

# Managing Stress God's Way

*“Come to Me all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for our souls. For My yoke is easy and My load is light.” Matthew 11:28-30*

What do you do when you feel stressed out?

Maybe you pull your hair, bite your fingernails, yell at the kids, or maybe even kick the cat. When you feel like you might come unglued or go crazy because life seems out of control, what is your usual response?

Tense, frustrated, stressed-out people who are under spiritual/emotional pressure and feel plain old pooped out with life thirst for relief and rest from stress.

Saddie is a new addition to our family. She is a hyper, energizer Bunny rat terrier. She runs and plays all day. My family says Saddie is a lot like me. Maybe so. But I am much better looking than my canine counterpart.

In the evening, when I say “Come Saddie” this black, brown and white bundle of endless animal energy leaps into my lap. She nestles down, fully collapsing in the warm, safe and secure presence of dear old dad. Saddie rests to renew her energy. She loves it when I pet her and talk to her. When she is rested from being on my lap, you guessed it...she leaps off the chair and heads out on a new puppy adventure somewhere in the house.

Saddie knows that when she is worn out and weary that Dad's invitation to come will bring her rest and renewal. To refuse means no rest for the little doggie.

**In our word for the week, Jesus invites us to come to Him. To all weary and worn-out souls, people like you and me who get stressed out from time to time, Jesus says “Come to Me” (verse 28). Jesus Christ is our stress-reliever. To receive His rest, we must choose to come.**

What keeps stressed-out people from going to Jesus?

**First and foremost, pride does.** Our arrogance and ignorance persuades us we can handle this one. We don't need God. I can chill out on my own. I don't need anyone to teach me anything. I am a mature, Bible Christian. Sound familiar?

Jesus says He is gentle and humble and we can learn from Him (verse 29). Faith fueled by love and manifested through humility is the first step to stepping out of stress and entering into God's rest.

**Secondly, shame and humiliation keeps many from going to Jesus.** Shame caused by sin separates us from our Savior. Humiliation brought on by ungodly behavior erects an unseen yet real barrier between us and the Lord. The devil lies to us that we are unworthy to come to Jesus and He won't receive sinners like us.

**Third, busyness will keep us revved up in a stress mode with no time to stop, take a time out, and wait on the Lord.** There is good busy and bad busy. Good busy works at God's pace and plans time to be spent with Him for renewal and rest. Bad busy keeps on ticking and takes a licking because there is no pause permitted to bask in His holy, restorative presence.

## Stress Builders

- ✓ Thinking I can go on forever without rest builds stress.
- ✓ Refusing to acknowledge that I have limits sets me up for burnout.
- ✓ Running and gunning without taking a time out from time to time is a sure formula for spiritual/physical/emotional and relational breakdown.
- ✓ Burning the candle at both ends burns out the candle holder.
- ✓ Fear of appearing weak before others lulls us into a false confidence that we have our act together and we don't need God's renewing and refreshing power.

## Stress Busters

- ✓ Taking a break before I break busts stress.
- ✓ Regularly meeting and waiting on the Lord for renewal busts stress.
- ✓ Releasing my weariness to the Lord relieves pressure and stress.
- ✓ Meditating on God's Word puts pressure and stress in its place.
- ✓ Recognizing and respecting my limitations keeps burnout at bay.

Jesus says "Come to Me". Why? Because His way is easier than yours and mine! Verse 31 states "*For My yoke is easy, and My load is light.*" Life in Christ is easy and light, not hard and heavy. Relief from soul stress is spelled J-E-S-U-S!

Life seem hard right now? Lighten your stress load. Unload it by going to Jesus. Crawl up into the Lord's lap like Saddy crawls into mine to find rest and renewal.

**A Word For Your Week:** Come apart and be with Jesus before you come apart away from Him!

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