

A God-Shaped Approach to Stress

In today's world, it is almost impossible to avoid stress. Just about everyone is carrying some degree of it in their lives and Christians are no exception. Many people are finding it increasingly difficult to handle the stress that is around them, and desperately seek relief through any remedy they can find. One expert calls our society "troubled" as we search for answers in how to cope. How should we deal with stress? What approach is best to take? Does God give us answers to these kinds of problems?

A. Understanding the problem

- 1) In some respects, stress is an inevitable part of life – but how we deal with it is important (*Phil. 4:6-7*)

- 2) Whether our stress is a burden or is manageable will greatly depend on our focus *Luke 10:41-42; Matt. 11:28-30*

B. Approaching it God's Way

- 1) I have to appreciate what my _____ is. (*Ecc. 6:7; Luke 6:48; Rom. 12:1-2*)
 - a. While Jesus certainly faced stress, His approach is our example. (*Heb. 5:7-8; John 12:27-28; Mark 14:34*)
 - b. Developing the right focus will give us the needed strength. (*James 1:2*)

- 2) I have to be willing to _____. (*Rom. 8:31; Ps. 127:1-2; Matt. 13:22; 6:33*)
 - a. King Saul could not do this and his stress was life-changing (*1 Sam. 18:6-11*)
 - b. Jesus was able to flawlessly handle stress-giving Himself completely (*1 Pet. 2:21-24; Duet. 32:35; Matt. 5:44; Heb. 2:17-18*)

- 3) I need to completely _____ (*Prov. 3:5-6; Matt. 12:20; Ps. 55:22; Ps. 34:17-19*)

- 4) I can immerse myself in _____. (*Acts 16:22-40; Hab. 3:17-19; Ps. 103:1-5; Ps. 25:15-18*)

Stress of all kinds is a natural part of life, but how we deal with it is up to us. On our own, it is an uphill battle that will not end well. Approaching stress with a God-shaped perspective will guide us to the peace that even Jesus knew in difficult times (*John 14:27*).