

# Stressed Out!

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Text - 1 Peter 1:18-23

We live in a day and age when many people feel the effects of stress. Some are stressed because of financial needs. The income never catches up with the out go. Often Mom is forced to go out and work. Then she's under the stress of trying to be a good mother and wife, keep house, provide meals, and be a good employee.

Some are stressed by the schedules their children keep. Between after school sports, band, music lessons, youth activities, and a host of other extra-curricular activities, it's hard to keep up with their schedules.

Some are stressed because of the health of parents. Mom or Dad might be in a nursing home or in a hospital needing your attention. They might be living at home, and needing your care.

There's also stress caused when you or someone you love is fighting serious illness.

Then there's the job, and the church and home improvement projects! Each of these demands time and involvement and there are times when we have 2 or 3 or more of these stress-causing things all happening at once! It's no wonder so many of us feel stressed!

We cannot escape stressful situations. Job 5:7, James 1:2-4, John 16:33

Has it ever occurred to you that Jesus came to relieve stress?

Has it ever occurred to you that the Bible was written to help relieve your stress?

Has it ever occurred to you that God wants to handle your stress? Isaiah 41:10, Matthew 11:28-30

Isaiah 26:3 - *"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."*

Stress relief comes when we get our thoughts off the stress-causing difficulties in life and on to our wonderful God! When our mind is centered on the Lord our hearts will be at peace. Our minds will be centered on the Lord when they are centered on God's Word.

Our text is 1 Peter 1:18-23. In the previous verses, Peter made an appeal for Christians to live holy lives. 1 Peter 1:15-16

In the rest of this chapter Peter gives us some reasons for living holy lives. But Peter is also showing us 4 wonderful things which, if we focus on them, will help relieve the pressures of stress. We must get our minds off our problems and challenges and on to what God has done and wants us to do.

## **GOD HAS GIVEN US A WONDERFUL REDEMPTION - Vss. 18--19**

Peter begins by talking about his readers' redemption. The word redemption has to do with the payment of a ransom to set free a slave. With the exception of our Lord Jesus, every man was born in bondage to sin. Ephesians 2:1-3

Peter here reminds the Christian that he or she was not redeemed by anything corruptible, like money! As permanent as gold and silver seem to be, they will eventually perish.

In Peter's day, money could pay for the freedom of a slave. Just as money today can buy the freedom of a captive. But money could not and can not buy the freedom from the bondage of sin and death.

The word "conversation" in this verse means "manner of life".

Money cannot begin to pay for the sins of a vain or empty manner of life. And we received this vain or empty manner of life by tradition from our fathers. The sinful, empty way of life goes back to Adam! Romans 5:12

Christian, your redemption, your freedom from the penalty of sin and your place in Heaven was secured by the precious blood of Christ! (Vs. 19) Why was the blood of Christ precious? Jesus Christ is God! It is God's blood that saved you! Are you stressed? Think of how much God loves you! He gave His own blood that you might have forgiveness of sins and everlasting life!

This blood was like that of a lamb. From Adam on, animals, often lambs were offered as sacrifices for sin. God required the Jews to offer blood sacrifices of animals. These were a picture of THE LAMB, the Lord Jesus Christ, who would come to pay for sin. (John 1:29) The particular lamb in view here is probably the Passover Lamb. You might remember that a lamb for each family was offered by the nation of Israel, and the blood was placed on the doorposts. When the Angel of Death came by, he passed over those that had the blood on them. That lamb had to be a lamb without blemish and spot, a perfect sacrifice. Jesus was perfect. Jesus was blameless. Jesus was pure.

The Lord Jesus did not deserve to die! He died voluntarily in our place as our lamb! John 10:17-18, 2 Corinthians 5:21

Christian, are you stressed? Think of this - Jesus died in your place as the perfect sacrifice for you sins.

### **GOD HAS GIVEN US A WONDERFUL REVELATION - Vss. 20-21**

Vs. 20 - There are times when unforeseen emergencies arise, and we need to react. For instance, there have been times when we have had unexpected company. Sometimes we have had food on hand that she could serve. Other times, we have ended up taking folks out to eat. We were taken by surprise.

Man's failure in the garden did not take God by surprise.  
The need of a redeemer did not take God by surprise.  
Jesus was foreordained as the "Lamb of God". God had planned ahead!

Although redemption was planned so far in advance, it wasn't revealed until the time of Peter. It has now been revealed in these last times.

Vs. 21 - To whom has this redemption been revealed? To those who believe in God, by Him!

Notice that true belief in God is by Christ! Redemption has been revealed to those who believe in God, through faith in His Son! John 14:6, Acts 4:12, John 3:36

And notice we believe in God who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead and gave Him glory. He sits at the right hand of the throne of God.

And notice that if you are a Christian, your faith and hope is in God!

Your faith and hope is in God for eternal life!

If your faith and hope is in God for the most important issue, eternal life, shouldn't your faith in hope be in God for every issue? If you can trust God with your soul, you can trust God with everything else! This is another wonderful reminder when we are stressed! Proverbs 3:5-6

### **GOD HAS GIVEN US A WONDERFUL REGENERATION - Vs. 23**

#### **When stressed, it helps to remember who we are!**

This verse talks about being "born again". When a person trusts Christ as Savior, he or she is born into the family of God. We literally become children of God! John 3 tells us that this new birth is the work of the Spirit of God. This verse tells us that this new birth is also the work of the Word of God. God's Spirit uses God's Word to bring about the second birth. John 1:12-13

Another word for being born again is regeneration.  
What does regeneration have to do with stress?  
When you are stressed, you are still a child of God.  
God is still taking care of you.

He is still in control. We can relax!

Psalm 121

### **GOD HAS GIVEN US A WONDERFUL RESPONSIBILITY - Vs. 22**

The word "love" used here the first time is the Greek word "phileo". This word means to like or have a fondness for someone else.

We have been born into a Spiritual family, the family of God, which is naturally fond of each other. When we obeyed the truth of the Gospel we purified our souls. The end result was a natural fondness for our brothers and sisters in Christ.

We are to take that fondness, that liking a step further.

We are to go on to loving one another with a pure heart fervently. The Greek word for love (The second time the word is used in this verse.) here is agape. It means the highest form of love. Our love should be unselfish and giving to other Christians. Agape love is the kind of love God shows to us.

#### **What does that have to do with stress?**

Most times when we get stressed, we are worried about ourselves.

However, when we use our times of stress to reach out and love others, we will find that the stress will be relieved.