

5 Prayers to Overcome Stress

My calendar made me hyperventilate on Saturday morning. Well, the calendar didn't make me –because it's just a Wyoming Wildlife calendar with a picture of a great gray owl on it for the month of December.

It was all my scribbles on the calendar that sucked the essence of life right out of my lungs, like a vile science fiction character would do with his clawed hand to the chest of his victim.

And that is how you know I've watched too much Stargate Atlantis.

It was the 12 events of Christmas that will happen in five calendar days –that's what did it. Two concerts, two staff parties, two birthdays, and one recital. Plus fifty-hundred gifts to buy and wrap better than my known skill level allows.

(Matt, I was being poetic. I know you just counted that list and didn't come up with the number 12. Do you have to count everything?)

Quiero I'm trying to say is that I was STRESSED.

That same day I listened to Pentatonix sing "It's the most wonderful time of the year", and all I could think of was how the rhythm was making my anxious heart beat faster, and why couldn't they chill and sing something more Valium-ish?

Stress is a joy sucker.

Well, you know how when someone is standing on a pressure-sensitive bomb, and the only way to save his life is to carefully slide something of equal weight onto the bomb while he slides off? (I'm blaming this illustration on my daughter who up and left home, which left me with two men who do not want to watch shows that have anything to do with cupcakes or

wedding dresses.)

Stress has to be replaced.

We can't just say, "I don't like stress, so I'm going to stop having it." Because then –kablooey! (And that is exactly how a bomb sounds.)

Stress has to be displaced with something of equal weight.

Paul says to followers of Christ:

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ. (Philippians 4:6-7 NIV)

So Sunday morning, **because I had so much to do**, I spent a long time praying...

FIVE PRAYERS THAT DISARM STRESS

1. **Pray for others** who are in even greater distress than you are.
2. Pray through each major stressor you have. **Admit your weakness** and need for help.
3. **Express belief** in the attributes of God. Meditate on which attributes of God make it possible for him to help you in each area where you need it. *Lord, because you are_____I know you can_____.*
4. **Ask God to be glorified** in each stressful area of your life. Use your imagination. What do you think it would look like if God were glorified in each event and task you have coming up this month?

5. **Feel thankfulness** well up inside you, as you think about the nearness of a God who cares about you and who has what it takes to help you with everything.

After spending a good length of time in prayer, I was not closer to accomplishing my great list of tasks, but I did seem to be breathing and smiling again, Mr. Wyoming Owl.

Our December calendars warrant the addition of one more great event.

A quiet hour of prayer.

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