

Follow These Spiritual Strategies for Conquering Stress

You can begin to manage stress by developing a new belief system that sees God as the One who is in control of your life. The Bible says, "See ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things will be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33, NKJV). God will add to your life the peace, happiness and control that you need when you give Him first place.

How do you do this? You must abide in the vine. In other words, you must learn to see Jesus Christ as the complete and total source of your life. When you do so, you will be walking in the Spirit. Galatians 5:16-17 (NIV) says:

"So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want."

Your mind acts like a referee choosing how you will receive and perceive the events of your life. Will you feel overwhelmed by them, or confident and in control no matter what happens? If you get your mind on the side of the Spirit by filling it with God's Word, you will rise above every negative, harmful and stress-producing emotion.

Removing the Roots of Stress

The Word of God is very powerful. It has the power to reprogram the way you think, causing your thinking to line up with God's way of seeing things. When you renew your mind with God's Word, you begin to pull out stressful ways of thinking

by their very roots. The Bible says, "We take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5, NIV).

When my patients come to me with physical and emotional symptoms that are rooted in stress, I prescribe scriptures to help them renew their minds along with a prescription to strengthen their bodies. Here's how it works:

If your mind tells you; "You'll never amount to anything," you can reprogram your mind with God's Word by responding as follows:

God tells me in Deuteronomy 28:13, "The Lord will make me the head, not the tail. If I pay attention to the commands of the Lord my God and follow them, I will also be at the top and never at the bottom."

Practice Forgiveness

Many people harbor hidden anger, bitterness, unforgiveness, resentment, fear, hatred, abandonment, shame and rejection, and aren't even aware of it. What about you? Do memories of old wounds and hurts surface in your thoughts when you encounter certain people? Have you been hurt in the past and simply buried the hurt? Feelings buried alive never die.

Holding on to unforgiveness doesn't punish the individual who wronged you. It only destroys you through the roots of stress. Mark 11:25-26 says, "And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive your sins (NIV).

Divine Forgetfulness

Not only do you need to forgive those who have hurt and offended you, but you also need to forget it. "Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus (Phil. 3:13-14, NIV).

Learn to Love

First Corinthians 13:8 says, “Love never fails” (NKJV). Are you in a political battle at work? Do you have strife in your family? Have you been hurt by your spouse? Love truly never fails—and it will not fail you!

Fear rules the lives of many people. The Bible says, “Perfect love expels fear” (1 John 4:18). You can live free from fear as you increasingly understand the power of God’s love for you. Mahatma Gandhi said that the whole world would accept the Christ of Christians if the Christians would only act like Christ.

Build and maintain the ties of relationships. Relationships with those who love you are gifts from God. Never take them for granted!

Learn to Laugh

The Bible says, “A cheerful heart is good medicine (Prov. 17:22). If you are stressed out, why not take a prescription for laughter? When you’re down or stressed, pick up a wholesome, funny video and watch it. A good belly laugh can actually massage your internal organs. Author Norman Cousins actually used the healing power of laughter to help him overcome a serious disease.

Laughter releases tension, anxiety, anger, fear, shame and guilt, and it can transform your attitude and outlook.

Note: This is an excerpt from Don Colbert M.D.’s book, *The Bible Cure for Stress*.

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