

How to Change Your Approach and Give Your Soul a Vacation

One of the most comforting Scriptures in the Bible is Matthew 11:28. In this verse, Jesus tells us, “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy-laden and overburdened, and I will cause you to rest. [I will ease and relieve and refresh your souls.]”

I think it’s interesting to note here that Jesus said He would “ease and relieve and refresh” our *souls*, not our bodies. It sounds like He’s saying we need to give our souls a vacation.

The Inner and Outer Lives

We all have two lives: an inner life and an outer life. Your inner life is your soul life, which includes your mind, will and emotions. Your outer life is your physical life. And while God cares about every detail of your life, He is more concerned with your inner life than your outer life.

I have found that it’s possible to give your body rest but not your soul. For example, have you ever had trouble going to sleep because you were worrying about a problem and couldn’t stop thinking about it? This kind of activity just wears us out inwardly.

We can also wear our souls out with too many thoughts running on, too many decisions to make, too much talking and too much multitasking. Worry, fear, excessive concern about what other people think and insecurity are also common reasons people are worn out and don’t have any peace.

I remember when I used to be jealous of Dave and the peace he had. I was worn-out most of the time, worrying about problems, but he wasn’t. Now, we had the same problems, but while they wore me out, Dave was still peaceful and happy because he

would cast his cares on God. One of his favorite Scriptures is 1 Peter 5:7, which says, "Cast all your anxiety on [God] because he cares for you" (NIV). And even now, anytime someone goes to Dave with a problem, he'll encourage them to "cast your care" and give them that Scripture.

It used to make me so mad when he wouldn't get upset when I was upset, but eventually, I got to the place where I was desperate to have what he had. So I prayed and told God I would do whatever I had to do to be peaceful, and He taught me how to change my approach to life.

The Revelation That Changed My Life

I came to realize that the world is not going to change, the devil is not going to change, and all of the people who bother me probably aren't going to change, so I have to decide to change.

In John 14:27 (AMP), Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you; My [own] peace I now give ... to you. ... Do not let your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. [Stop allowing yourselves to be agitated and disturbed; and do not permit yourselves to be fearful and intimidated and cowardly and unsettled.]" So we can be peaceful and make the decision not to be troubled, afraid, agitated and disturbed, but it won't just happen automatically.

The truth is, we won't have peace if we don't pursue it on purpose, because there will always be opportunities to get upset or offended about something. For example, you lose your car keys when you're running late, or you get caught in a traffic jam, or someone at work gets the promotion you wanted, or the electric bill is higher than you expected it to be ... and on and on. There can be an endless cycle of stuff that happens that we can get upset about.

We also have to remember that we have an enemy who wants to keep us worn out. The devil is a peace stealer and he works

hard to set us up to get upset. But we can learn how to change our approach so we don't live upset all of the time. And Jesus gives us the best example to follow.

The Key to Living in Peace

Jesus didn't conform to the world—He walked in the Spirit. When He felt tired and pressured from the crowds who wanted Him to help them, He took time to walk away and get rest. He spent time in prayer, alone with the Father, because He knew He wouldn't be any good to anybody if He didn't get refreshed.

It's so easy to let other people's needs and emergencies control and manipulate us. And when we let others run our lives, we can get to the point that we're falling apart! It's not wrong to want to help or please people, but we need to take care of ourselves, calm down and stop getting upset about things that usually don't really matter anyway.

Make the decision today to commit your ways to the Lord and rest in Him. Cast your cares on Him, knowing He loves and cares about you all the time, in every situation of your life. He'll meet you where you are and ease, relieve and refresh your soul!