

STRESSED OUT!

Philippians 4:4-9

INTRODUCTION: We all need to know how to have the joy of the Lord in the midst of our times of stress. The book of Philippians says more about the joy of the Lord than any other book of the Bible. Experts tell us that seventy to ninety percent of all doctor office visits are caused by stress. No one is immune to stress in their life. The apostle Paul wants to help us when we get stressed out to know how to get the stress out of our hearts.

I. REJOICE IN THE LORD!

The beginning of learning to live with less stress is to learn to rejoice in the Lord: Philippians 4:4. There are two words in this verse that are very important: “always” and the word “again.” We are told to rejoice in the Lord both when you feel like it and when you don’t feel like rejoicing in the Lord. We are told to rejoice in the Lord both when we are happy and when we are not happy because joy has nothing to do with being happy. We cannot always rejoice in our circumstances but we can always rejoice because we are in the Lord! We cannot always choose to be happy because happiness depends upon what happens to us. But we can always choose to rejoice in the Lord and when we choose to rejoice in the Lord no matter how much stress we may be under, stress has to move to the side because when we chose to rejoice in the Lord strange things happen in our minds!

II. CHOOSE TO RELAX IN THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD!

Philippians 4:5: The word “gentleness” is talking about having a temperament and an attitude that is calm even during stressful times. Gentleness refuses to panic or over react to the stress of this life. Have you seen the sign: “Choose faith over fear!” As we obey the Holy Spirit’s teaching here we will choose worship over worry. When we choose to rejoice in the Lord instead of freaking out or running away from our problems, others will take note that we have been with Jesus! Instead of focusing on our problems we will choose to focus on our God and rejoice in Him our gentleness will be evident to all. We have an invitation from our Lord Jesus Christ to do exactly that: Matthew 11:28-30. Four words should come to our minds every time we get stressed out: “The Lord is near!” Psalm 73:28. True peace in our lives is not the absence of problems; it is the presence of our God: Isaiah 26:3-4. We can learn to relax in our Lord!

III. RELEASE ALL YOUR CARE ON THE LORD!

Philippians 4:6: We need to quit worrying and start praising and trusting our Lord. What does God tell us it is ok to worry about? “Nothing!” Sadly what do we worry about? “Everything!” God here in this verse gives us the alternative to worrying: Philippians 4:6. Worry about nothing! Pray about everything! We can choose how we respond to the stresses of our lives. We can choose to carry the pressure ourselves and deal with the problem on our own or we can choose to rejoice in the Lord and cast our care on Him: 1 Peter 5:7. We are told to give thanks in every situation. How can we do that? Because our God has told us He loves us and will meet our every need.

IV. REST IN THE PEACE OF YOUR GOD!

If you are stressed out, and will obey God, God will get the stress out of your heart! Here is God’s promise if you will choose to obey His Word: Philippians 4:7. The stresses of this life cannot penetrate the peace of God! This is not a temporary peace, it is a peace that passes all understanding. This is not the peace of the world found in a bottle or a pill. It is the very peace of God! Philippians 4:4-7.