



HOUR OF POWER

Reverend Dr. Major A Stewart



**HOW TO HANDLE
STRESS BEFORE STRESS
HANDLES YOU!**



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April 24, 2024

HOW TO HANDLE STRESS! BEFORE STRESS HANDLES YOU!



One of life's toughest problems is stress. The word "stress" relates to pressure applied either from the outside or inside. "Stress" is a term familiar not only to the medical field but also to engineering and architecture. When architects design a building, they are careful to calculate the stress-bearing capacity of the foundation, walls, and roof. They estimate the effects of wind, snow, and ice, and then allow a generous margin of stress safety.

God is the Divine Architect who designed you and me. He created us with a capacity to bear only so much stress, and He knows how much stress we can withstand (Psa. 103:14a). To strangle stress, we must know the causes of stress and the cure for stress.

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The Causes of Stress

There are at least four causes of stress:

1. Debt causes stress. Many otherwise wonderful Christians are “debtly” sinners, which causes them enormous stress. How do you know if you might be a “debtly” sinner? Two sure signs are overdue bills and not completely paying off credit card balances each month. This condition may be the result of acquiring more possessions than we can afford or not planning our spending carefully. When we don’t pay our bills, we are sinning. How does the Bible declare this fact in Psalm 37:21a?

This means it is wickedness to borrow and not repay. Would you agree it is much easier to borrow money than to pay it back? When we borrow money or buy on credit, we are making a commitment. How does Proverbs 20:25 encourage us to be very careful about going into debt?



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God teaches it is a big mistake to commit to something before we think it through. Buying something on credit, without carefully considering the consequences, is called “impulse buying.” It is seeing something, wanting it, and insisting on having it now. So, how do we get it if we don’t have the money? We charge it and increase our debt stress! What’s the cure for debt stress? The answer is found in Proverbs 27:12. What is it?

Therefore, if we are wise, we will see the dangers of debt, but if we are simple-minded, we “charge” on ahead. Debt causes stress, and ...



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2. Relationships cause stress.

It might be a marriage relationship, a business relationship, or a dating relationship. Like getting into debt, it's much easier to get into a relationship than out. Most people get married because they have a "quiver in their liver" and think they are in love. However, it takes much more than love, or a "quiver in their liver," to make a marriage. Marriage is much more about commitment than love. That's why we have wedding vows. In every marriage, there will be times when love won't cut it; so if you don't have the commitment, you can't make it work. Some married folks feel cheated. They say, "I was deceived by false advertising because when we were dating my spouse always looked and acted their best." Do you know why your spouse acted better when you were dating than now? Because you looked and acted better then, and you reap what you sow (Gal. 6:7).



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After being married a few years, the grass begins to look greener on the other side of the fence. But it really isn't. Do you know where the grass is greener? Where you water it. In any relationship, the "grass is greener" when we "water" it. What is the "water" that makes relationships turn "green" and grow? According to 1 Corinthians 13:4–5, how will we behave if we water our relationships in a growing, healthy way?

The causes of stress are debt, relationships, and ...

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3. Poor time management.

Our problem is not lack of time; our problem is not properly using the time we have. There are three things we can do to help manage our time:

A. Have a daily “to do” list. On your “to do” list, write the things to be done, in order of priority, and concentrate on one thing at a time. Don’t go to the second thing until the first is complete. If possible, write down your “to do” list the night before or early in the morning.

This forces you to plan your day and obey what command in Ephesians 5:16a?

B. Start early. I can get more work done in the one hour between 6:30 a.m. and 7:30 a.m. than in any three hours during the rest of the day. For most people, the most productive time of day is early in the morning when our minds are fresh and our bodies are rested.

How does Jesus give us an example of this in Mark 1:35?

C. Learn to say “no.” You can’t be involved in everything. You can’t do everything everyone expects you to do. Choose the most important things—things you are good at and enjoy—and be committed to them. When you are committed to too many things, you get stressed out and don’t do a good job at any of them.

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4. Health problems cause stress.

As we age, all of us suffer from declining health. Paul apparently suffered from some kind of chronic health problem that he called a thorn in my flesh. He asked God three times to remove it, and each time God said “no.” However, what did God tell Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:9a?

Sometimes God will not remove the cause of our stress, but He will give us the grace to live with it and make it a means of ministry to other people who may have the same source of stress. The **causes of stress** are **debt, relationships, poor time management, and health problems.** Now, let's look at ...



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The Cure for Stress

To strangle stress, we must do three things:

1. Prayer and Meditation: Philippians 4:6–7 advises to pray about everything and to let go of worries, with the promise that God's peace will guard our hearts and minds.
2. Talk honestly. Talk to your husband or wife about the stress in your life. If you are not married, find someone of the same sex who understands what you are going through and talk it out with them. Talking will release some of Rev. Dr. Major Stewart On Overcoming the Obstacles of Life April 23, 2024. The tension and relieve much of the stress. We all need a friend to talk to because of what truth found in Proverbs 27:9? One of the best things about having friends is their counsel and advice. When we are "all stressed up with no place to go," we need to turn to our friends.
3. Trust in God's Plan: Proverbs 3:5–6 encourages trusting in the Lord with allyour heart and leaning not on your own understanding. Knowing that there is a divine plan can provide comfort during stressful times.
4. Gratitude: 1 Thessalonians 5:18 encourages giving thanks in all circumstances, which can shift focus from stressors to blessings.

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The Cure for Stress cont.

5. Self-Care: 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 reminds believers that their bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, promoting self-care practices such as rest, proper nutrition, and exercise.

6. Forgiveness: Colossians 3:13 urges believers to forgive others as the Lord forgave them, releasing the burden of anger and resentment that can contribute to stress.

7. Play weekly. Play is a great stress reliever. The God who made us knows we can't take stress seven days a week; that's why He tells us in the Ten Commandments to take off one day a week. Golf, fish, Pickle Ball, Swim, bike, or do something you really enjoy each week. Jesus enjoyed life so much His critics accused Him of being a "party animal." Jesus liked being around people who were having a good time. Because of that, what accusations did His enemies make about Him in Matthew 11:19?



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Jesus took time off. Is your job more important than Jesus' was? Unless you schedule some play time each week, you will never get it. Plan your work and week so you have time to rest and relax. If you don't plan your week, your week will plan you. What wonderful revelation does the last phrase of 1 Timothy 6:17 tell us about everything God gives us?

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THE PROBLEM IS WE DO NOT TAKE TIME OFF TO ENJOY THE GOOD THINGS GOD HAS GIVEN US. THE CURE FOR STRESS IS TO PRAY EARNESTLY, TALK HONESTLY, AND PLAY WEEKLY. WHAT CAN YOU DO TODAY TO BEGIN STRANGLING STRESS IN YOUR LIFE?



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