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ESCAPE STRESS

Relief at last from the pressures that undo you

GO SLOW—YOU'LL GET THERE QUICKER!

How to get more done with less wear and tear

THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON

What to expect and when

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PERSONALLY SPEAKING

In a 1968 episode of the original Star Trek, the crew of the starship *Enterprise* encounters an intergalactic species whose lives are far faster paced than those of their human counterparts. But there is a price. "At this level, they are easily damaged," Captain Kirk observes, "as if accelerated living burns them out." Star Trek's creators apparently were making an observation about where the mounting pace of modern life was taking us—and they may have been even more right than they realized.

The World Health Organization recently predicted that by the year 2020, half of the top 10 medical problems worldwide will be stress related, and another recent study found that 54% of people worldwide now complain of stress at work. In Japan, the modern era has coined the new words *karoshi* and *karojisatsu*—"death from overwork" and "suicide from overwork."

Stress is a very real problem that affects all of us to varying degrees. Perhaps the most daunting aspect of stress is the way it is self-perpetuating. Just thinking about how to get out from under it puts us under more stress.

There *is* a way out, though—a sure and simple way of escape. It's so simple, in fact, that many people make the mistake of dismissing it before trying it and therefore continue on in their stressed-out state.

"Come to Me," Jesus says, "and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30). Just a few quiet moments with Jesus can melt away the tension, bring peace of mind and spirit, and put the situations that lead to stress in proper perspective. Can it really be as simple as that? You'll never know what sweet relief awaits you till you try it!

Keith Phillips

For the *Activated* family



e s c a p e s t r e s s

HOW OFTEN DO WE FINALLY REACH A STATE OF PEACEFUL CONTENTMENT and then wish we could hang out a sign that says, “Do not disturb”?

Of course we can't prevent disturbances or stressful situations, but when they come, the Bible says the Lord can give us peace inside. “You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You” (Isaiah 26:3). If we turn to Jesus, He will give us peace. If we are spending time talking with Him in prayer, reading His Words, or even just thinking about Him, the Bible says the reward is peace.

In another place it says, “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6–7).

At times it may seem impossible for us to remain peaceful inside. Just coping may be difficult. But Jesus is the Prince of Peace and He says, “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27). So when you feel like hanging a “Do Not Disturb” sign on your forehead, remember He has a special brand of peace—eternal, deep, tangible. And it's available for the asking.

—CHLOE WEST

WHEN LIFE FEELS LIKE A TINY, WINDOWLESS ROOM and its four walls are closing in, you can create a window of escape through the Word of God.


As you read and meditate on the Word, as you believe My promises and claim them as your own, you open a window to the spiritual realm where wonderful things await you. The warm sunshine of My love will melt away the tension.

Like a breath of fresh air, the soft breeze of My Spirit will clear your mind. Crystal-clear streams of truth and pools of wisdom will refresh your spirit and mind. New vistas will open before you. You will see things from the heavenly perspective and thrill to the new possibilities and challenges before you. You will find new faith and inspiration. That stifled feeling will give way to exhilaration and a passion for living. “The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63).

Learn to turn to the Word when you feel bottled up, and My Word will set you free (John 8:31–32).

—JESUS

Rest AND Repose

A large, thatched umbrella stands on a sandy beach. Two white lounge chairs are positioned on either side of the umbrella's base. The background shows a clear blue sky with scattered white clouds, a turquoise ocean, and a white sandy beach.

HE COULD THEN REFRESH OUR SOULS,
CLARIFY OUR THOUGHTS,
AND TAKE AWAY THE STRAINED FEELING.

“I’M UNDER SO MUCH PRESSURE! I can hardly stand it—the pressures are so great!” People talk about the strain they’re under, and it can be seen on their faces. We are living in the rapids of time. The speed and relentlessness with which we move is most remarkable, but it takes its toll on our bodies, minds, and spirits.

As I tried to get quiet in my soul today, I realized how much stress and pressure had gotten into me. But I know where I can find repose. *Webster’s Dictionary* defines repose as “a state of being at rest.” Other meanings are “freedom from worry; peace of mind; calmness; tranquility.”

That sounds so nice, but how does one get to that state? How are people going to find such repose when they’re on the run and in a rush all the time?

When I get alone to take time in God’s presence, when I read His Word and search the Scriptures, and when I search my own heart and spend time in prayer, the peace that He promises is restored—sweet rest and repose that only God can give. The remedy takes all that strain out of the spirit; it relieves unrest of mind and tension of body.

So many people in this jet-propelled age have to take tranquilizers to calm themselves down. I read recently of a man

who came rushing home from work and said to his wife, “I can’t believe all the things that happened in the office today! I’ve been under such strain, such tension, that I can hardly stand it! Give me one of those pills to calm me down.” So she gave him the pill, but just about that time the phone rang and he was ordered to come back to the office because a very important customer was ready to give a big order. So he said to his wife, “Where are those pep pills? I’ve got

to have one!” People take one pill to pep up and another one to calm down.

Pressures are many, and some people have no other recourse but to pop pills. But the Christian does have another recourse! The Christian has his quiet time—the time of meditation with God that will cool the fever of this hectic rush. But we have to do our part to get quiet with the Lord. Here are some verses that demonstrate this reality.

“Moses said to them, ‘Stand still, that I may hear what the Lord will command concerning you’” (Numbers 9:8). He had to get those around him quiet before he could even hear what the Lord wanted to say to them.

In 1 Samuel 9:27, the prophet Samuel said to King Saul, “Tell the servant to go on ahead of us. ... But you stand here awhile, that I may announce to you the Word of God!”

In counseling and praying with people, it can be so hard sometimes to get them quiet enough to listen to God’s Word. A wonderful verse about that is 1 Samuel 12:7, where the prophet Samuel says to the people, “Now therefore stand still, that I may reason with you before the Lord.”

In Job 37:14, God says, “Stand still and consider the wondrous works of God.”

David talked about meditating and communing with God at night or first thing in the morning, before the rush of the day begins. “Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still” (Psalm 4:4). And God says, “Be still, and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10).

If only we would get to this quiet place so we could seek God’s presence and read His Word! He could then refresh our souls, clarify our thoughts, and take away the strained feeling. Some people think it’s a waste of time to

stop to meditate, to stop and pray, yet millions throughout the ages have found that only in the presence of God could they find rest and peace and subdue every symptom of pressure.

Prayer makes available the power of God that can take all the strain out of life. Won’t you think about it? His Word says that they who believe enter into the Lord’s rest (Hebrews 4:3). God’s Word goes on to say, “There remains therefore a rest to the people of God” (Hebrews 4:9). You don’t have to wait for Heaven to get that rest! You can have it right now! God bless you and bring you into His place of perfect peace. •



WHAT I NEED

MARCIA, AGE FOUR, was my Sunday morning commitment. Today Marcia had exhausted my surprise bag of coloring books and puzzles in the first seven minutes. Even the candy failed to hold her attention for more than thirty seconds.

I took Marcia’s face in my hands and, looking into her eyes, whispered, “What do you need to make you happy today?”

Returning my gaze, she whispered, “I need to sit on your lap!”

I took her in my arms. She nestled down until her soft cheek rested against the skin of my neck, and she barely stirred for the next hour.

I remember days when my own behavior was an adult version of Marcia’s. I was restless, dissatisfied, impossible to please. When that happens again, I hope I will be as wise as Marcia and as honest about my needs. My restlessness melts away when I rest in Jesus.

—AUTHOR UNKNOWN

SHOCK ABSORBERS

OH, THAT DITCH AGAIN! I was driving home and—as I had done every day for months—had to drive very slowly over a dip in the road to avoid a bone-jarring jolt.

My car was due for a general servicing, so I took it to the mechanic I regularly go to. As he got behind the wheel to pull it into his shop, I was feeling pretty good about myself for having remembered to have my car serviced. He had moved it only inches, however, when he stepped on the brakes, turned to me with a look of surprise, and asked, “How can you drive your car like this?! Your shock absorbers are gone!”

My reflex reaction to the instant diagnosis was to question the mechanic’s motives. How could he be so sure, so quick? But since the car was 10 years old and my past experience with this mechanic gave me no reason to mistrust him, I asked him

to check the shocks and replace them if necessary, which he did.

Oops, that ditch again. As I was driving my newly serviced car home, my mind was somewhere else and I didn’t think to slow down for the familiar dip until it was too late. I braced myself for the inevitable impact—tail-bone to floor and car body to wheels—but hardly felt that old ditch. The mechanic had been right. I had gotten so used to driving my car with no shock absorbers that I had forgotten what it was like to have them.

If you drive only on good roads you hardly need shock absorbers, but when the road gets rough or you come to one of those bone-jarring dips or potholes, it’s a different story. Isn’t life a lot like that? Most of the time, thank God, the ride is pretty smooth. But what about when we lose someone close to us, or

suffer a business failure, or an injury shakes our lives? What if there is a power failure and we are stuck in an elevator for hours, or we find ourselves in an earthquake or other disaster? What kind of “shock absorbers” can help us make it through incidents like these in one piece?

Ask the Man who walked the rough and rugged road to Mount Calvary and gave His life there for you and me. He should know—and He does. “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

So many people drive through life with absolutely no shock absorbers, carefully trying

“He will keep in perfect peace all those who trust in Him, whose thoughts turn often to the Lord” (Isaiah 26:3 TLB).

BY MATTHEW NANTES



to avoid every bump and hole in the road that could give them a jolt. They try to only drive on the smoothest roads because they know they're not prepared for any sudden bumps. They don't have the peace that Jesus offers—shock absorbers for their earthly vehicle. Maybe they don't even realize they *need* shock absorbers, or how much wear and tear these things can spare them.

There are going to be bumps on the road of life. That's inevitable. But with Jesus' loving hands underneath you, you'll hardly notice them. You can just relax, enjoy the ride, and arrive safe and sound at your final destination.

Put yourself in His hands, and see the difference it makes.

MATTHEW NANTES IS A VOLUNTEER WITH THE FAMILY IN GREECE. •

**I HAD
GOTTEN SO
USED TO
DRIVING MY
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PRAYER FOR THE DAY

Jesus, when I feel weak, tired, or out of sorts, You're right there to put Your arms around me, to comfort me, and tell me that everything is going to be okay. You reach down and soothe my ruffled nerves, melt away my worries and fears, and blow away the confusion that surrounds me.

Thank You for blessing me so! I'm so blessed to have Your peace. Thank You for delivering me from the worries of the world. Thank You for Your peace that passes all understanding.

Thank You that I don't have to take a pill to find relief from the stress of a busy schedule. All I have to do is take *You*. Thank You that I can just sit down for a few minutes with You and feel Your soothing touch that gives me strength to continue on in my busy day.

Thank You, wonderful, wonderful Jesus, for Your touches of love that melt away the mountains of obstacles and problems. And thank You, too, that when I feel good, You make me feel even better! I love You!

bright, multicolored icing
caterpillar cake

Through the

BY MARIE CLAIRE



bitten off a bit more than I could chew. But Tristan was sure he wanted a castle cake, knights

and all, and I wanted to make him happy, so I shot up a quick prayer asking the Lord to help me and give me talents I don't normally have.

Before I knew it, his birthday was upon me, and I set to work on the cake. Book in hand, I tried to follow the directions as best I could, but soon realized why there was only a *drawing* of this castle cake, not a photograph, as with most of the other designs. There was a gulf between concept and finished product, and I was adrift and sinking! My cake was lopsided, the icing didn't stick well, and the turrets weren't equal in height or diameter. I couldn't find any toy knights, so I settled for a Lego figure of a man on a horse.

I felt so under pressure and discouraged! *Poor Tristan, I thought. He's going to be so disappointed! He's been looking forward to and talking about his*

knights and castle cake all week, and now look what he's going to get! Things never turn out the way I want them to! Tristan is sure to be one unhappy little boy when he sees his mother's version of his dream cake!

I finally finished the cake, adding the final touches as best I could—paper flags, cookies along the top of the walls that were supposed to look like stones but kept falling over at awkward angles, and “grass” made from shredded coconut dyed with food color that somehow turned out a muddy mossy color. I was done, but felt like crying.

I cleaned up my mess and decided I'd better let Tristan see the cake, to prepare him for the embarrassing moment when he and his friends would see it at the party. As Tristan entered the room, I studied his expression and prayed for just the right thing to say to cheer him up and help him not to take it so hard.

Tristan's eyes widened and, to my surprise, a huge smile spread across his face. “Wow,

ABOUT A WEEK BEFORE MY SON TRISTAN'S FOURTH BIRTHDAY, I talked with him about how much he had grown up in the past year, how much he had learned, and how proud I was of him for the progress he had made. Then we talked about his birthday and what he wanted to do for his party. As usual, I let him choose what kind of birthday cake he wanted.

Last year he chose a “caterpillar” cake, as at the time bugs fascinated him. That cake wasn't too difficult—just a string of crescent-shaped cake pieces with bright, multicolored icing. I expected him to choose something equally simple this year, so you can imagine my chagrin when, after looking through a book with imaginative cake ideas for children, he chose the “knights and castle” cake.

I looked at the detailed drawing, read over the explanation, and felt immediately that I had

Eyes of a Child

PARENTING FROM THE HEART

knights and castle



Mom! It's so cool!" he exclaimed. "It's *just* what I wanted!"

I nearly burst into tears as he went over to the cake, inspected each part, and said it was exactly the way he wanted it to be. Then he ran over and hugged me, thanked me for making it for him, and lifted his hand to his mouth as if to tell me a secret. I bent over to let him whisper in my ear.

"I love you!" he said, and then ran off to tell his friends about what he'd just seen.

After he left the room I sat there a while, thinking about what I'd just experienced. In those few minutes I was taught a lesson that can take a lifetime to learn. How many times had the Lord chosen to let things in my life turn out differently than I had hoped or imagined? How many times had my dreams seemed to turn out a little lopsided, distorted, with pieces missing? How many times had I questioned God and not fully accepted or appreciated what He had done for me?

Oh, that I can learn to see life through the eyes of a child—full of faith, hope,

love, and positivity, instead of seeing the imperfections. Oh, that I can learn to see the *good* and the wonder of it all. I stayed in that magic moment as long as I could. Drinking in the scene of that misshapen cake before me and the fresh memory of Tristan's sweet reaction, I asked the Lord to forgive me for my recent negative outlook on life and to help me see things the way my son had seen that cake.

Then a funny thing happened. As I stared at the cake, it took on a cartoon quality and I actually began to *like* it!! Best and most important, Tristan liked it. It was *his* birthday, after all. •



OH, THAT I CAN LEARN

see

TO SEE THE GOOD AND

THE WONDER OF IT ALL

wonder

go slow

YOU'LL GET THERE QUICKER

“IN QUIETNESS AND CONFIDENCE shall be your strength” (Isaiah 30:15). There is nothing in the Bible promoting hurry. The only verse I know that seems to advocate rushing is, “The king’s business required haste” (1 Samuel 21:8). But for that one Scripture, I think there must be a hundred that tell us to go slow, or words to that effect—even to take it easy!

Jesus said, “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light” (Matthew 11:28–30). When you get under too much pressure and too much tension, too heavy a burden and too hard a yoke, it’s not God’s fault. It’s somebody else’s fault, or your own.

Maybe that’s why God created donkeys—as an object lesson. They are plodders. They are very slow, but they have more endurance and can carry heavier loads than horses. They are the workhorses of the backwoods. They can negotiate trails that horses would kill themselves on, carrying loads for miles that a horse couldn’t—especially not a racehorse.



FEEDING READING

RESTING IN THE LORD

The Lord promises His people spiritual rest.

Exodus 33:14
1 Kings 8:56a
Hebrews 4:9

Resting in the Lord brings complete rest—rest of body, peace of mind, contentment of heart, and spiritual well-being.

Psalm 23:2–3a
Psalm 55:18a
Psalm 116:7
Isaiah 28:12a

There is one condition for receiving the rest the Lord promises: “Come to Me!”

Matthew 11:28–30
Hebrews 4:11a

We cannot do the Master’s work without the Master’s power.

2 Chronicles 20:12b
Psalm 20:7
Psalm 84:5a
Psalm 127:1a
2 Corinthians 3:4–5
Isaiah 40:29,31

To get the Master’s power, we must spend time with the Master.

2 Corinthians 4:16

Psalm 105:4
Psalm 138:3
Isaiah 30:15a
Isaiah 41:1a

Resting in the Lord means giving our cares and concerns to Him and letting Him carry them.

Psalm 55:22
1 Peter 5:7
Hebrews 4:10

Resting in the Lord means taking time to meditate on the Lord and His wonders.

Genesis 24:63a
Job 37:14b
Psalm 104:34
Psalm 143:5

Resting in the Lord means humbling ourselves before Him.

Psalm 46:10
Isaiah 57:15
Micah 6:8

Take time to be holy—wholly His.

Luke 10:38–42
Psalm 27:4
Psalm 84:10a
Proverbs 8:17
John 14:21b
John 16:27a
James 4:8a

Racehorses can sprint for a few rounds around the track, and that’s it! They’re extremely high-strung, nervous, and are just not workhorses. They’re not plodders, and they’re not load carriers. But pack mules and donkeys are—and they’re as stubborn as they come! You cannot rush them. You have to do it slowly, in their time. They just plod along, but they do it and they get there. It’s like the old story of the tortoise and the hare: The tortoise was slow, but he got there.

You may choose intensity and speed; I’ll take the low road and the slow road. You can take the high road and get there first if you want to—if you get there at all—but I’m going to take the low road and the slow road, and I’m determined to get there in one piece, no matter how long it takes.

I can’t count the times I’ve told taxi drivers, “Go slow and you’ll live longer. Live fast and you’ll die quicker.” That certainly is true. Doctors and health experts have said that pressure and tension are killing people, and that many of today’s illnesses are from pressure and tension. Pressure and speed are killing people through heart trouble, nervous trouble, and high blood pressure.

Lord help us to go slow! We shouldn’t waste time, but we need to trust the Lord instead of being rushed and impatient. Patience indicates slowness, plodding along, doing our work persistently and not wasting time, but also not getting fretful and worried and all worked up about it. Impatience is marked by speed, hurry, rush, haste, push, pressure, tension! Patience shows faith. Impatience shows lack of faith. Impatience shows that we don’t think the job is going to get done unless we hurry and push it and rush it.

But if we’ve got faith that Jesus is going to help us take care of it somehow, we can afford to be patient and go slow and do it right. •

The Battle of Armageddon



WHERE IT FITS IN ENDTIME EVENTS

ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE, the struggle between the forces of good and evil will climax in a cataclysmic battle known as Armageddon. Some scholars speculate that the Battle of Armageddon will involve nuclear weapons.

The word “Armageddon” comes from the Hebrew *har megiddôn*, “hill (or height) of Megiddo,” a reference to a site in northern Israel, east of Haifa. This mount overlooks the Valley of Jezreel and the Plain of Esdraelon.

Events leading up to the Battle of Armageddon will involve an empire headed by a powerful Devil-possessed dictator known as the Antichrist, who will arise and take over much of the world (Daniel

8:23–25; 11:21–24). After the first three and a half years of the Antichrist’s seven-year reign, he will declare himself God and demand that the whole world worship him (2 Thessalonians 2:3–4). The Antichrist’s chief minister, referred to in the Bible’s book of Revelation as the “False Prophet,” will erect an image of the Antichrist, an image referred to as the “abomination of desolation,” which will “both speak and cause as many as would not worship the

image of the beast to be killed” (Revelation 13:15). The False Prophet will also enforce the “mark of the Beast” economic system, under which no one will be able to buy or sell unless they receive a personalized mark in their forehead or right hand (Revelation 13:16–17).

This will bring on three and a half years of “great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be” (Matthew

24:15–21). Nevertheless, some nations will rebel and war against the Antichrist government, refusing to bow down to its satanic leader or receive his mark (Daniel 11:40–44).

Immediately after this last three and a half years, Jesus Christ will return “in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory” (Matthew 24:29–31) to rescue and resurrect all of those who love Him! His people will then rise from the earth in powerful, immortal resurrection bodies and join Jesus in Heaven for a great victory celebration, the “marriage supper of the Lamb” (1 Corinthians 15:51–52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17; Revelation 19:7–9).

Meanwhile, the wicked forces of the Antichrist will suffer hell on earth as God pours out His judgments on those who cruelly persecuted His people and brought such destruction to others (Revelation 16:1–11). But even after suffering God’s judgments, the wicked of the world will refuse to repent or turn to God, but rather curse Him all the more (Revelation 16:8–11).

The armies of the Antichrist will gather in the Valley of Jezreel, around the height of Megiddo,

Armageddon, to war against the armies of the nations that oppose him (Revelation 16:12–16). The course of the battle will run from Megiddo to the very gates of Jerusalem (Joel 3:10–14; Zechariah 14:1–5).

At this time the Lord and all His resurrected saints from all the ages will come flying down on powerful heavenly white horses to destroy the Antichrist forces and rescue the opposing armies (Revelation 19:11–21; Zechariah 14:1–5; Ezekiel 39:17–22). So horrible will be the carnage that it will take seven months to bury the dead in Israel alone, and seven years to remove all the wreckage of the battle (Ezekiel 39:9–16).

The Antichrist and the False Prophet will be captured and taken from the Battle of Armageddon and tossed directly into the lake of fire—Hell (Revelation 19:20; Daniel 7:11). Satan, who possessed the Antichrist, will be imprisoned in the “bottomless pit” for 1,000 years (Revelation 20:1–3).

The Lord and His resurrected saints, His saved people of all ages, will then work together with those on earth who survived the Battle of Armageddon to rebuild

a new and better world, setting up the kingdom of God on earth (Daniel 7:18,27; Revelation 2:26; 20:4,6). Only then, under the supreme rule and reign of Christ, will all wars finally cease and the world at last be governed fairly and well with true justice, liberty, peace, plenty, and happiness for all. Jesus “shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore” (Isaiah 2:4). Complete disarmament at last!

This period will last for 1,000 years and is therefore known as the Millennium. The curse that came upon the earth when man fell into sin will be removed, and the earth will be restored to its original Garden of Eden state. “The lion will lie down with the lamb and the leopard with the baby goat, and a little child shall lead them” (Isaiah 11:6–7).

Are you ready for these coming events? If not, you can get ready now by receiving Jesus into your heart and studying His Word. •

The Lord and all His resurrected saints from all the ages will come flying down on powerful heavenly white horses.



ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

Stress Reducers for Christians



Q: I'm under pressure at work and pressure at home, pressure to succeed, pressure to provide for my family, and pressure to be a good parent and spouse—pressure from every side. So often I just don't know how to cope! What can I do?

A: Stress is becoming an almost inescapable part of modern life—*almost*, because there are things one can do to avoid getting under undue stress or living in a state of constant stress. While some of the following tips apply to everyone—getting sufficient exercise or eating the right kinds of foods, for example—others on this list can give Christians a special edge because they bring Jesus into the equation in a very real and personal way.

Jesus is the Christian's counselor, coach, business manager, intercessor, executive secretary, personal trainer, confidant, and best friend. In short, He is everything the Christian needs to contend with the stress that has become part of modern living and to come through a winner!



Tips for Stress Reduction

Pray. Make quiet time with Jesus a daily habit.

Go to bed on time; get enough sleep.

Get up on time so you can start the day unrushed.

Say no to projects that won't fit into your time schedule, or that will compromise your mental health.

Delegate tasks to others who are capable.

Simplify and declutter your life.

Allow extra time to do things and to get to places.

Pace yourself. Spread out big changes and difficult projects over time, when possible; don't lump the hard things all together.

Take one day at a time.

Concentrate on things you have direct control over—yourself and your habits—rather than on things that you have little or no control over.



Get organized so everything has its place.

Separate worries from concerns. If a situation is a valid concern, find out what God would have you do about it. If you're worried about something that you can't or shouldn't do anything about, then put it in His hands.

Live within your budget; don't buy things on credit if you don't have to.

Have backups—an extra car key in your wallet; an extra house key buried in the garden; extra postage stamps; extra batteries for your flashlight, cell phone, etc.; back up your computer files.

Carry God's Word with you to read while waiting or during spare moments.

Take your work seriously, but yourself not at all.

Laugh.

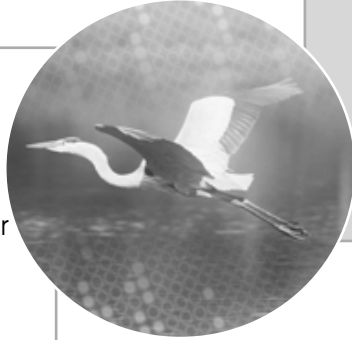
Use the time while driving or riding in your car to listen to Bible-based cassettes, CDs, or MP3s that can help improve your quality of life.

Keep a folder of favorite Scriptures or inspirational readings on hand.

Slow down.

Remember that the shortest bridge between despair and hope is often a hearty "Thank You, Jesus!"

Don't take on new work until you have taken care of timely matters that are still pending.



WHERE TROUBLES CAN'T TOUCH YOU

Submariners tell us that no storms ever reach very deep into the ocean. The water is perfectly calm a hundred feet down, no matter how high the breakers may rise on the surface. There is quiet in the depths that no surface storms can disturb. This is possible, too, in human lives; there can be serenity and peace within, undisturbed by the storms of the world. Jesus is our peace (Ephesians 2:14).

Having problems? Talk to God on the spot. Try to nip small problems in the bud. Don't wait until it's time to go to bed to try and pray.

Remind yourself that you are not the general manager of the universe.

Get enough exercise.

Every night before bed, think of at least one thing you're grateful for that came out of your day.

Develop a forgiving attitude. (Most people are doing the best they can.)

Be kind to unkind people. (They probably need it the most.)

Eat right.

Thank God for what's coming, because He won't send you anything that you and He can't handle together.

If you haven't yet met the Prince of Peace, Jesus, or received His forgiveness and gift of eternal life, you can right now by praying the following:

Thank You, Jesus, for paying the price for my mistakes and wrongs, so I can be forgiven. I ask You now, dear Jesus, to please come into my heart, forgive me, and give me Your gift of eternal life. Amen.

Taking back **CONTROL**



There's so much that you need to do each day, so much that you want to do, and so much that others expect of you. You feel pulled in all directions. Pressure. Tension. Anxiety. Will it ever stop?

It won't stop on its own, but you can break the cycle. You don't have to remain entangled in the unending struggle to do more and have more. Life doesn't have to be a daily crisis. You don't have to be the prisoner of unrealistic expectations. Let Me help you regain control of your life.

The root of the problem is simple: You try to do too much, more than is humanly possible, and you put your mind, body, and spirit under pressure they were never meant to handle. It's time to reassess. Determine what things mean the most to you—your primary long-term goals and responsibilities—and what other things are essential to achieve those things. Channel your energies into those things, and let go of the rest. Once you've done this, the pressures that once seemed unbearable will start to dissipate.

Do you want a new lease on life? You can have one, but you have to be willing to let go of the pressures that drive you now. It's up to you.