

## ***NOW CONCERNING SPIRITUAL THINGS***

an historical account of one man's walk with God

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Boldly declaring the **new things** of Isaiah 42:9 and the **greater things** of John 14:12 **in this generation**

### **THE ANTIDOTE FOR *STRESS***

Today in the print or electronic news media or from physicians, psychiatrists, psychologists or nutritionists, you may read, see or hear of ways to deal with stress. "Stressed out" is a relatively new term in my lifetime. I was recently listening to a radio talk show and heard a woman say she runs to get rid of stress.

If you want to get an eye full on the subject of stress, pull up "stress management techniques" on the Web. There is not enough time in the day – any day – to explore all the ways through which one may seek relief from stress. Testimonials abound, emphasizing one method or another.

Among the testimonials, for example, one may hear of (1) Ergotropic timing wherein you listen to a recording telling you how to regulate your breathing, (2) stress management techniques indicating that stress is inevitable so one must learn to manage it, (3) an increase in serotonin level to decrease stress with pills at a discount and (4) time management and personal goal setting for stress management. These are only a few ways suggested to deal with stress.

So how do we deal with stress? What is the cause and the solution? Why is stress a major problem in the lives of many people today? Let's see if we can find an answer.

A practicing Physician<sup>1</sup> with whom I am personally acquainted recently said to me, "Peace is the absence of stress." That means stress is the absence of peace. **Peace, therefore, is the antidote for stress.** This Physician, the Lord Jesus, makes house calls and His fees are exacting but reasonable. His results are guaranteed when His prescription is followed. Here are some of the things He said about *peace*:

"Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword."<sup>2</sup> A surface reading of this scripture indicates that I have been "shot out of the tub" to start with. However, let's look at what He said. What the

Lord is saying *in these words is*: "The reason I came to earth was to destroy the works of the devil."<sup>3</sup> That is a declaration of war, not peace. That war started with Adam's sin in the garden of Eden, instigated by Satan, the archenemy of the Lord and man. That war is still being waged with spiritual weapons, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God wielded as scripture spoken through the mouth of believers.<sup>4</sup>

Jesus forcibly took from Satan his authority over the earth at the cross.<sup>5</sup> Our enemy, therefore, has no authority or power except what we give him inadvertently or otherwise. Here are other words from Jesus on the subject of peace:

"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."<sup>6</sup> Notice that *we may be of good cheer because He has overcome the world*. That means through His death, burial and resurrection, He overcame **the economy of this world** that is driven and possessed by self accomplishments, the stronghold of the enemy. Satan and his emissaries **point to self**<sup>7</sup> – what I (self) can do – what I (self) may achieve which may feed our pride or vanity – what I (self) may accumulate – what I (self) may give.

The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life are the three temptations Satan used successfully with Adam and used unsuccessfully with Jesus.<sup>8</sup> Each of these temptations is descriptive of self indulgence. These three temptations collectively **are descriptive of self indulgence to the utmost**, Satan's way (weapons) of temptation (destruction) prevalent in the economy of this world.

Every gift glorifies the giver. Anything – everything – accumulated or possessed by self that

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<sup>3</sup>These are paraphrased words from 1 John 3:8 (b).

<sup>4</sup>See Mark 16:17; Luke 10:19.

<sup>5</sup>God gave to Adam dominion over the earth to subdue it. That authority was surrendered to Satan when Adam sinned.

<sup>6</sup>John 16:33.

<sup>7</sup>The Holy Spirit points to the Lord. This is a good way to measure one's thought processes. Whom do they exalt? The Lord or self?

<sup>8</sup>See Genesis 3:1-6 (Adam); Luke 4:1-13 (Jesus).

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<sup>1</sup>The Physician to whom I refer is Jesus of Nazareth, the Great Physician who gave His life on a cross almost two thousand years ago to set the world and believers free from the stench of sin and death.

<sup>2</sup>Matthew 10:34.

is given to any cause, worthy or unworthy, glorifies the giver.

Here is the Lord's prescription for *overcoming the world*: "If any man will come after Me, let him **deny himself**, take up his cross **daily** and follow Me."<sup>9</sup> One morning the Lord spoke to me and said, "Time spent with Me is denial of self." In today's world of "hurry," no one has time to spend with the Lord. You must take time or make time for Him or you will not have it, which leads me to the first part of the scripture:

"These things I have spoken to you that **in Me** you may have peace." There is no other way to attain peace since all of the blessings of the Godhead (Father, Son, Spirit) are in Christ.<sup>10</sup> In view of that statement, I would like to share with you how I found God's prescription for peace. If it will work for me, it will work for you.

After Adam's sin, he and Eve heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in **the cool of the day**. Then the Lord called to Adam (not Adam and Eve) and said to him, "Where are you?"<sup>11</sup> Adam then answered the Lord God. That is not monologue, **it is dialogue**. If the Lord God had a two-way conversation with sinful Adam, you may likewise engage in dialogue with Him since He is no respecter of persons!<sup>12</sup> Learning to hear His voice continually will **change you life forever!** Notice that the dialogue between God and sinful Adam occurred in the cool of the day which I believe was *in the early morning*.

Now listen to the writers of the Psalms who sought the Lord *in the morning*.

"My voice You shall hear in the morning, O LORD; *in the morning* I will direct it to You, and I will look up."<sup>13</sup>

"For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for life; weeping may endure for a night, but *joy comes in the morning*."<sup>14</sup>

"Cause me to hear Your loving kindness *in the morning*, for in You do I trust; cause me to know the way in which I should walk, for I lift up my soul to You."<sup>15</sup>

*"I will rise before the dawning of the morning*

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<sup>9</sup>Luke 9:23.

<sup>10</sup>Colossians 1:9.

<sup>11</sup>See Genesis 3:8-10.

<sup>12</sup>See Acts 10:34.

<sup>13</sup>Psalms 5:3.

<sup>14</sup>Psalms 30:5.

<sup>15</sup>Psalms 143:8.

and cry for help; I hope in Your word."<sup>16</sup>

Notice that each of these Psalm writers had learned the importance of putting the Lord first in their day. There must be a specific reason for that priority in their lives.

During the many years in the wilderness, the Israelites had to gather their manna *in the morning* or the sun would spoil it.<sup>17</sup>

Spending time alone with God in the early morning is also a way to offer to Him the first fruits of the day for an abundant harvest.<sup>18</sup>

I have found the same thing to be true in my life. Unless I spend time with the Lord first thing in the morning, the sun may spoil my (spiritual) manna. Here is the way it works for me and the way it may work for you to start your day at peace, **the antidote for stress**, as the Lord said to me.

Webster's Dictionary defines the word *antidote* as, "A remedy to counteract the effect of *poison*. Whatever tends to counteract *evil* that something else produces." God does not cause stress. Stress will *poison* us. Stress is *evil* produced by living in and being controlled by the economy of the enemy, the god of this world.<sup>19</sup> Do believers have stress in their lives. Yes! Do believers get stressed out? Yes! Does stress cause physical, emotional and spiritual problems? Yes! Is there a remedy for stress? Yes! What is it? **The peace of God which passes understanding that is a matter of spiritual growth.** Let me suggest how you may begin.

Get your life lined up with God **as you understand it.**<sup>20</sup> If you give Him dregs, that's what you will get. Walk before Him in obedience as I have written in my letters for many years. Then at the beginning of your day, **each day**, put God first in your life. You must put Him first in your life if you expect Him to put you first in His life.

Spend time alone with Him, preferably in the early morning. In that quiet time with Him, be sure all your known sins are confessed to Him and that you are walking in forgiveness with your God, your neighbor and yourself.<sup>21</sup> That's everyone on

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<sup>16</sup>Psalms 119:147.

<sup>17</sup>See Exodus 16:21.

<sup>18</sup>See Exodus 23:14-17; Numbers 12:15.

<sup>19</sup>See 2 Corinthians 4:4.

<sup>20</sup>God will not hold you responsible for something you do not know.

<sup>21</sup>Unconfessed sin and unforgiveness are obstacles on the path to Jesus. The Lord once said to me, "Obedience removes obstacles on the path to Jesus."

the face of the earth, whether dead or alive. Death of someone does not erase your debt of forgiveness to that one. Forgiveness **sets you free** while the one you forgive must give an account for himself to the Lord Himself.

Then in your quiet time with God, take time to read the scripture. Talk to Him about everything on your mind. Ask Him for help on everything you don't know how to handle and ask for His guidance and His blessings on everything else. When you finish, **if you have done your part**, your mind will be clear and uncluttered, and you will be **at peace** with everyone on the face of the earth. And remember, **peace is the antidote for stress**.

If you start your day this way, you will be able to handle anything that occurs with a clear, uncluttered mind. If you start your day burdened with the cares of life without clearing your mind in time spent with the Lord, **stress may likely be the result**. I ran a corporate entity in this town for twenty-five years as president with this formula. It works!<sup>22</sup>

The pathway through which I have come to get to this point includes salvation (through Christ Jesus), rebirth, Holy Spirit baptism and learning to hear the voice of the Lord continually. Here are two additional things that I have found helpful, both of which the Lord called to my attention:

(1) End your prayers with a light heart, regardless of how serious the problem may be. That is similar but not identical to a "merry heart" mentioned in Proverbs three times.<sup>23</sup> When you end your prayers with a light heart, that means you trust God. If you end your prayers with a heavy heart, that means you don't trust Him and take your burdens with you, instead of giving them to Him, and you tie His hands.

(2) When you finish your prayers, release them to the Lord "to do the work." The blessing of this practice is that it (a) allows the Lord to correct any misapplication of His word used in your prayer and (b) allows Him to go beyond what you prayed to bring about something you overlooked or had no knowledge of. You do this at the conclusion of

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<sup>22</sup>When I became president, I determined that the only way I could handle my responsibilities at home, at church and at my job was to get up an hour earlier than the rest of my family and spend that quiet time with the Lord. Yes, it deprived me (self) of sleep, but it enabled me to start my day, each day, at peace with everyone on planet earth – **without stress** and you can't buy that with money – any amount of money!

<sup>23</sup>See Proverbs 15:13, 15; 17:22.

your prayer by simply saying, "Lord, I release to you everything and everyone about which and over whom I have prayed, to do the work." In learning to hear His voice continually, I have grown and been blessed beyond anything I previously thought attainable. **You have the same growth ability – the same potential within you**. That is Good News, otherwise known as the Gospel. Hearing His voice continually is something new for the latter part of this rapture generation and opens the door to participate in the great harvest of souls prior to the rapture.

The apostle Paul sums up the way to stay free of stress with these words, "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."<sup>24</sup>

#### OVERHEARD WHILE LISTENING ON THE DATES AS LISTED

##### January 10, 2008

Self is man's enemy. Self is the robber. Self is the thief who steals your peace – your joy. And self is satisfied when indulged; is deprived when denied.

Man has only one enemy: Satan. But he is so sly, his every effort, his every activity is to pacify, to satisfy or indulge self so as to make one self-sufficient. **The self-made man, if he goes no farther, is oblivious to the fact that in this world<sup>25</sup> he may be a success, but in the kingdom of God he is a total failure.**

The thief comes to steal, kill and destroy<sup>26</sup> and he is so sly that each of his temptations point to or exalt self. All of Satan's temptations may be classified as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye or the pride of life. Each one individually and the three collectively involve self-indulgence.

A reason one may be uncomfortable in a crowd, for example, is that he may be self-centered and/or self-conscious. When self is denied (dead), that same person may look forward to the crowd as an opportunity to share something interesting or exciting about a personal Acquaintance. When one is dead to self, he becomes "others centered" instead of "self-centered." That desire to share does not necessarily come as the result of undergraduate or graduate degrees, or from reading

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<sup>24</sup>Philippians 4:6, 7.

<sup>25</sup>Satan is the god of this world. See 2 Corinthians 4:4.

<sup>26</sup>See John 10:10.

the bible or memorizing scripture verses, although each of these may bring blessings. When they are an accessory to the Fact (a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus), they may be of great value.

If sinful Adam (who committed suicide and homicide against the whole human race with one sin) could have dialogue with the Lord God, so can you.

Jesus told two people, “Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more,”<sup>27</sup> and “Sin no more lest a worse thing come upon you.”<sup>28</sup> The first statement was to a woman taken in (caught in the act of) adultery. The second statement was to a man Jesus healed who had an infirmity for thirty-eight years *because of sin*. The wages of (the payment for) sin is death. Every time you sin, that sin is a **down payment on death**. Satan therefore, tempts you to sin. That’s the way he comes to steal, kill and destroy you. **He tempts you to sin so you can destroy yourself**, which is suicide. That’s what he successfully tempted Adam to do and that’s what sin causes you to do. The image you see in the mirror is your enemy.

Contrary to that which is accepted, taught and practiced by many believers, you do not have to sin. Sin is not inevitable; it is a choice. To understand that, however, may require that you know God’s definition of sin and that you have matured in your relationship – that personal intimate relationship with the Lord. Jesus died that you might have that relationship with Him.

Continually hearing the voice of God may be an antidote for man’s problems.

There can come a day in your life when your greatest desire is – the reason you want to live is – to glorify Him. In my experience that began when I became acquainted with Him personally, and it was accentuated when I learned to hear His voice continually. That desire continues to grow now as the days go by.

Nothing else suffices like time set aside in the cool of the day to be with Him.

#### November 26, 2003

My son, as you ask for personal blessings, they will be given, as they enhance the ministries I have given to you. Ask boldly for blessings to enhance the call on your life. These are the ones I freely give, for freely you will receive, then freely you must give – that is, give out to others that which I have given you. This is called My flow-

through law. It has always been active. As you ask, I respond and give to you that which will bless and edify you. Then as you comprehend what I have given you and its usefulness, you are equipped to give it away. That is the rule. **It must first govern your own life before you can give it away to bless and govern the lives of others.** That is the flow-through principle of My giving. I desire to give, more than My people desire to receive, but I must stand by until they ask and then respond. So you see, in My giving, there is a testing period prior to the flow-through reality. It must first be received by you to govern you – only then may it be given away to bless others. In all cases, remember to glorify Me in the giving out even as My servant (*name withheld*) does by saying often, “Give Him praise, I give You praise.” As this praise comes forth from your lips **it is a cleansing agent designed to keep the vessel pure. It is pure and so, purifies as it comes forth from your lips.** And this method of purification must be constantly in and practiced by My servants in order to continue to grow into the full stature and wisdom of the Lord Jesus.

My son, as I revealed to you, the greater things that you will do<sup>29</sup> – things greater than I did – **is the Rapture**. I had to die. *You do not have to die*. But My death is the act necessary to allow you to do even greater things than I did. So you see, the principle of My giving was to provide you with greater things than I was able to do for Myself. “He saved others; Himself He cannot save,”<sup>30</sup> was a true statement. I knew I could not save Myself, but knowingly I gave My life so that those raptured would not have to give theirs. There is much to gain and be learned from the meritorious principle of giving of one’s self. The vicarious giving of My life was the one act in human history that set man free. Use this to teach, bless, heal, deliver and set the captives free, says the Lord. My son there is much in these words. Ponder them. Deep calls unto deep – and I will give you more. Remember to give Me the glory so I can give more to you.

I would not have said to you the “greater things” revelation unless the Rapture was imminent. You may share this with others as you choose. These are three things, yea, even four, concerning My soon return, that I have shared with you, and others will come, says the Lord.

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<sup>27</sup>See John 8:11.

<sup>28</sup>See John 5:14.

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<sup>29</sup>See John 14:12.

<sup>30</sup>See Matthew 27:42, 43; Mark 15:31, 32; Luke 23:35, 36.