

STRESS OUT: PART 5 **Take This Job and Love it!**

I am so glad you are with us! How many of you are glad to be in church today? Anybody anybody? God bless you guys. Welcome to week number 5 and the conclusion of our series called Stress Out! Before we get into the bulk of that message this morning, I want to share something with you out of **Mark 8:34-36 NIV**,

“Then he **called** the **crowd** to him along with his **disciples** and said:”

(Jesus understood that those who were following Him that day, there were different people at different stages in their journey. He wasn't just surrounded by a bunch of disciples who were sold out followers, He had people who were just checking things out and kicking the tires, so to speak. He knew this as He spoke to them. He called out to the crowd and His disciples to hear His message)

“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross **and follow me.**”

*(In other words, each of you must take your next steps. You need to come from where you are to the full potential I have for your life. And all of us need to do that, right? Myself included. None of us have taken all the steps God has for us. We're still learning and growing. **He says...**)*

“For whoever wants to save their life will lose it,”

(You have to exchange some of the things you're doing with your life - those things that are not the best version of you - for what Jesus has 4u).

“but whoever **loses their life for me** and for the gospel **will save it.**”

(And then He gives this beautiful closing thought that I want to throw out to you today...)

“What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet **forfeit their soul?**”

(So, you got that great job, great marriage, great house you always wanted, the great cars and the dream vacations **but** have you dealt with your soul issues? The real you - the part that will live forever?)

Basically, there are 4 different groups of people in this room right now. Some of you are what we would call the...

1. Crowd Come and **See**.

You may not be a part of us yet, you're just checking us out. And that's okay. Matter of fact, what we say to you is **Come and See!** Take your time. Enjoy yourself. We want you to know that we aren't expecting anything from you. You don't need to give; you don't need to serve or worship the way we do – you're free! We just want this place to be a comfortable place for everyone. Whether you're struggling with faith or you're an Agnostic or an Atheist or don't know what you think, You Are Very Welcome Here. **You don't have to believe to belong.** You're free to **Come & see. We're just glad you're here!**

For you folks who call this home, who have people in your life who haven't connected with God yet or who just aren't sure where they are at with regards to faith, all you have to say is – **Come and See! Check us out.**

But there is a 2nd stage to that journey. A second group we would call the...

2. Congregation Come and **Join Us**.

These are the members. These are the ones who have accepted the invitation to **Come and Join Us**. And by the way, coming and joining us isn't the 1st thing you join, 1st you join Jesus - long before you join a church. So, before you become a part of our family, you need to become a part of God's family.

All through scripture people who come into relationship with God are called sons and daughters of God, we come part of **a spiritual family**. So, I encourage you to take that step. And by the way, you don't have to join this particular local expression of the family – called a church. There are many of them. There are 8-10 really good churches in this area that I would consider going to if I were looking for a church. So when you become a part of the family of God I want to encourage you to become a part of a local expression of God's family - church.

Next Steps is the vehicle we use to help get you connected hear at Open Door. It explains who we are, what we are passionate about, and how you fit. If you haven't done that already, I invite you to do so. Week one is today downstairs in the room to the left of the welcome center.

That said, let me personally invite you to be a part of this family, Come and Join Us! I would love to have you.

Then there is another stage in the journey of spiritual growth. It is the...

3. Committed Come and **Grow**.

It is a group of folks who have not only **come and seen** and **come and joined** us, it's a group of people who have **come to grow**.

Those of us who are in this group are not just believers, we're becomers! We are becoming more like Jesus. And that is a process. Belief is a decision that can happen in a moment but then there is this long process over our whole lives where we are growing. **The Biblical word for that is discipleship.**

Where does discipleship happen? For a lot of us older folks it happened in Sunday school classes. There was the big church event but there were smaller groups meeting too. Today we still do this but it doesn't just happen on Sunday. They happen all through the week, we call them **small groups**.

We have over 20 of them and you get to pick which one you want to be in. You can get out of debt with **FPU**, you can work on your marriage through **Alpha**, you can be with **just ladies** or **just men**, you can be with **young people**, you can go **jogging or fishing** or study a book or **a book** of the bible.

There are all kinds of different expressions where growth occurs. We say to you, **Come and Grow**, get in a small group! There is an online directory where you can find these at **www.myccod.com/groups**.

Finally, the last group that Jesus called to Himself. He had the **crowd** and the many **disciples** all together to whom He directed His journey messages. The last group though was the...

4. Core Come and **Serve**.

Don't just sit in the stands, get in the game! Don't just attend your church, participate in your church. **Worship one, Serve One**. Come be a part of our serve team. We have more than 75 people on that team who serve in different aspects of ministry here.

You say, well it sounds like you have it all covered. Well, we're doing okay, but we would **do a whole lot better with you on the team!!** And really with the fall season and the new people who come during the holidays, there's a place for you! I don't know if you know that or believe that but there is **a place here for you and you can be a participant in your church!**

Attending is wonderful. It is great to have you here in the stands, but it is even better when you Come and Serve, Come and Serve!

One other thing before I get to the sermon today. There is another step that Jesus asks us to take and that is the step of **water baptism!**

Acts 2:41, *"Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day."*

Look, for any of you who have accepted the message of Jesus, follow that up with baptism.

That day, that same day, those who accepted were baptized. It was a vibrant practice of the early church. I'm looking forward to the day that we can get a baptismal installed here so we can do baptisms as soon as possible after people accept Jesus and place their faith in Him.

It is a post belief situation not pre. That is why we don't baptize children here, we baptize believers. Child baptisms are more like dedications. So here, we dedicate our children and guide them into an understanding of the message so when they accept, we can baptize them. (27 in NT, all were post decision).

You make a private decision to accept Jesus but a you follow that up with a public profession. That is why we have this **TSHIRT**.

I have decided to follow the **example** Jesus set (didn't need it but did it).
I have decided to demonstrate my **changed life**. Why water? Dirty/clean.
I have decided to declare my commitment **publicly**.

Some people think that, "***well my faith is private!***" Well that's a nice thought but it just isn't what you find in the Bible. The Bible says the opposite is true,

Matthew 10:32-33 NIV, "Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven." **JESUS IS TALKING**. "But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven." **This in front of people thing was really important to Jesus.**

So, take out a connect card and let me know if you want to follow Jesus in baptism and we will make that happen!

Now, let's finish up our series here today that address the issues that rob us of our joy.

Joy is something that isn't about our circumstances. It happens internally regardless of the circumstances.

The greatest sources of stress are **Relational, Financial**, and today the number 1 reason is our **Jobs**. It is your 8-5 whether you work outside or inside the home. In either case, it is causing us a lot of stress! And if you feel that way, you're in good company because Solomon, one the wisest and richest of all men felt the same way.

Ecclesiastes 2:17 NIV, "So I hated life, [I hate my life] because the work that is done under the sun was grievous to me. All of it is meaningless, a chasing after the wind."

It all seems so grievous, but the truth of the matter is we all have to work. **If we don't work, we don't eat.** Even so, **job life causes a lot of stress.**

*Matter of fact, studies say that **80% of workers feel stress on the job!***

25% feel like screaming or shouting because of job stress.

10% are concerned about an individual at work they fear could become violent.

And 14% say they think they are the ones who are going to be violent!!!:)

14% [and am I'm the one who's going to be violent] **felt like striking a coworker in the past year.**

18% experienced some sort of threat or verbal intimidation in the past year. WOW!

So, what is the solution to this obvious issue. I have a single solution.

Now you saw the title today for this message. It comes from that song many of you have heard, "**Take this job and shove it.**" But this sermon is entitled, "**Take this job and love it.**" And I am going to show you how!

You can actually be in the middle of turmoil, traffic, pressure and stress and still have peace. The Bible promises it. In fact, **Jesus said in John 16:33,**

*“In this world you will have trouble. **But take heart**, I have overcome the world.”*

So, Jesus never promised that it would go away. Now I know what you really want. You want me to give you a verse on how to get rid of **your boss**. Or *how can I work without having **Difficult Debbie** nagging me all the time?*

There are no promises where God says He will just take it all that away. *Some people treat God like He is a celestial genie in a bottle and **rub a dub dub, give Debbie the snub**. No, No!*

The promises in scripture are about how to have peace in the midst of pain.

So, what I'm going to share with you is **THE solution**. It is a powerful one. It's found in a very important verse that is surrounded by a unique context.

Colossians 3:1-2 NIV, “Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, (*you are a Christian who has a new life here on earth through Christ*) set your **hearts on things above**, [*you may be having a difficult day or week here on planet Earth – so if you want to get a positive jump on the day or week ahead set your hearts on things above*] where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your **minds on things above**, not on earthly things.”

The way to get work stress down, 100% guarantee – try it, is to start your day with your **heart and mind set** on the right thing before you start your day.

It is really critical. Now what you need to hear is that once you set them for that day, it is a solution that will only last for a day!

Something happens in the middle of the night where what we have set isn't set no more. **So, what do we have to do?** We have to **put on a fresh attitude and perspective daily**.

The only solution, at the end of the day, is a matter of your perspective.

Our Colossians text continues a little further on by saying...

Colossians 3:12-14 NIV, “Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, **clothe yourselves** with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.”

So, tomorrow morning you have to **get up, take a shower and get dressed**. But don't just do it physically, do it emotionally and *spiritually*.

Your soul has to get dressed. *You want to handle work stress, dress yourself correctly. With what? With compassion.* You have to put this on. You may get up not feeling any compassion. You got to **put it on!** And the same goes for **kindness, humility gentleness and patience**. And you are going to need a lot of that on your drive into work – I know I do. **Put on that patience!**

Why? Because you are going to need to...

“Bear with each other [*now I can make that decision for one day but it isn't any good for tomorrow – I got to get up and dress and put that on*] and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. **Forgive as the Lord forgave you.** [*you see this is a perspective issue – you got to see things as God saw them with you*].

How do we have peace? By making your boss go away? No, no, no!

What I can tell you is that God has given us specific directions on how to lower the stress in our present circumstance. He goes on to say...

“And over all these virtues **put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.”**

And then over all that other clothing put on Love and it brings the “whole outfit together.” It's a daily attire choice. I have to put it all on.

And I don't have another solution for you. All I know is that this really works. As a Christian, you have been raised with Christ to live a new spiritually dynamic life – while you still live here on Earth in the flesh. **And to do that you have to set your mind and heart on a new perspective.**

And I encourage you to do this tomorrow. **Wake up, clean up and dress up!**

Here are **three little principles** to help you reduce the stress at work.

1. Discover my real purpose and make [*sure you are doing something weekly to make a difference of eternal significance in the life of someone else*] **a difference with my life.**

Let me just say that the most beneficial thing that I can say to you is that ...

The happiest people I know don't have better **husbands or wives** than you. **The happiest people I know** don't have a **better job** than you. **The happiest people I know** don't have **better finances** than you.

The happiest people I know are those who have something in their lives that is truly meaningful. They have found their calling.

You say, "*that's for preachers and missionaries!*" No, no its not! The Bible says every single one of you have a divine calling. You're made on purpose for a purpose.

The reason why? Because God just wants to get a lot of work done? **That is true** if you are living out your calling. **BUT better than that it's what God does on the inside of you.**

Secular psychologist and sociologist have confirmed this; that the happiest people are those who are doing something with their life that makes a real difference. **You see...**

A career gives you something to live **on**.

A **calling** gives you something to live **for**.

So, when it comes to church life – living in God's kingdom, *what if you worshipped one today and served one today and saw people's lives changed and went to bed tonight saying I did something today that made a difference?*

Things aren't as bad when you know you're doing something that matters.

Now, I know it is always better if the Career and the Calling can be in the same place. *I happen to have that and I am very blessed and fortunate that my career is my calling.* It happens for some of us **but not for most of us!**

Not even for the most famous person in the New Testament, other than Jesus, **the Apostle Paul**. He had a different secular job from his calling.

He said this about his life in, **Acts 20:23-24 NLT**, "*The Holy Spirit tells me in city after city that jail and **suffering** lie ahead. [Over and over He tells me my weeks are going to be hard ones, that there are going to be stresses at every turn] **But my life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—** [none of that suffering and stress matters – what really matters is whether I'm doing what the Lord assigned me to do in the midst of my suffering]...*

It's... "*the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God.*"

He is saying, sure, go ahead and jail me, lock me up - it doesn't matter to me because I am connected to my real purpose in this life.

On Halloween Night, serve 31, we had people who are white collar professionals serving people dressed up like evil warlords, hot coffee, cocoa and cider. I mean they have jobs that **make a difference in peoples lives**. But Thursday night they took time out of their schedules to do an ordinary thing that I am sure made an **eternal difference in people's lives**.

People saw the love of a church person (a member of the body of Christ) and went away a step closer to Heaven; those Christians are nice people and maybe they are nice because they have something I need.

We need that folks! When we say to you "**get on the Serve Team, we'll do a better with you on the team.**" Realize this isn't our main motivation. **It's because you'll be better for it!**

Paul said despair is everywhere around me but not bothering me...*Why?* Because I have my eyes fixed on something that is eternal and these seen things here are temporary. That's something you really need to do. Fixate up!

2. Realize my vocation is my ministry location.

Stay at home Moms, Students, and everybody else, you can't go into your job just thinking *I'm just going to do what I got to do, or I'm going to plod along until I can get out of here, or punch the clock.*

Instead, ***what if you thought this way; that where I am is my ministry!*** I'm telling you it changes things!!

Now I told you Paul had a secular job, let me show that to you.

Acts 18:1-3 NIV, "After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. 2 There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them, 3 and because **he was a tentmaker** as they were, he stayed and **worked with them.**"

He said, "Hey your job coincides with my job, why don't we build tents together and he worked with them. This passage goes on to show how Paul

went on to minister to these people in his workplace. Now Paul was a gospel writer, he was a preacher, he was an evangelist, he was a church planter but he also had to build tents. I promise you he wasn't that excited about it because this is the only place he mentioned it.

So, while he did his 9-5 with Aquila and Priscila and ministering to them, **every Sabbath** he went to

Acts 18:4 NIV, "Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks."

In other words, wherever he found himself, he saw it as a ministry opportunity.

What would it be like tomorrow morning if you got up, got dressed, spent a little time in God's word and then headed over to Tim Horton's and got a dozen donuts and went to work and said everybody, good morning - plop!

*What if you just took responsibility for your work environment? **Bring joy into it, bring life into it! Start talking to people.** Hey how you doing? Anything I can do to make your day better? Anything I can pray for you about? **You don't have to pray for them there.** Just tell them, "Hey look, when I get home, I am going to take some time and lift you up in prayer."*

I promise you that your miserable work-related stress is going to turn into your ministry location. It isn't that hard – really! JUST...

Find a **Need** and **Fill** it.
Find a **Hurt** and **Heal** it.

Just bring ministry to people and just watch how much a miserable 9-5 can turn around because you put a little ministry into it.

Hey, I praise God for the Serve team that is greeting people, making coffee, keeping us safe and taking care of your kids and all of that. I praise God for that! **But the best ministry takes place out of these walls in the 9-5 jobs.**

We've got to take the light of Jesus and let it shine before others.

So, **IN CONCLUSION** *here is the 3rd and last principle to reduce the work-related stress.*

3. Work for **God**, not **people**.

I have to take this perspective. It is easy for me in my position to make the mistake of letting what **you** think matter more to me than what God thinks.

But in the end, I have to stand before God and answer for my life – not you! And that's the same for you.

This whole message began by looking at the book of Colossian chapter three. And so we return there as we conclude this message.

Colossians 3:23-24 NIV, “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, **as working for the Lord**, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an **inheritance from the Lord** as a reward. **It is the Lord Christ you are serving.**”

I have to stand before the Lord so I am going to find fulfillment in making an eternal difference in the lives of others. I am **going to move** as many people as I can from being just part of the **crowd today to being a disciple**.

And I am determined to help them to go from this place saying I am so glad I came here today. And that you are going to wake up tomorrow morning with a better plan that is going to make a difference in your life.

I'm going to give my best. Because I'm going to be with the Lord one day.

Take this same perspective! It will help you to take your attention off of that mean coworker or terrible boss. Because whatever you'll be doing, you'll be doing for the Lord! **“It is the Lord Christ you are serving!”**

And that perspective will reduce the stress in the workplace.

PRAYER: *Lord your Word heals encourages and strengthens. Give people courage to make some decisions today. To Accept you, to be baptized, to serve you, to change their perspective.*

If you haven't accepted Jesus as you own personal savior. Do you need salvation, do you need to get right with God? Let me help you with a prayer.

*Jesus thank you for paying for my sins, I'm so grateful, forgive me, I give you control of my life, save me, send your Holy Spirit to live inside of me to make me the person you want me to be! I believe Jesus that you are the Son of God, I believe you died, you were buried and rose again and today I put my faith in you, Thank you for loving me – I love you Jesus, Amen! **Welcome these new family members.***