Stressed Out?

- Study 1: **WHAT CAUSES STRESS?**
  - Leader’s Guide | Participant’s Guide

- Study 2: **SIGNS OF STRESS**
  - Leader’s Guide | Participant’s Guide

- Study 3: **THE STRESS OF CHANGE**
  - Leader’s Guide | Participant’s Guide

- Study 4: **BIBLICAL WAYS TO OVERCOME STRESS**
  - Leader’s Guide | Participant’s Guide
Defining the universal problem of stress.

Everyone experiences some kind of stress, and it's impossible to get rid of all stress. For some, stress can even be motivational. The word stress does not occur in the Bible, but distress, distressed, distresses, and distressing occur in the NIV 111 times. So clearly the Bible has a lot to say about this human phenomenon.

Stressed Out? What Causes Stress? Leader’s Guide

Part 1 Identify the Current Issue

Note to Leader: Before meeting, provide each person with the Participant’s Guide, included at the end of this study.

Stress as defined in Webster’s Dictionary is a “force that strains or deforms; mental or physical tension; urgency, pressure.” From the Journal of the American Medical Association: “Psychological stress occurs when an individual perceives that environmental demands tax or exceed his or her adaptive capacity.” In his book Adrenalin and Stress, Arch Hart suggests that stress is a result of anything that annoys, threatens, excites, scares, worries, hurries, angers, frustrates, challenges, or reduces self-esteem.

Discussion Starters:

[Q] Consider these quotes on stress. Explain what you think they mean:

• “It’s not stress that kills us; it is our reaction to it.”
  —Hans Selye

• “Adopting the right attitude can convert a negative stress into a positive one.”
  —Hans Selye

• “The greatest weapon against stress is our ability to choose one thought over another.”
  —William James

Prevention magazine says, “Almost nine out of ten adults have experienced serious stress. More than four out of ten adults suffer adverse health effects from stress, and some estimates suggest that 75 percent to 90 percent of all physician office visits are for stress-related complaints.”

[Q] What are some common causes of stress?

[Q] How do most people cope with stress?

[Q] What causes you stress?

Optional Activity:

On a whiteboard or poster board, write the letters PETE vertically. Tell the group that each letter represents a leading cause of stress. Ask them to guess at what those four things might be. The rest of the study will provide the answers.
Stressed Out?
What Causes Stress?

Leader’s Guide

Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching Point One: People can cause stress.

There are two kinds of people in our world: Those that energize and those that exhaust. And there are three things about people that generally create stress: personality, values, and character traits.

[Q] Read about an example of personality stress in Luke 10:38–42. What about Martha's personality caused her and those around her stress?

[Q] Read about poor values stress in Luke 16:15. Why would such values cause stress?

[Q] Read about negative character traits in Proverbs 29:10, 27. Why would these cause stress?

If there are certain people who are causing you unmanageable stress, try the “P S A” method of stress management—Purposely Stay Away from them. If you cannot avoid them, be “B V D”—Brief and Very Direct. Put these stress-producing people on your time schedule, not theirs! Don’t be surprised or stressed by the guilt they try to put on you. Don’t spend two hours when twenty minutes will do. Don’t spend twenty minutes when two minutes will do.

People stressed Jesus out, too. Mark 9:19 says, “O unbelieving generation,’ Jesus replied, ‘how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you?’” He dealt with this kind of stress by taking time away to pray and listen to his heavenly Father.

Teaching Point Two: Events can cause stress.

There are plenty of scriptural examples of events that caused stress. Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers, then rose to all the stress of helping Egypt out of a famine. Moses spent years wandering in enemy territory while in charge of thousands of rebellious people. Paul was beaten and thrown into prison countless times.

If your stress is coming from events, you can let it consume you, or accept it and let it go. Or consider the “Oreo cookie” method of dealing with stressful events. Do something you enjoy. This is the first black part of the cookie. Then do something that causes dread and stress. This is the white middle of the cookie. Then do something that you enjoy as a reward. This is the other black part of the cookie. This way you are pre-warding and rewarding yourself for getting stressful tasks done.

Also memorize John 16:33 and learn to claim God's promises there: God wants to give us peace; we are going to have trouble; and God has overcome the events that stress us.
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Change what you can to get rid of stress in your life. For example, if what you watch on TV causes stress, there is a simple stress management technique—Turn It Off! (Matthew 18:8–9).

[Q] What is the last event you think of before going to bed? What is the first event you think of when you wake up? Are these your stressors?

[Q] Jesus had horrifying events to deal with as he faced the cross. Read Mark 14:32–36. How did he deal with this stress?

Teaching Point Three: Thoughts can cause stress.

How many thoughts do you think you have in a given day? Research shows the average person has about 60,000. That is a thought every second and a quarter.

Thoughts stressed Jesus. On the cross, he had to deal with the knowledge that God had forsaken him because of our sin (Mark 15:33–34).

David had a lot of stress with Saul trying to kill him and then conquering a country and ruling a kingdom. Read Psalm 13.

[Q] How did David work through his thoughts in this Psalm?

[Q] What does this tell you about the importance of being honest about our stressful thoughts?

[Q] What does David eventually do with his negative thoughts?

Teaching Point Four: Emotions can cause stress.

Emotions can rule us and take over every other part of us. We all experience emotional stress—even Jesus. Reread Mark 14:32–34.

[Q] Give examples of how your emotions cause stress.

[Q] Does stress cause anger or does anger cause stress? Explain.

[Q] How does dissatisfaction with yourself create stress?

[Q] Read Proverbs 13:12. How does hopelessness create stress? What can we do to counteract it?

[Q] Read Proverbs 12:25. How does anxiety create stress? What’s the solution?
Stressed Out?
What Causes Stress?
Leader's Guide

Part 3 Apply Your Findings

Consider what is causing you the most stress right now. Is it stress from people, events, thoughts, or emotions?

Action Point: On your own this week, read the following verses: Hebrews 4:14–16; 7:25; Psalm 18:6; 34:8; 62:8; Isaiah 53:3, 12; Jeremiah 20:11; John 16:33. Write down what each verse tells you about God, and how this can help you deal with stress.

— Study by Charles R. Gerber, with JoHannah Reardon

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How do you know if you are stressed?

Stress may be affecting your health, even though you might not realize it. It may be to blame for that nagging headache, frequent forgetfulness, or your decreased productivity at work. Stress can affect your body, thoughts, feelings, and behavior. But when you learn to recognize common stress symptoms, you can take steps to manage them.

Scripture: Job 15:24; 33:19; Psalm 25:18; 55:17; 57:6; 69:29; 119:143; Proverbs 1:27
Stressed Out?
Signs of Stress
Leader’s Guide

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A 2006 Harris poll examined which people groups experience a lot of stress and broke down the responses by age:

- All adults: 23%
- Echo Boomers (18–29): 29%
- Gen X (30–41): 28%
- Baby Boomers (42–60): 25%
- Matures (61+): 9%

Discussion Starters:

[Q] Would these percentages be higher today? Why or why not?

[Q] How might stress in these age groups manifest itself differently?

[Q] Why do you think a certain event might be stressful for one person and not for another? Give an example.

Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching Point One: Stress affects all parts of a person.

Stress that seems endless or beyond a person’s control results in suppression of the immune system. This may show up in a simple way, such as a person getting one cold after another, or manifest more severely as a chronic disease.

There are at least five parts of a person. All people have physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual components. We see some of these in Luke 2:52, where it says that Jesus grew in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and men.

[Q] How might stress affect a person physically?

Leader’s Note: A person might experience back and neck aches, headaches, chest pain, high blood pressure, upset stomach, or sleeping problems.

1 http://seniorjournal.com/NEWS/Features/6-10-09-OlderPeople.htm
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[Q] How might stress affect a person intellectually?

**Leader’s Note:** A person might have trouble concentrating on tasks or staying focused. They might forget things that they would normally remember.

[Q] How might stress affect a person emotionally?

**Leader’s Note:** They might “cry at the drop of a hat,” or have outbursts of anger and impatience. They might be sad, worried, depressed, or anxious.

[Q] How might stress affect a person spiritually?

**Leader’s Note:** They might believe that God is angry and punishing them for events in their past. They might stop praying, reading their Bible, or going to church. They might become angry at God.

[Q] How might stress affect a person socially?

**Leader’s Note:** They might isolate themselves from healthy people and stop participating in activities they once enjoyed. Stress can create huge relationship conflicts.

**Teaching Point Two:** The Bible is full of stories of people who experienced great stress.


[Q] Read Job 15:24 and Proverbs 1:27. How can stress “overwhelm” us or be “like a king poised to attack”?

[Q] Read Psalm 25:18 and 119:143. What are two ways David dealt with his distress?

[Q] What are some other biblical examples of people who were under great stress?

- What encouragement can you find from their examples?
- How did they deal with their stress? How did it affect the areas listed in teaching point one?
Teaching Point Three: Not all the ways we choose to handle stress are appropriate or effective.

An article titled “Stress a Major Health Problem in the U.S., Warns APA”\(^2\) says,

While Americans deal with high levels of stress on a daily basis, the health consequences are most serious when that stress is managed poorly. Four in ten Americans (43 percent) say they overeat or eat unhealthy foods to manage stress, while one-third (36 percent) skipped a meal in the last month because of stress. Those who drink (39 percent) or smoke cigarettes (19 percent) were also more likely to engage in these unhealthy behaviors during periods of high stress. Significant numbers of Americans report watching TV for more than two hours a day (43 percent) and playing video games or surfing the Internet (39 percent). Healthy behaviors used to manage stress included: listening to music (54 percent); reading (52 percent); exercising or walking (50 percent); spending time with family and friends (40 percent); and praying (34 percent).

\[Q\] What are some unhealthy ways that you try to manage your stress?

\[Q\] What might be some healthy ways of dealing with stress?

**Leader’s Note:** A few ideas: adequate sleep and rest, good nutrition, exercise, recreation, good fellowship, fun and relaxing activities, spiritual disciplines, and professional counseling for more chronic problems.

**Optional Activity:**

*There are many ways to deal with life’s stresses. They won’t change the stress, but may give you the energy needed to deal with it. Break the larger group into two smaller groups. Ask each group to look up one of the following groups of passages and to report back what they’ve learned.*

**Nutritious Food and Rest:** 1 Kings 19:1–9; Psalm 4:8; 127:2

**Fellowship and Laughter:** Psalm 133; Proverbs 15:13–15; 17:22; 27:17; Romans 12:13–15; Hebrews 10:24

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\(^2\) PR Newswire; 10/24/07
Part 3 Apply Your Findings

**Action Point:** How would you rate yourself on dealing with stress? Of the following areas, which are you good at and which do you need to improve: adequate sleep and rest, good nutrition, exercise, recreation, good fellowship, fun and relaxing activities, spiritual disciplines, professional counseling for more chronic problems. What step can you take to improve one of these areas by next month? Share your answer with a friend and ask them to keep you accountable.


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How can we learn to deal with the changes that come to most of us?

There are many life-changing events that are stressful to almost everyone. A few that the majority of people experience are the death of a loved one, marriage, pregnancy, buying a house, and even Christmas. This study will look at how to deal with these inevitable changes.

Part 1 Identify the Current Issue

Note to Leader: Before meeting, provide each person with the Participant’s Guide, included at the end of this study.

If it seems tougher to deal with what life throws your way than it was in the past, you’re not the only one who thinks so. The death of a friend, getting laid off, or having a baby takes more adjustment than in the past, according to a study that compares perceptions of life changes today versus 40 years ago.

“Life just gets more demanding. Today’s life is more stressful,” says Richard Rahe of Salem, Oregon—a psychiatrist who in 1967 co-created the Life Changes Stress Test (also known as the Social Readjustment Rating Scale), which is now widely used in stress management.¹

Discussion Starters:

[Q] Do you agree that life is more stressful today than it was for your parents? Why or why not?

[Q] What events are happening in today’s society that were not happening in past generations?

[Q] Are these modern stressors self-imposed or unavoidable in our society? Explain.

[Q] What kind of changes are the hardest for you?

[Q] Consider this quote: “There are only two ways to handle tense situations: you can change them, or you can change the way you look at them. There is enlightenment to be had in changing the way you look at things.”² Do you agree? Why or why not?

There are many life changing events identified as stressful. Holmes and Rahe did research on the life-changing events that cause stress. The higher the number, the greater the stress:

- Death of a spouse - 100 points
- Divorce - 73 points
- Marriage - 50 points
- Pregnancy - 40 points
- Buying a house - 31 points
- Christmas - 12 points³

¹ “Point values add up to far more stress these days,” by Sharon Jayson, USA Today, 5/6/2008.
² Paul Wilson, The Little Book Of Calm, Plume, 1996.
The truth is that any change, even if it’s positive, can create stress. The feelings that can accompany these changes may be hopelessness, helplessness, emptiness, and lack of control.

But change can also be a positive experience. Change in life takes away boredom and gives us something to look forward to. And it moves us out of being lukewarm, which Jesus abhors (Rev. 3:16).

[Q] Read Psalm 55:19. What changes must we all make in order to fear God?

**Optional Activity:**

If you would like to give your group the assessment test that Holmes and Rahe came up with, you can find it online at [http://www.unl.edu/ECSE/960/strestst.html](http://www.unl.edu/ECSE/960/strestst.html). Print it out and let your group members take it. Then ask them to discuss their answers.

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**Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles**

**Teaching Point One: God does not change.**

Knowing that God is our unchangeable Rock in life gives us stability and peace amidst ever-changing circumstances. Read Malachi 3:6; Numbers 23:19; and 1 Samuel 15:29.

[Q] Read Hebrews 6:17–19. How is the fact that God is unchanging an anchor for your soul? Give an example, if possible.

[Q] What are some of God’s unchangeable traits that you can focus on in times of stress, to help you deal with it better?

[Q] Read Hebrews 13:8. How does this knowledge bring peace?

**Teaching Point Two: God is always in control, which gives us hope.**

Our hope in this fact is the best stress-reduction technique. Read Isaiah 46:8–13.

[Q] Read Psalm 33:4–11. According to this passage, what kind of ultimate power does God possess? What perspective does that give you on your circumstances?

[Q] It should bring us hope that God is in control. How would you define hope? Why is hope necessary to managing our stress?
How is stress created when we lose our hope in God (Prov. 13:12)?

In the New Testament, there are five Greek words for hope. One of the most common words for hope is elpizo. It is found 31 times, and means “to have full confidence and to trust fully.” In this world we operate in one of two modes: hope or disappointment (Isa. 49:23); faith or fear (Mark 4:40).

Read 1 Peter 1:3–4. What is a living hope?

**Leader’s Note:** Hope that is rooted in Christ and thus can never disappoint because he is always faithful and true.

Can a person have dead hope? Give an example.

**Leader’s Note:** Dead hope is hope that is in something that will ultimately disappoint, such as thinking that wealth will make us happy or marriage will solve all our problems.

Read Hebrews 11:1. How is hope significant to faith?

Read Job 7:6. How would you describe days without hope?

Read Job 19:25. How would this decrease the stress of all the changes that Job went through?

**Teaching Point Three: Faith in a God who does not change reduces our stress.**

Stress is ultimately soothed only by our faith in God as one who is always acting in our best interest.

Read Luke 18:1–8. What question does Jesus ask in verse 8? Why is this an important question?

Read Luke 17:5. How does one increase their faith? What was Jesus’ answer in verse 6?

Read Hebrews 11:39–40. What is the something better God has planned for us?

**Teaching Point Four: God helps us deal with the stress of change.**

In times of stress, God:

**Refreshes** (Ps. 68:9; 2 Pet. 1:12–13)

Give an example of a time God refreshed you in the midst of stressful change.
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[Q] What is one of God’s ways to refresh people (Ex. 23:12)? Do you take Sabbath rests? Why or why not?

**Restores** (Ps. 23:3; 51:12; 53:6; 71:20–21; 80:3; 85:4) FYI the word “restore” is found 61 times in the NIV.

[Q] How does God restore us? Give an example from your own life.

**Revives** (Ps. 19:7; 85:6)

[Q] Give an example of when God revived you.

**Renews** (Ruth 4:15; Ps. 51:10)

[Q] Give an example of a time that God renewed your faith and strength. What precipitated that?

**Rebuilds** (Ps. 69:35; Ezra; Nehemiah)

[Q] Give an example of a time God rebuilt something in your life.

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**Part 3 Apply Your Findings**

A refreshed, restored, revived, renewed, rebuilt mind leads to a relaxed body. A refreshed, restored, revived, renewed, rebuilt body leads to a relaxed mind. This is why we need to daily tend to both our physical and spiritual well being.

**Action Point:** In the coming week, meditate on one of the five R’s under teaching point four, using one of the passages listed for that trait.

— Study by Charles R. Gerber MA, LMHC. Charles is the author of the book *Living With Stress: Biblical Truths to Manage Your Life*. 
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The Stress of Change

How can we learn to deal with the changes that come to most of us?

There are many life-changing events that are stressful to almost everyone. A few that the majority of people experience are the death of a loved one, marriage, pregnancy, buying a house, and even Christmas. This study will look at how to deal with these inevitable changes.

Stressed Out?
The Stress of Change
Participant’s Guide

Part 1 Identify the Current Issue

If it seems tougher to deal with what life throws your way than it was in the past, you’re not the only one who thinks so. The death of a friend, getting laid off, or having a baby takes more adjustment than in the past, according to a study that compares perceptions of life changes today versus 40 years ago.

There are many life changing events identified as stressful. Holmes and Rahe did research on the life-changing events that cause stress. The higher the number, the greater the stress:

- Death of a spouse - 100 points
- Divorce - 73 points
- Marriage - 50 points
- Pregnancy - 40 points
- Buying a house - 31 points
- Christmas - 12 points

The truth is that any change, even if it’s positive, can create stress. The feelings that can accompany these changes may be hopelessness, helplessness, emptiness, and lack of control.

But change can also be a positive experience. Change in life takes away boredom and gives us something to look forward to. And it moves us out of being lukewarm, which Jesus abhors (Rev. 3:16).

Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching Point One: God does not change.

Teaching Point Two: God is always in control, which gives us hope.

Teaching Point Three: Faith in a God who does not change reduces our stress.

Teaching Point Four: God helps us deal with the stress of change.

In times of stress, God:

- **Refreshes** (Ps. 68:9; 2 Pet. 1:12–13)
- **Restores** (Ps. 23:3; 51:12; 53:6; 71:20–21; 80:3; 85:4)
- **Revives** (Ps. 19:7; 85:6)
- **Renews** (Ruth 4:15; Ps. 51:10)
- **Rebuilds** (Ps. 69:35; Ezra; Nehemiah)

### Part 3  **Apply Your Findings**

A refreshed, restored, revived, renewed, rebuilt mind leads to a relaxed body. A refreshed, restored, revived, renewed, rebuilt body leads to a relaxed mind. This is why we need to daily tend to both our physical and spiritual well being.

**Action Point:** In the coming week, meditate on one of the five R’s under teaching point four, using one of the passages listed for that trait.

— *Study by Charles R. Gerber MA, LMHC. Charles is the author of the book* *Living With Stress: Biblical Truths to Manage Your Life.*

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Biblical Ways to Overcome Stress

The Bible gives us some clear ways to find peace in the midst of stress.

Everyone wants peace of mind. We look for it in a lot of different ways—from pills to pillows, from mantras to mediation. But true peace comes only from Christ.

Part 1 Identify the Current Issue

Note to Leader: Before meeting, provide each person with the Participant’s Guide, included at the end of this study.

The Bible is full of people who faced great stress. Abraham had to leave his home, send away one son, and be willing to sacrifice another. Jacob worked seven years for a wife, then got the wrong one. Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers. Moses led a disobedient and rebellious people. David ran from King Saul, who was trying to kill him. Elijah had to face an evil king and queen. Nehemiah had to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Queen Esther had to take her life in her hands and defy the king. Job lost everything. Daniel was thrown to the lions. Jonah was swallowed by a fish. Paul faced numerous beatings, imprisonment, and eventually beheading. And, of course, Jesus died a horrible death on a cross.

Discussion Starters:

[Q] Can you think of any other biblical characters that faced stress?
[Q] What are some ways these people dealt with their stress?
[Q] Do you have a favorite Bible verse or passage you read when you are stressed? If so, what is it?

Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching Point One: You can lower your stress level.

Don Osgood, in his book Pressure Points, gives five ways to deal with stress, and Scripture backs him up.

Analyze (clarify goals and find multiple solutions to problems)

[Q] Read Job 12:13. According to this verse, what is the first step in finding a solution to any problem?

Athletics (exercise, healthy eating, and the proper amount of rest)

[Q] Read Luke 5:16. Jesus withdrew and rested, even when needs surrounded him. What might you learn from his example?
Stressed Out?
Biblical Ways to Overcome Stress
Leader’s Guide

Awareness (discover how your body responds to stress)

[Q] Read 1 Kings 19:3–5. Elijah had just been through a huge ordeal, which caused him to despair. What did he need to learn about his body’s response to stress in order to cope?

Alter thoughts (meditation and mental relaxation exercises)

[Q] Read Psalm 1:2. How is biblical meditation different than secular meditation?

Attitude (control thoughts about self, others, and events)

[Q] Read Proverbs 15:30. What does this teach us about the value of controlling our thoughts?

Teaching Point Two: The Bible offers many ways to deal with stress.
The following verses give insight into how we can deal with stress.

Allow others to help carry your burdens: Galatians 6:2.

[Q] What does it mean to carry one another’s burdens in practical terms? Give examples.

Listen to music to reduce stress: 1 Samuel 16:23.

[Q] Does listening to music reduce stress for you? If so, why?

Have proper, godly self-esteem: 1 Corinthians 3:16.

[Q] How does seeing yourself as holy and a temple of God help to decrease stress?

Be careful with whom you associate: 1 Corinthians 15:33.

[Q] How might poor relationships increase stress? How might good ones reduce it?

Don’t blame yourself for the actions and attitudes of others: Ezekiel 18:1–4.

[Q] How often do you blame yourself for how people treat you? Why?
Stressed Out?
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Say no without making excuses: Matthew 5:37.

[Q] Why is this one difficult?

Do something for others: Proverbs 3:27.

[Q] How does serving others lower stress? How might it change our negative thinking?

Stop dwelling on your past mistakes: Isaiah 43:18–19.

[Q] Why is it difficult to forgive yourself?

Express your anger in timely, appropriate ways: Ephesians 4:26–27.

[Q] How does expressing anger inappropriately create stress?

Enjoy the work you do here on earth: Ecclesiastes 5:18–20.

[Q] Do you see your work as a blessing? Why or why not?


[Q] How does praise reduce stress?

Be still before God and know that he is in control: Psalm 37:7.

[Q] Why is it even more important to slow down and listen to God when you’re stressed and busy?


[Q] Give an example of how prayer can help your stress.

Teaching Point Three: Laugh often.

Laughter may be the best stress reducer God made. Norman Cousins, in his book Anatomy of an Illness, got the medical community’s attention about the potential beneficial therapeutic effects of laughter when he used it to treat his own painful, degenerative, crippling, incurable disease in 1964. Laughter relieved his pain and allowed him to sleep better.
The idea of laughter being linked to medicine and healing is nothing new. Solomon wrote, “A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones” (Proverbs 17:22).

Consider what the Mayo Clinic says about laughter:

Short-term effects: When you start to laugh, it doesn't just lighten your load mentally, it actually induces physical changes in your body. Laughter can:

- Stimulate your organs. Laughter enhances your intake of oxygen-rich air, stimulates your heart, lungs and muscles, and increases the endorphins that are released by your brain.
- Activate and relieve your stress response. A rollicking laugh fires up and then cools down your stress response and increases your heart rate and blood pressure. The result? A good, relaxed feeling.
- Soothe tension and stomachaches. Laughter can also ease digestion and stimulate circulation, which helps reduce some of the physical symptoms of stress.

Long-term effects: Laughter isn't just a quick pick-me-up, though. It's also good for you over the long haul. Laughter may:

- Improve your immune system. Negative thoughts manifest into chemical reactions that can impact your body by bringing more stress into your system and decreasing your immunity. In contrast, positive thoughts actually release neuropeptides that help fight stress and potentially more-serious illnesses.
- Relieve pain. Laughter may ease pain by causing the body to produce its own natural painkillers.
- Increase personal satisfaction. Laughter can also make difficult situations a little bit easier.¹

[Q] Read Proverbs 15:13–15. How does a happy heart affect the physical body?

Optional Activity:

Suggest ways each person in the following case studies might be able to handle the stress they are going through:

- Pam is a chronic worrier. She lays awake many nights worrying about her family, job, and finances.
- Max is trying to hold down three part-time jobs because he can't find one full-time one. He is feeling very stressed.
- Mark feels angry almost all the time. His family is afraid of him and he feels out of control.
- Laura is overwhelmed by being a mother of two preschoolers. She doesn't know how to handle this stage of her life.

Part 3 Apply Your Findings

In John 14:27, Jesus said, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”

Action Point: In the above list of ways to overcome stress, find the two most difficult for you to do. Work on those two first over the next week. If you work on the easiest ones first, you will increase your stress as you work on the list. If you work on the most difficult ones first, you will lower your stress level working through the list. Look up other passages on the area that you need to work on (use a concordance or BibleGateway.com).

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