



*“Do not be anxious about anything,
but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving
let your requests be made known to God” Philippians 4:6.*

How to Handle Stress

Read: Mark 5:21-43

In the gospel we hear the story of two miraculous healings. The first is the woman with the haemorrhage. The second is Jairus’s daughter who was perceived to be deceased. Although each circumstance appears to be unique there is a common thread that connects the two. Both parties find themselves in a very stressful situation.

This is common in the lives of so many people. We have all had to deal with stress and anxiety at some point. All types of factors can cause us to experience stress, especially the diagnosis of a disease or the unexpected loss of a loved one. Our responses can be many but stress is almost assuredly one of them. Everyone copes with stress in a different way. But what is our spiritual response to stress?

The gospel gives us a clue. In both circumstances Jairus and the woman brought their needs before the Lord. The woman reached out in silent hope while Jairus audibly asked for healing. Both performed an act a prayer. Although the woman was instantly restored, Jairus’ miracle was postponed. After petitioning Jesus to heal his daughter, Jairus then accompanied Christ back to his home. The two traveled together before his daughter was healed. It took time and was not instantaneous.

Many people have found that one of the best ways to deal with stress is to find time for daily prayer. Sitting down with the Lord and placing our needs before him is a great way to center ourselves and orientate our priorities. Prayerful meditation does wonders for stress. However, it doesn’t mean our situation will be immediately resolved. Sometimes we have to travel with Jesus amidst our stressful lives trusting that we will arrive at the end of our struggles with his aid. There may even be moments when the worst-case scenario prevails, just like Jairus’ daughter’s passing, but even then Jesus does not abandon us. He tries to revive us from the brink of hopelessness and gently reminds us, “Do not be afraid, just have faith.”

Reflection: What are the major causes of stress in my life? Do I take time to discuss these moments of difficulty with the Lord? Are there steps I can take towards finding peace?

Discipleship Challenge: Find five minutes each day to unplug. Take a few seconds to center yourself by breathing deeply. In your own words, place before the Lord your troubles. Ask Jesus to mend your broken situation and for the strength to endure these trials. Be patient and trust that the Lord will guide you through your difficulties.