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Viewpoints

Observing events in our modern world from the viewpoint of our ascended Savior.

Antidote for Stress - June 4, 2015

Find a good shepherd to reduce the stress of modern life.

[Online Version & Archive](#)

I chuckled, but it's no laughing matter. I was reading the news and found this headline:
Stress caused by traffic noise 'can increase risk of obesity'

I wasn't laughing in disbelief. I was grinning because this is old news. Over ten years ago I learned that stress initiates a variety of complicated and powerful chemical reactions in our bodies. In a sin-cursed world where a lion might suddenly attack a first-century pilgrim walking to Jerusalem, these chemical reactions are a blessing from God to allow the pilgrim to find an explosion of energy that rockets him into a fight or flight response. The lion misses lunch. And the cortisol, adrenalin, and a host of other chemicals in the traveler dissipate, as life returns to normal.

But what happens when in our modern world, the stress never dissipates? What happens in our 24/7 culture when stress continues to keep those powerful chemicals amped up? What happens when traffic noise contributes to producing a stressful environment day in and day out? Gaining unwanted weight is only one of a number of yucky side-effects. Consider what the Mayo Clinic was reporting back in 2006 (placed in the quotes):

How does stress come to wield such influence over our lives? Answer: because stress triggers a release of those chemicals that regulate almost everything your body does. That would be hormones, "the most abundant being adrenaline and cortisol... Cortisol, the primary stress hormone, increases sugar (glucose) in the bloodstream... Cortisol alters immune system responses and suppresses the digestive system... The complex alarm system also communicates with regions of the brain that control mood, motivation and fear."

Now get this! "The more [the stress response] is activated, the harder it is to shut off. Instead of leveling off once the crisis has passed, your stress hormones, heart rate, and blood pressure remain elevated."

And to make matters worse, when we turn to comfort food in an effort to soothe our stress, and it turns into belly fat, this belly fat internally stimulates our bodies to operate in a stress-response mode, even if there are no external, environmental stressors to pull the trigger. Operating for lengthy periods of time in a stress-response mode creates its own cyclical weather system inside the body that uptakes

stress and precipitates it throughout our bodies. “The long-term activation of the stress-response system-- and the subsequent overexposure to cortisol... can disrupt almost all our body’s processes, increasing your risk of obesity, insomnia, digestive problems, heart disease, depression, memory impairment, physical illnesses and other complications.”

So what’s cure for all this constant stress that the modern world produces? How can we reduce stress if we happen to live next to a busy freeway? Don’t laugh, but the best answer is an old answer: **we need a shepherd.**

In Psalm 23 the Bible prophesied about the coming Savior Jesus by describing him as a shepherd. “**My shepherd... makes me lie down** [the Hebrew verb means that the Shepherd (God) enables one to have rest and refreshment] **in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters** [the Hebrew word means waters that bring rest]. Obviously, the opposite of stress is rest. And Jesus, the Good Shepherd, is the ultimate stress-reducer. Jesus invites you: “**Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest**” (Matthew 11:28).

A daily dose of the Shepherd’s uplifting promises is heaven’s antidote for life’s stressors. Yes, make God’s Word a part of your daily diet, and watch the bad side-effects of stress melt away. Do you need a digital way to find some daily stress relief? [Find daily devotions here.](#)

Digging Deeper Blog: Learn about stress and [the association of sleep, food and attitude](#)

Source Material (Links may become inactive over time.)

[Stress caused by traffic noise 'can increase risk of obesity'](#) @ Independent News.UK

[Chronic Stress Puts Your Health At Risk](#) @ mayoclinic.com

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Blessings to you and your loved ones, Pastor Mike Nitz

