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**Stress Busters: God's Strategy For Busting Stress**  
***"Stressed Out Over Your Job"***  
(Part 5)

**Intro: Video: I Had A Bad Day**

Hopefully, you've never had that bad of a day. Our jobs though, do create stress that we have to deal with on a daily basis. The question is HOW? How do we lessen it / deal with it?

**I. Change Your Attitude That Work Is Good Not Evil**

**A. Work was created by God**

*Gen. 2:15 "The Lord God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and care for it." (NLT)* First recorded job description in history!

1. Contrary to popular belief, work is NOT a result of the fall (sin entering the world.) Work / responsibility have always been part of God's plan for mankind. It was before sin entered the world.
2. Even though God created a perfect environment for mankind to enjoy, part of God's perfection was for mankind to fulfill responsibility by tending and caring for this environment He created. (i.e. Work! – gardener / landscaper)
3. God did not create mankind to be idle / to have no purpose / to not fulfill any responsibility. God wired the need to work and be productive into the DNA of mankind. Why do I say this?
4. Because all you have to do in order to be miserable, is do nothing for a long time. (Now, I realize doing nothing may sound wonderful right now, especially if you throw in a beach and some palm trees!)
5. Why does accomplishing something always make you feel better? Because it's hard-wired into your nature. It makes you feel good about life and yourself. God made us this way.
6. This also explains why many people struggle in retirement. They lose their purpose / lose being productive – making a positive contribution to something. (This should make us re-think our beliefs about what retirement means. Are we biblical or cultural?)

**B. Work is commanded by God**

*II Thess. 3:11-12 "Yet we hear that some of you are living idle lives, refusing to*

*work and wasting time...In the name of the Lord Jesus we appeal to such people – no, we command them: Settle down and get to work...” (NLT)*

1. I just love the bluntness of the Bible sometimes. You just don't have to go to seminary to understand this passage. We are not to live idle lives. We are commanded to fulfill responsibility. Work!
2. God never commands us to do something that is evil. Therefore, since work is commanded by God it must be good! (work inside the home / outside the home – stay at home moms / it's all good work.)
3. Why is this so important? Because we set ourselves up for job stress because of the way we view work. We view it as evil / bad / burden / as something I hate / stupid job / I hate my job
4. If this is the way you are looking at your job, you will be miserable every day you go to work and you will be magnifying the stress as well. Our thinking effects our emotions! (Bad day everyday!)
5. What would happen if you began to change your thinking that your job is good. WHY? Because God says that work is good / honorable. You may not have a job you love, but working is still a good thing.
6. Practice: Say it with me...”My job is good.” (I'm not asking you to say there are no frustrations and stresses.)

## **II. Remember Daily Who You Work For**

### **A. Our ultimate boss is God**

*Col. 3:23 “Work hard and cheerfully at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.” (NLT)*

1. We must remember who we are ultimately working for. According to the Bible, we are working for God. He is our boss.
2. I realize that you may have an earthly boss you either like / tolerate / or try to avoid at all costs. But, if your belief is that you work for him / her or for their company, this will just create more job stress.
3. WHY? Because you've left God out of the equation. Now you're working to try to please a person instead of God. That's stressful. Working to please God is greater motivation to do your work well then the motivation that comes from the fear of a boss / supervisor / foreman.
4. Working for God makes you a better employee. WHY? It makes you more conscientious / honest / more responsible / better attitude / AND it helps with job stress. HOW?
5. Because I'm living to please only ONE. I'm not saying that fulfilling your work responsibilities are not important. I believe when you work for God, you fulfill them even better and it's less stressful.
6. There's just something nice when your boss / supervisor is “going off” to say in your mind, “I don't work for you. I work for someone else”

## B. How I do my job matters to God

*Col. 3:24 "Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward, and the Master you are serving is Christ." (NLT)*

1. Since God is my ultimate boss, my reward for how I work isn't only a paycheck in this life, there are rewards in the next. How I do my job in this life counts for eternity.
2. We have made a great mistake taking God out of the work equation. We have made our world into the secular and the sacred. We talk about God at church but we keep Him out of work and real life.
3. This just adds to feelings of the meaninglessness of our jobs. We don't see the point or purpose. This is true especially if you have a very monotonous job. "What's the point to this?" "I'm just working for a paycheck!"
4. The point is that it matters! God sees. He is taking into account how you are doing your job whether you are an executive / janitor / mill worker / truck driver / teacher / housewife. It all counts in eternity!
5. I believe in heaven some people who are going to have the greatest rewards waiting for them are going to be the ones who did the seemingly unimportant / uninspiring jobs, yet they did them for the Lord all the days of their lives with good attitudes and amazing faithfulness.
  - Dad's testimony / all the years at Willamette Egg.
6. These people are nobodies in this life, yet will be heroes in heaven! No matter what type of job you have...it matters to God.
7. If you want to lessen your job stress, remember who your boss is and that He notices what you do and He will one day reward you for what goes unnoticed and unrewarded in this life!

## III. Embrace Your Role As An Ambassador At Work

### A. I am strategically placed at my job

*Matt. 5:13-15 "You are the salt of the earth...You are the light of the world...Don't hide your light...Instead, put it on a stand and let it shine for all." (NLT)*

1. We are to have a role of influence in this world. BUT, because we have this sacred and secular mindset, we don't realize that our jobs are strategic spiritual placements. God has placed you there! (Some of you are thinking, "Boy, God must really be mad at me for assigning me here.")
2. Thinking that I am at my job simply for a paycheck adds to job stress. WHY? Because earning a paycheck is NOT a significant enough purpose to satisfy you.

3. God wants us to embrace His purpose for us as His Ambassadors to this dark world. This is how we get our significance from who we are in Christ rather than what tasks we do at work.
4. We have it backwards. We think of ourselves incorrectly. We say things like, “I’m an electrician / an accountant / truck driver / housewife / salesman / Instead we should say, “I’m a Christian who happens to be an electrician / an accountant / etc...
5. Can you imagine if every believer embraced their role to represent Christ wherever they worked? Found their purpose by fulfilling their role as an ambassador rather than an employee? Transformation!

**B. I must embrace a Kingdom mindset at work**

*Matt. 6:33 “He will give you all you need from day to day if you live for Him and make the Kingdom of God your primary concern.” (NLT)*

1. I am convinced most believers simply do not believe these words of Jesus. What they really believe is: they will have everything they need from day to day if they work hard by providing for themselves and make God’s Kingdom one of their many concerns. (This is why you have so much stress!
2. To embrace a Kingdom mindset is to understand that we represent God’s Kingdom wherever we go. I am an ambassador of His Kingdom / His values / His righteousness / His truth / His power / His love / etc...everywhere!
3. Your job is no less spiritual than my job! (explain) We both represent!
4. If we are willing to live this way, we open the door to experience God’s provision on our lives. We will experience God taking care of us in very practical ways. (Which results in less stress!) YET, it is conditional
5. Embracing your role as an ambassador results in less stress because you will experience renewed purpose and you will see God’s provision in amazing ways.
6. Some of you have so much job stress because you are knocking yourselves out for the wrong kingdom. The promise from Jesus is that if you would make His Kingdom your primary concern, you won’t have to work so hard providing for yourself.
7. What would happen if we would all begin to look at our jobs as assignments from God? If everyday we’d begin by asking God to help us represent Him well as we work?

**IV. Allow God To Grow You Through Your Work**

**A. Your job is one of God’s primary tools to change you**

- WHY? Because this is the place where you spend so much time. Therefore, this will naturally be one of His primary methods.

*James 1:2-4 “...whenever trouble comes your way, let it be an opportunity for*

*joy. For when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be strong in character and ready for anything.” (NLT)*

1. Our jobs are the spiritual laboratories of life. It’s where the spiritual meets the real. It is where faith becomes actual. It is one of the greatest arenas where we demonstrate / live out our relationship with God.
2. To not understand that God will use your job to transform your character is to miss God’s plan for your life and increase your stress. If you only see the trials of your job as evil / unnecessary / and to be avoided, you’ll miss what God is trying to accomplish in you.
3. Last week we talked about the pains in life. Let’s face it; our jobs are one of them! God will not waste the trials and frustrations of your job if you give them to Him. He will use them to make you a better person.
4. Just like we said last week, pain will either make you bitter or better. This is true with job stress as well. What are you allowing your job stress to do to you? (your marriage / your kids / your relationships / etc...)
5. Is your job stress testing your patience / relational skills / priorities / endurance / forgiveness? Can you see how many qualities get tested on the job that God wants to lead to your maturity?

**B. Our cooperation with this process lessens the job stress**

1. If God is going to grow us through the trials of our jobs, then I must cooperate with this process. Part of this cooperation is not always looking for another job simply because it is difficult.
  2. I’ve had so many people over the years think that they should change jobs because the job is hard / difficult / tyrant bosses / unhealthy relationships / unrealistic expectations / etc... We think that trials are to be avoided at all costs. (Then we go from the frying pan into the fire sometimes – THEN we blame God!) When in reality, we dropped out of school...His school!
  3. Our first response to job stress should not be looking at the help wanted ads. It should be looking to God asking Him what He wants to do IN my life through the trials that I am experiencing.
  4. If there are certain lessons and character traits God wants to instill in you, do you actually think you can avoid this by simply changing jobs? Do you really think God’s going to let you off the hook that easy?
  5. Ever changed jobs and then eventually have the same issues show up in that new job? Could it be that God is more concerned about your character than He is with your employment or enjoyment? Maybe it’s time to cooperate?
- HOW?

*James 4:10 “When you bow down before the Lord and admit your dependence on Him, He will lift you up and give you honor.” (NLT)*

6. Humility before God and His growth process and surrendering to the circumstances that He wants to use, releases God's resources upon your life. (He will lift you up).
7. Some of you have never experienced being "lifted up" by God because you've been fighting so hard all the time lifting yourself up...and very stressed out in the process.  
\*\*I'm not saying there are never times to change jobs. This should never be our first response. Our first response needs to be humility / dependence / surrender.

Some of you are under a tremendous amount of job stress. Some of you may actually believe God doesn't care much about the stress you're under. This is entirely untrue! He cares deeply about you and the weight you carry. He's ready to help you, but we must embrace His perspective on our jobs and the stress we face.

- Will we change our attitudes about our jobs – they're good. / Can we remember daily who we really work for? / Can we embrace our role as ambassadors on the job? / Will I allow God to grow me and change my character through my job?