

Title: Too Stressed to be Blessed, or Too Blessed to be Stressed?

Scripture: Isaiah 41:10

Speaker: Josh Maness

Event: Sunday Evening Service

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Isaiah 41:10 *“Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.”*

Christians need to have the ability to endure stress and strain. In this scripture, Israel has been split and (ten tribes making up Israel and two tribes making up Judah) Judah is getting to head down the same path that Israel had already been down. God gives Isaiah the words that make up verse 41 as a comfort to him. We all encounter that time in our lives when it gets hard to pray, hard to study, and hard to fellowship. We need to realize that God is there to help us get *through* situations.

What to do when you feel too stressed to be blessed

- 1. Fear thou not:** we are all gripped with some sort of fear in one way or another. In our daily lives we want to serve the Lord, but something grabs us and keeps us from serving. We forget that God is there beside us and we panic. When God tells us to “fear not”, we need to have faith that God will help us through whatever he calls us to do. He will free our fears. In Psalm 34:4 David said, *“I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.”* It seems that all sorts of little things will happen at once and get us bogged down or it seems that bad things will never stop happening. We need to pray to God to give us the strength to conquer all fears that we will face, both in the present and in the future.
- 2. For I am with thee:** Psalm 23:4 *“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.”* After God gives us the command to “fear not”, he gives us the reason why we shouldn’t fear – because he is with us. He’s *inside* of us. Nothing that goes on in our lives will throw him for a loop. He has gotten us through our situations before the situations were ever in existence. We may be led into the valley, but we know that God will be there with us. He isn’t waiting on us at the top of the mountain. He makes the journey up and down with us. Even when talking about the valley of death David had assurance that he had nothing to fear because God was with him unto death.
- 3. Be not dismayed:** the word dismayed means discouraged. We all get discouraged; however, God doesn’t suggest that we try to avoid discouragement. He commands us like he did at the beginning of the verse and he says *be not dismayed*. Many people in the Bible went to God when they were going through times of being discouraged and God was the encouragement that always brought them out of it.
- 4. For I am thy God:** the word “thy” is the biggest word in this phrase because God is saying that he is **our** God. He’s not just here for a select few – everyone has the ability to have him. When you are with God do you have the desire to pull him closer? Does he pull you closer? Think of how a husband/wife or boyfriend/girlfriend act when someone of the opposite sex gives them a glance. We want to pull them closer to show that they are ours and they aren’t available. Our God said he is a jealous God – are we just as jealous of him? Do we want others to know that He is ours?
- 5. I will strengthen thee:** the Lord is our support. Christ is our foundation – our FIRM foundation. He gives us the ability to have his grace. II Corinthians 12:9-10 *“And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.”* God will be there for us ALWAYS. There will never be a time that his strength will not be available.
- 6. I will help thee:** help is always good. How many times have you tried to solve a problem on your own only to make the situation worse? Romans 8:26 *“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should*

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pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." God is always here to help us. Psalm 41:6 says *"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."*

- 7. I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness:** If God has us lifted up it doesn't matter what's going on around us because his hand surrounds us. The word righteousness refers to God being right. We cannot outsmart God and we aren't able to handle all of the troubles of this life on our own. He is always right and his way is always right, therefore he holds us with his hand of righteousness.