

# THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

John 6:16-26

Lesson #23

Stress Management

12/20/2015

Mary **Crisis**  
and a  
happy new



**fear!**

1

What is the latest new fear?

Y2K  
Communism  
The Bomb  
Global Warming  
T' Party  
**ISIS**  
Economic Collapse  
Big Government  
Obama  
Islam  
Secularism  
Materialism

2



Brene Brown

"We're tired of the national conversation centering on "What should we fear?" and "Who should we blame?"

3



"God never promised us a smooth ride, just a safe landing." 4

Lily Tomlin  
(comedian)



"The biggest source of stress in life is reality and those who chose to live in it."

5



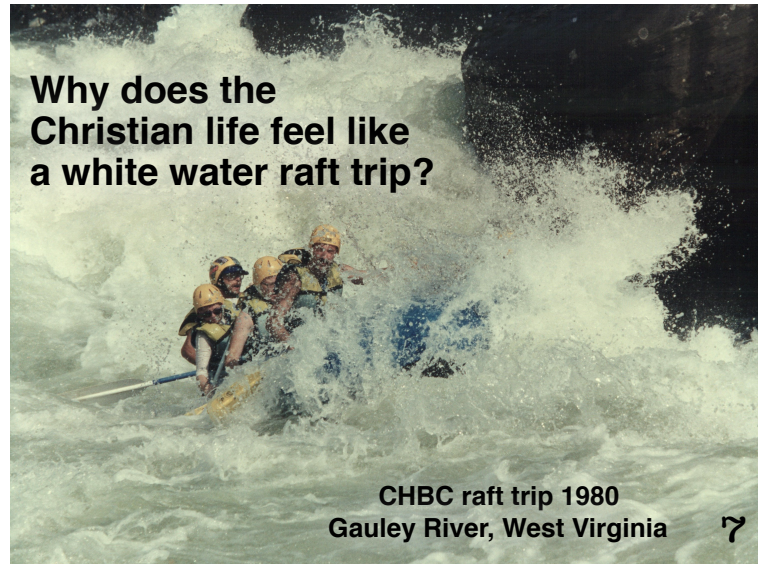
## The essence of the Incarnation.

*Matthew 1:23*

“And they shall call His name Immanuel, which translated means, “God with us”.”



Why does the Christian life feel like a white water raft trip?



CHBC raft trip 1980  
Gauley River, West Virginia

Is following Christ for 4X4s only?



Black Bear Pass,  
Ouray, Colorado

*John 6*

“<sup>16</sup> Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea, <sup>17</sup> and after getting into a boat, they started to cross the sea to Capernaum. And it had already become dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. <sup>18</sup> And the sea began to be stirred up because a strong wind was blowing. <sup>19</sup> When therefore they had rowed about three or four miles, **they beheld Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near to the boat; and they were frightened.** <sup>20</sup> But He said to them, “It is I (**I AM**); do not be afraid.” <sup>21</sup> They were willing therefore to receive Him into the boat; and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.”

9



“When therefore they had rowed about three or four miles, they beheld Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near to the boat; and they were frightened.”

*John 6:19*





### The context

- Jesus had withdrawn from the disciples to be alone.
- The disciples cross the sea alone late in the day.
- It is dark, the sea is rough, and they are afraid as they see what appears to be a ghost.

#### Note that John leaves out

(from Matt.14:22-33 and Mk.6:45-52)

- Jesus **COMMANDING** the disciples to cross the sea on their own.
- **PETER** walking on the water.
- Notations of the disciples' **WORSHIP** Matt.14:33 and **HARD HEARTS**. Mk 6:52

**NOTE: this may be just an expansion of the "fear" theme.**

12

### Mark 6

"<sup>37</sup> But He answered and said to them, "**You give them something to eat!**" "

"<sup>45</sup> And immediately **He made His disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the other side to Bethsaida,**"

13

*Too many Christians come on board the Christian life expecting a luxury cruise or smooth ride only to end up lost, in a storm, off road, at night*  
**Wondering where Jesus is?**



14

A deep sense of duty  
+  
A sense of inadequacy  
+  
A judgmental audience.  
=

The "perfect storm" for stress

**Sounds like some churches.**

**John 6 & Mark 6.**

15

### Implications

- Following Jesus may be exciting **but not without times of exhaustion and stress.**
- Jesus sends his followers into harm's way alone **but not without opportunity to develop insight and faith.**
- Jesus does not shield the disciples from stressful circumstances **but neither does he leave them without a resource.**
- What do we do when we "seem to be" alone, on rough seas, in the dark?

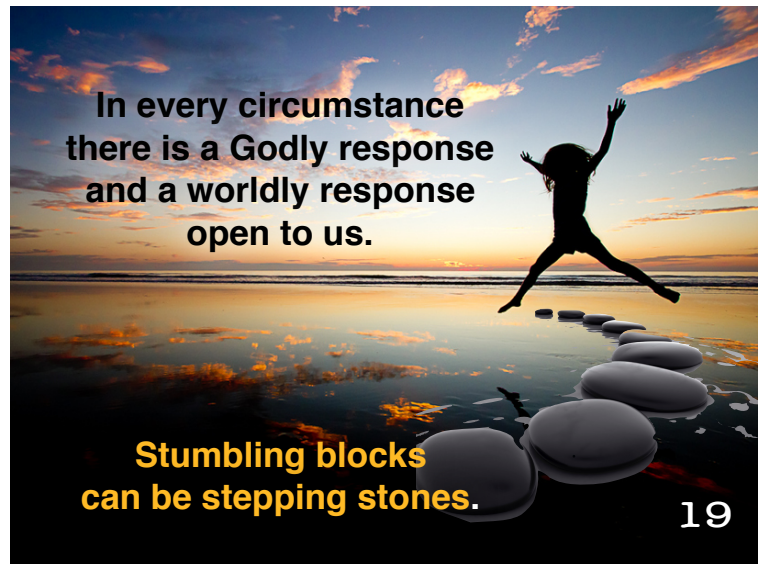
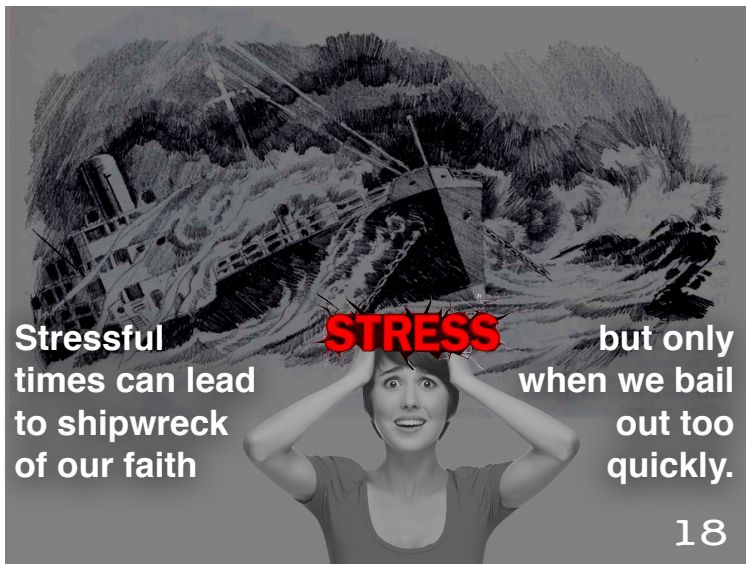
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### Applications

1. Don't be surprised by life's stressful circumstances.
  - Jesus not only permits but some times prescribes them.
  - We work hard and have many tools to keep bad circumstances at bay.
  - But we cannot avoid many of them.
2. Following Jesus is 4x4 drive only.
  - Most of the way will be off road.
  - Being off road is not the same as being in the ditch or shipwrecked.

17





### 3. It is the Spirit of Christ IN US that is our security (not God's work outside us).

- God can change our circumstances but He is more glorified by the way we respond to them.
- Christ in us is the hope of glory. Col.1:27

20

"<sup>22</sup> The next day the multitude that stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other small boat there, except one, and that Jesus had not entered with His disciples into the boat, but that His disciples had gone away alone. <sup>23</sup> There came other small boats from Tiberias near to the place where they ate the bread after the Lord had given thanks. <sup>24</sup> When the multitude therefore saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they themselves got into the small boats, and came to Capernaum, seeking Jesus. <sup>25</sup> And when they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, "Rabbi, when did You get here?" <sup>26</sup> Jesus answered them and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, **you seek me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.**" <sup>21</sup>

## The Sea of Galilee



Looking across the Sea of Galilee from Tiberius (today) to where the 5000 were fed in the first century.





## Implications

- Following Jesus is no virtue **if it is for the wrong reason.**
- When Jesus blesses us in tangible ways **we too often see this as the end game.**
- Jesus takes a risk whenever he blesses us **lest we don't hang around for the main course.**
- **Why are we following Jesus?**

24

**The Israelites worshipped a "golden calf" crafted from gold, God had given them.**

Exodus 12:36  
**"and the Lord had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have their request (gold and silver) thus they plundered the Egyptians.**



25

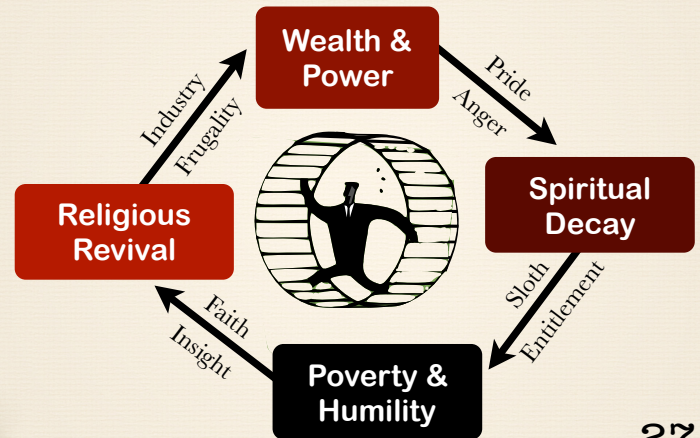


Dwight L. Moody

"I brought bread to the poor only to see them too often leave once they were full and not wait to receive the bread of life."

26

## John Wesley's dilemma



27

## The greater gift

"A monk in his travels once found a precious stone and kept it. One day he met a traveler, and when the monk opened his bag to share his provisions with him, the traveler saw the jewel and asked the monk to give it to him. The monk did so readily. The traveler departed overjoyed with the unexpected gift of the precious stone that was enough to give him wealth and security for the rest of his life. However, a few days later he came back in search of the monk, found him, gave him back the stone, and entreated him, 'Now give me something much more precious than this stone, valuable as it is. Give me that which enabled you to give it to me.'"



Anthony De Mello  
 Indian Jesuit priest

28

**Don't stumble over the stepping stones.**

**The real treasures of the Gospel lie beyond the temporal stress and satisfaction of this life.**

29