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2 CORINTHIANS 4:8-18

2 Corinthians Series

that you would empower me with words that would be most beneficial for these folks. I pray that you'd bless those who hear it as much as you blessed me this week in my preparation. So Lord, settle our hearts and give us a clarity of thought so we can process our own lives and think about what you have for each one of us. We ask in Jesus' name, amen.

When I come to God's word, I come to it not like a history lesson. It's not like a history book. The Bible in talking about itself says that it's living and active. So when I come to the Bible as this living and active thing, it has an effect on me. I come into contact with the Bible by reading it or hearing it spoken, and it has an effect on me. Sometimes it corrects me because I'm off track somewhere and I need to get back on track. Sometimes it encourages me just because I need some kind of encouragement. Sometimes it teaches me something or reminds me of a truth. Maybe I didn't know it, or maybe I knew it, I forgot it, and it helps me know that truth more effectively so I am thinking rightly about life.

The Bible is a very powerful tool for our lives, so as we do look at it or read it, it has an impact. So I would encourage you to be reading the Bible every day. This is a great time, the first of the year, when people often start read-through-the-Bible-in-a-year programs. I'd encourage you to do something like that, to be in God's word regularly. It affects you, it changes you, and does what it needs to do in your own heart.

We're studying the book of 2 Corinthians and in that book we're talking about the power of God. We're going to take that power of God today as we come to 2 Corinthians 4. We're going to apply it to this whole idea of stress, something we all experience.

So in honor of God's word and its power, would you please stand with me. If you have your Bible, you can open it up please to 2 Corinthians 4. I'm just going to read the five verses, 8-12, although we're going to take it to the end of the chapter today, Lord willing.

Verse 8 says – We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body. So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.

You may be seated.

We all find ourselves under stress, pressure. Some of that is things we can delegate. I like to delegate a lot of stuff in my life to offload some of the tasks that I need to do, things that need to get done. But there's some things I can't offload. I'm the dad. I'm the husband. There are certain things I have to do. So just being who I am means that those are part of me and what I need to do. I've been trying to find a way to delegate my exercise. I could free myself up with a lot of hours every week if I could just delegate my exercise to someone else. But it doesn't work. I have to do it. That's me.

I would suggest that with life comes a certain amount of stress that we need to face in our lives. In fact there are four different kinds of stress. Let me show you what they are. Because I think we need to be prepared for them and we need to have an idea of how we're going to address these.

The first kind of stress that we experience is general stress. It's the stress of getting up in the morning and getting out of bed and then meeting the various challenges. By the time we get to the bathroom or when we start seeing people or getting in our car or trying to do what we need to do, we all face stress. It's a general kind of stress that we all need to be able to deal with. That general stress that takes place is a good thing, in some regards, in that it prompts us to grow and learn and so on.

The only people who don't experience stress live in a cemetery. In fact I was talking to my grandson the other day and I said to him, "Do you see how they have that fence around the cemetery?"

He says, "Yeah."

I said, "Do you know why they put the fence around the cemetery?"

He says, "No. Why?"

"Because people are dying to get it there."

Stress is all around our lives. We all experience it and we need to be able to deal with it on a regular basis. So we get it, we need to offload it, we need to get a plan for dealing with it because if we don't then it accumulates. That's a second kind of stress, which is cumulative stress. You're not getting angry today about today; it's because of yesterday. What happened yesterday, you're angry. So it accumulates in our lives.

In fact there's three emotions of choice. I don't know which one you like, which one is your favorite one, but people use three emotions. Anger, anxiety, or disappointment are the three main emotions that we experience. I don't know what your favorite one is, but the challenges that you experience if you've accumulated stress is you're going to see it more often.

Let's take anger for example. If you're angry and you've accumulated some stress in your life then what's going to happen is the angry episodes you have are going to be greater than the situation warrants. Because you've got some stuff from yesterday and the days before and weeks and so on. So you just accumulate it and you get a trigger and boom. They're going to happen more often, they're going to be more intense because it's more intense than the situation warrants. This situation isn't that big, but because it's happened over and over and over again, it's accumulated. Then you have a larger reaction or the recovery time is longer. It takes you a

longer time to get over it because you've got accumulated stress. So this accumulated stress is a problem that we need to have a solution for in our lives.

So you need to have a solution for both general stress and cumulative stress, and then there's the surprise stress of some kind of an injury, accident, upsetting news, some kind of a difficulty that takes place in your life. So that surprise stress provokes something inside that we need to have a plan for. Of course if your general stress is really high, then a surprise stress throws you over the top and you've got some major issues to deal with.

The fourth kind of stress we talk about is posttraumatic stress. This lingering stress is the result of an incident or a series of incidents or a whole bunch of things that happened over a period of time. So they have a lingering and lasting, damaging relationship on a person. So that posttraumatic stress then causes them to react to life and sometimes become less functional than life requires.

So those are four kinds of stress that are experienced in life. Now we're going to look at our passage and I want you to keep that in mind. In fact as I'm often counseling with someone that I'm just getting to know, I'll often ask this question: Why don't you tell me five stress points in your life? You can learn a lot about someone by asking them that question. Tell me five stress points in your life. You might take a moment and jot down at your leisure five stress points in your life. They're probably coming into your mind. You've got them there. Maybe they're not ideas; maybe they're actual people. They're your stress point. Jot those down and it will reveal to you where you are on this chart and what you need to deal with. It just makes it so relevant.

This week the Lord brought me into contact with three people that were feeling overwhelmed. At different times. I'm going, "Here we are, Lord." I even shared this with two of them. I said, "The reason you're here talking to me today I know is because I'm preaching this sermon on stress this week." I know by talking to you, and I feel your pain of being overwhelmed like these people were, and I need to feel that so when I get up on Sunday morning I'm not just teaching some lesson of an idea. But it just comes out of a heart of compassion. It's not trivial, the pain that we experience or that you experience or that I experience because of stress. It's really hard. It's difficult.

We're going to look at the words. I want you to see the actual words of the text. So open your Bible to the passage and I'll show you some of the words that are here. I'm going to show you what they look like so that you can start understanding a little bit more of what this means.

The first word is *hard pressed*. As I look at the Greek words for each of these four words that are described there, I described them using their original language so maybe you make these statements. That's what Paul is talking about. *Hard pressed on every side* is the word. It's feeling like life is closing in. I'm under a lot of pressure. I'm having trouble managing life. Life is too confining. That's really the word what *hard pressed* means. It's confining me. If you feel like life for you is confining you, you're being pressed in. That's the word that's described, our first word in that passage.

The second word that's used in that passage is the word *perplexed*. When we look at that word we come to these kinds of statements: I'm confused about what to do next. I have more questions than I have answers for. I'm overwhelmed and I don't know what to do. That feeling of overwhelmed that causes us to feel so hard-pressed or perplexed or whatever, is things are pressing in on us. It's this emotional response to the stress that we have, that feeling of being overwhelmed.

The third word is *persecuted*. And it has this idea. You know Paul was really persecuted for his faith. But the word itself means to be attacked. Some of you know what that looks like. You're just going around the house and you've got young person in your home who uses sarcasm or meanness or somebody just makes a comment and you just feel like you're being attacked. Or you feel like people don't understand me, I'm being treated unfairly, I don't feel safe. That's what that word *persecuted* leads us to in this area of stress.

And then the fourth word is *struck down*. I feel pinned down, unable to move. I feel like I'm failing. I don't feel like I can stand firm. I feel like I can't deal with life.

Those are the four words that we see in the passage. As we look at those words I would suggest that most of us can identify with some of those statements and we go, "Wow. I know what that means."

So if we take the words in the passage as you see them in the text and we put them in a little chart, then we're going to come up with something like this. He says in the previous verse that we are jars of clay, that we are just common. We talked about this last week. There's a commonness about us that we are human, that we are frail, that we have challenges. But in the midst of that we have this treasure inside. So those are your four words on the left, and then he wants us to know he puts the word 'not' in front of these because he's looking at the problem. We're going to look at the solution, but we're still right now in the problem.

He's looking at the problem. He's saying I want you to know there's still some reserve that you have and that you can have because of the treasure inside of you. This is going to be our ticket to dealing with the stress of our life is to find that piece of reserve. So Paul is saying you're not completely destroyed here. You're not abandoned. You're not in despair. You're not crushed. You're not leveled here. But there's a place where you have some reserve if you have the treasure inside.

So we have to understand that we're not taking an approach to stress here that's humanistic. If your approach to stress is to sit there and meditate, or to take deep breaths, or to somehow find some humanistic solution that pulls you up by your bootstraps, that's not what Paul is talking about here. You may be crushed if that's all you're looking at. But he's saying there's something inside of us as Christians that God provides for us that's this treasure, and we need to get in touch with it.

So that describes the problem. At this point you should be at least be able to identify with the problem if you're not feeling stressed or discouraged already because we're talking about the problem so much.

So I want to talk about the solution. Not just about the problem, but I want to look at the solution. Look at your verses in the text. You will see that the text says that the solution is the *life of Jesus*. You go, “Oh wow. What’s that? That seems so esoteric.” I want to help you understand a little bit more about what that means, the life of Jesus. Because as we get into the word *life* and understand what it means, it’s going to be very practical as to how we handle our day-to-day stuff, from the time we get up to the time we go to bed as we meet the various stresses and challenges we face in our life.

If we look at the word *life* in the passage notice it says – *so that the life of Jesus* (that’s where we get those words) *may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive* (that’s the same Greek word) *are always being given over to death for Jesus’ sake, so that his life* (that’s the same Greek word) *may also be revealed in our moral bodies. So then, death is at work in us, but life* (that’s the same Greek word) *is at work in you.*

Now in order to understand this idea of life we need to look at the scriptures and see that there are three Greek words for *life*. We don’t get that in English in the translation. All of these use the same word, but I’m going to show you some other Greek words. This is going to help you. It sure helped me as I went through it this week and I understand it. If you understand the three Greek words and how they’re used in the New Testament, this one is going to stand out for you. You’ll see more about what he’s talking about.

So let’s look at the first Greek word. The first Greek word is *bios*. Three words for life in the New Testament. The word *bios* is where we get our word biology. It’s used ten times in the New Testament and it refers to the temporal things, the things around us.

So in Luke 8:14 there’s this parable about the seed that falls on different kinds of soil. The seed represents the word of God and the soil represents our hearts. We’re just going to look at one of the seeds. We don’t have time to look at the whole parable at this point. But he’s saying one of these kinds of seeds falls on the soil and that soil is characterized by *the seeds that fell among thorns stands for those who hear*. They hear the word. They’re here on Sunday morning to hear the gospel, they hear the message, they hear it on the sermons, they hear it during the week, they hear the message. *But as they go on their way they are choked by life’s bios* (this is the word *bios*), *worries, riches, and pleasure, and they do not mature*. So what happens is the temporal things of life, these are the things of life that we often have to live with every day.

In fact he gives us two examples. One is riches and the other is pleasure. Just think of how much time you have to spend dealing with money in the course of the week. As you’re dealing with that, it’s distracting. In fact it can be consuming sometimes to deal with all the things that we have – paying for them, fixing them, and so on. This idea of *bios* is the temporal things around us. Pleasures have to do with things like our entertainment choices and the things around us that help us to be comfortable. I would suggest that the temporal things sometimes distract us from the real life that God would have for us.

I would also suggest that that’s why Christians tend to live more simply. Christians tend to live more simply, eat more healthy, and give more generously. All because of this idea of *bios*. We

don't get consumed by all the temporal things in life. If we do get consumed by them, they will distract us from what the most important things are.

I just found this to be very motivating for me that one of the ways that I need to realize that I can avoid stress in my life is to de-emphasize the bios and focus on the other form of life that we're coming to in just a moment.

Here's another verse that also uses the word bios to describe our mission as Christians. It says – *No one serving as a soldier gets entangled in civilian life* (that's the word *life*. It's translated *affairs* in my translation), *but rather tries to please his commanding officer*. Do you see that there's a tug of war between the mission that the person has a soldier and the temporal things around. He's saying you don't do that. Obviously Paul's message to Timothy is that you want to make sure your focus is in the right direction, your purpose in life is set. So that will help you say no to things. It will help you to be able to say I'm not going to get involved.

There are lots of good things out there, but those good things often rob a person of their ability to stay on track in their mission. *Bios* are the good temporal things that are around us that we get sucked into. I'm not saying that they're evil. They're not bad. But they're temporal. Because of that they distract us from real life that God would help us to enjoy.

Let's go to the second word. The second word is *psuche*. It's where we get the word psychology from. It's translated *life* in the Bible. It's used 104 times and it refers to the inner challenges that we experience with our emotions, our expectations, or having to have it our way.

When I was doing driver training like a hundred years ago I remember a very specific video that we watched that made an impact on me. It was called *The Second Crash*. What it was trying to communicate was that the first crash, when you hit the pole, isn't the one that hurts you. It's the second one inside the car where your head hits the steering wheel. It's the second crash that hits you. The motivation for watching that video is to prompt all of us to wear our seatbelts or to be careful how we handle ourselves even in the car.

Now I would suggest that much of the stress that we experience in life is a result of the second crash. It's not the externals that are going on. Yes, it's bad. They're bad. We live with difficult people and we experience difficult challenges and we have difficult things at work and driving, and all of life is difficult. Yes. Those are the things that are out there. But it's our internal response that says I expected it to be this way and it isn't, therefore I'm upset. Or I've got to have it my way and it's not my way, so I'm upset. So there's this internal stress that's created because our response to life then with our emotions and so on creates a problem. That response, that *psuche* is a kind of life.

Now we get our word psychology from that and there are a lot of psychological solutions out there for life's challenges. I would suggest we can benefit from some of those, but they come up short because they don't fulfill the deeper needs that we have inside. But if you're a humanist (that is you don't know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior) then you're going to come up with as many psychological ideas as you can to be at peace.

Let me show you some verses that talk about this idea and they use the word *psuche* in the verse. So when Jesus was speaking He said – *Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your psuche, for your life, for your souls.*

Now here's what He's saying. The idea of a yoke in those days is you would take an ox and you would pair it with another ox and the best thing is that those oxen would be equal in their ability to pull the plow. You could plow more effectively and get things done more effectively if they were equally yoked. So they were yoked together to pull this plow and move forward. Sometimes they would do this: They would take a new ox that wasn't yet trained and they would put that ox with the old, mature oxen in order to train him. It wasn't as efficient, but the new ox was learning how to live life, in essence, or plow the field like the old oxen did.

Jesus is using that example, which we wouldn't understand in our industrial society or our technology society. But they lived in an agricultural society, so they understood this idea. Jesus is saying, "*Take my yoke upon you. Come on, take it. Live life the way I'm going to show you to live. If you'll live life the way I've designed it, if you'll walk the path like I've designed it, then life is going to be easier for you.*" So Jesus is saying you're going to find rest (a very important word when it comes to stress management) for your *psuche* if you're following the yoke and you're living the life that God has called you to live.

So one of the key solutions for dealing with the challenges that we face in our stress-filled life is to take a path that's following the path of Jesus. "What would Jesus do" is a great question. Although I find that question rather challenging sometimes because Jesus would just stand up to the waves, "Peace. Be still." What am I going to do? I can't do that. I've got to live with the waves in my life. So I like the question "what would Jesus do," but the real challenge here is to take the Jesus-filled life and know how to live that in the midst of a technological society, dealing with computer and electronic payments and Facebook and all kinds of challenges that we face in our lives. How do we live our life in a way that's going to take on the yoke of Christ to find rest for our souls.

Let's look at another verse that uses *psuche* as well. In Matthew 6 in the Sermon on the Mount He's trying to teach us how to live a life that's following the kingdom. That's the sermon that Jesus preached about the kingdom. He's got something better for us. Here's what He says: *Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life (that is your psuche), what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?*

So do you see the word *worry* here? That's why He's talking about the *psuche* here. Because it's this sense of inner struggle that we face, like common things like food and clothes. We often will find ourselves struggling with food and clothes and spending a lot of time concerned about those things. What He's saying is yes, those things are the reality of life, but there's something more to life and I'm going to share that with you. That's what Christ is sharing on the Sermon on the Mount. A different way of living that's going to produce something different inside of us than this worry that we often experience.

So that takes us to the third word for *life*, which is the word in our text. I'll take you back to our text in a moment. But first let's look at a couple other verses that use the word *zoe* where we get the word zoology from. It's used 134 times in the New Testament. For example, it's used in Matthew 7 this way: *But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life (zoe), and only a few find it.* So what he's saying is I'm coming to share with you a life that's different than most people find. Of course we know that that life is salvation in Jesus Christ. When we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, it's going through the narrow gate and we're able to experience something grand.

But I want to take it a step further. Because it's not just a decision we made years ago to accept Jesus into our lives. I would suggest that very few people find this stress-reduced life in Christ, this *zoe*, even those who are Christians. There's a lot of Christians who are living like the world or they're not embracing all the treasures in the jar of clay that they could, and so there's this reserve at the bottom that we could take more advantage of and it would allow us to not feel crushed or abandoned, and all of those other words that are there. So there's this treasure there. Jesus is introducing this idea in the Sermon on the Mount in Mathew 7 and He's using the word *zoe*. *Zoe* is the life.

If we go to John 10:10 He says there's a wrestling in the spiritual world for our hearts. *The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have zoe, and have it to the full.* So what Jesus is saying is there's a thief out there that wants to steal your peace, wants to pour on the stress on your life. He wants to take away your peace, he wants to steal, and kill, and destroy you. What a great way to do that but slowly through the stresses of life. But He says *I've come to give you zoe so that you can have zoe to the full.* This *zoe* that is this spiritual energy and strength to be able to deal with life. There's a nugget inside in that extra space. When you're being hard pressed you're not crushed because there's something in there that we can all take advantage of and enjoy and embrace.

There's a passage in James 4 that kind of jumped out at me as I was looking at this word *life* because of the question that's there. It became a question for me in my own heart. *Now listen, you who say (now notice the temporal idea), "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life?*

I just stopped right there. *Zoe* is the word there. *What is your life?* What's your spiritual life? Because if your spiritual life is not where it should be and you're not enhancing that and growing that in your life then here's what happens. *You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live (zoe) and do this or that."* There is this capacity that God has given to us inside of our hearts that allows us to deal with the pressures and stresses of life. It is a spiritual capacity, but it needs to grow and it needs to be taken advantage of in our lives.

Now let's go back to our verses. Now that we've kind of delved into the meanings of those words, let's go back into 2 Corinthians 4:10-12 first of all and see how this word *zoe* is being used. *We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the zoe of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are (zoe) alive are always being given over to death for*

Jesus' sake, so that his (zoe) life may also be revealed in our mortal body. So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.

In other words as we're going through these pressures, one of the ways we experience life is through the encouragement of other people experiencing victory. So Paul is saying we're going through these death experiences, these challenges, and you're being encouraged by these. So he's saying you can experience this kind of life in part that way.

So I want to go back to the question. This is the question I started thinking quite a bit about in my own personal life this week in James 4. He says – *What is your life?* What is your life? Are you hard pressed, perplexed, struck down, persecuted? Are those the words that would characterize you? If so, then we need to get to know the life of Jesus.

This is what it's going to do for us. I think when we amplify this one piece in this reservoir that's available to us, when that is amplified in our lives then we have a different perspective on the things that are going on. We kind of rise above the circumstances instead of being under the circumstances. Our values are changed and adjusted so that the things that are temporal are not so draining to us. We invest emotionally into the right kinds of things so that we're not investing in things that are going to cause us to be all stressed and upset all the time. We're practicing this sense of spirituality that's going to give us this greater strength on the inside.

I just thought that is really a valuable thing that I need. Because I feel stressed sometimes, overwhelmed. We really need to amplify that little piece that God has inside that can really take over and be this great thing in our lives.

But I want to continue in our passage because as I continue to read the passage, I get into some how-tos. I get to see some more amplification of this idea that we've already talked about. So I'm continuing on in 2 Corinthians 4 to the end of the chapter. Notice it says – *It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken." Since we have that same spirit of faith, we also believe and therefore speak, because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you to himself. All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.*

Wow. That's interesting. The grace that's going out, it's spreading more and more is something that we too can experience. Notice there's that word in here. Do you see it? *Thanksgiving*. I'm so impressed in the Bible how many times *thanksgiving* appears. It's got to be part of the solution, even in here dealing with stress, to be grateful for what we're seeing God doing in life instead of complaining about where we are.

Notice in verse 16 it says – *Therefore we do not lose heart. Why do we lose heart? It goes on. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.* There's this inward thing inside of us. So we live under pressure. The pressure of getting school assignments turned in. The pressure of being misunderstood by other students or teachers or someone. The pressure of living in challenging situations, whether they're physically challenging or financially challenging situations.

There are some people who just struggle physically getting through the day. One woman I talked to I asked, “How many good days do you have in a month?”

She says, “About two weeks. Fourteen days are good days. The rest of the days I’m just overwhelmed with stuff.” Her body just doesn’t have good days. It’s really hard. There are people who live with a lot of pressure in their life. It’s just struggling.

How do you deal with all the stuff that’s there? You can look in your own life and you can see the pressure confining you, challenging you. We need to know that there’s this renewal that’s available to us. Notice the renewal is day by day. It’s not a one-time renewal. So it’s this daily renewal of this energy that’s inside this squished place where we’re feeling like we’re being confined, but inside there’s something happening renewing every day. It’s like it’s this energy source that we get to see. “So yeah. Today was a hard day. Lots of good things, but I saw God work today. I saw Him do this today.” So we find ourselves encouraged by the day as Christians because we have some spiritual benefit. We see what’s going on. We see God working in challenging situations and He’s doing these little things here and there. God is working. Renewal day by day.

For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

So that idea of fixing our eyes, I think, helps us address this idea of stress. The challenge that I know you have and I have is we’ve still got to get things done, we’ve still got to meet our tasks, we’ve got to meet the challenges of life, we’ve got to put up with things, people, situations. We find ourselves in things we can’t really escape. Maybe sometimes we need to adjust our lives and simplify them. Other times those situations are things we have to live with and have to deal with for a time. But in the midst of all of that there’s something spiritual going on inside. It’s that something spiritual that helps us deal with the stresses of life.

I believe that it will help us deal with the general daily stress. It will help us deal with the accumulated stress that starts to come up. We go, “Uh oh. I’m saving up some stuff here. I need to deal with it.” It will help us deal with the surprise stresses that happen in our lives. And it will help us deal with the posttraumatic stress that we experience. Because there is something spiritual going on deep inside of us. When we get a glimpse of that, we start embracing that, it’s generating some spiritual energy inside of us that helps us overcome the situations that we find ourselves in.

That’s it. Wow. I look at that and I go, “I need that.” I trust that the Lord will use that in your own heart and that you’ll take the next few moments just to talk to the Lord and say, “Lord, here’s what I need to do.” I don’t know what God’s telling you. Maybe you need to reorient some things or make some adjustments or changes. Or maybe what you need to do is you need to trust the Lord more or involve yourself more in spiritual things. I don’t know exactly what it is, but praying and asking the Lord to speak to you is the first step. As He does and you want to obey Him, you’ll start to see that spiritual component of the treasure inside of you grow and develop in some powerful ways.

God's word is just amazing. As we dig into it we learn a lot more about ourselves, about Him, and about His plan for our lives.

Would you stand with me and let's pray together.

[PRAYER] Heavenly Father, we come before you and we ask that you would come into the parts of our lives that are our stress points. As we list five stress points in our own lives, we ask that you would come into those areas and show us what it means to embrace that treasure and to harness that energy that you have provided for us. Lord, we want the *zoe* kind of life, the eternal life that's used in the scriptures. The Lamb's book of life is where that life is mentioned. We want that kind of life in our lives every day. Life abundant. So we ask that you would show us what that looks like and reveal to us the specific things that we can do and need to do this week to experience that in our own hearts. We ask this in Jesus' name, amen.