

# Family TableTalk

Conversation 104

## Everyday Stressors and Strains

read

Matthew 6:25-34, Philippians 2:3-11

think

Tom had just arrived home from work. It had been a long day. He had to dismiss an employee, and his workload would increase until said employee was replaced. As Tom walked in the door, he was reminded by his daughter that she has practice. His wife, Julie, had to leave in 10 minutes for a women's Bible study but was feeling overwhelmed because the school had called about their sons' absences piling up. As they walked out the door his son said, "Dad,

Jenny broke up with me today. I am so bummed and don't want to go to school anymore where I have to see her every day. Can I change schools?"

How do we handle the regular stresses of everyday life, and do so in a way that honors Christ? Jesus addresses this in His Sermon on the Mount, when he says "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life..." This statement really provides an overarching response to how we should handle everyday stressors in our lives. He leaves no room for us to include a "what about this situation?"

After commanding us to refrain from being anxious about our lives, Jesus asks a profound question; "And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?" In love, Jesus commands us to not allow the normal, everyday stressors to be what rules in our hearts and heads. Why? Not only does it not add to our lives, but it also can rob us of the joy Jesus has for us. When we allow stress to be what drives us, we are communicating that we don't trust God to sustain us. Jesus gives us these commands so we can honor God and experience the joy of seeing Him provide us with all we need for each day.

apply

- As a family, read Philippians 2:3-11, where we are told to "count others more significant than yourselves." How does serving others help our everyday stress? Why not write down ways you can do this as a family? Come up with a list of 5-7 ways you can do this and track how this helps you deal with the stresses and strains of life.
- Where in life do we need to slow down and trust Jesus to sustain us in stressful situations? Are we aware of any big stressors coming up in our lives? What if our daily stresses and strains are seen as opportunities rather than obstacles?
- Adrien Segal once wrote, "We honor God and help others far more when we prayerfully focus on doing, in love, the best job we are able."<sup>1</sup>
- Discuss this quote from counselor Julie Lowe: "worrying is not a tactic that will keep our kids safe. Our anxiety does nothing but take up time and mental energy... Worry prevents us from living fully in the present."<sup>2</sup>

pray

God of grace, we acknowledge you rule and reign over all things. This includes the stresses and strains of life. Father, as we can see the sin of selfishness in our lives, we ask that you forgive us. We ask that you replace self-pity with self-sacrifice. Thank you, Jesus, for revealing to us how to handle stress, and to bring our requests to you. May we do this often and always, and may you receive all the glory as we live with peace. Remind us, oh God, of your power, presence and plan when life is overwhelming. By Your grace and for Your glory, we pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

<sup>1</sup> Adrien Segal – *Give Your Anxious Mind a Rest*

<sup>2</sup> Julie Lowe – *Safeguards: Shielding Our Homes and Equipping Our Kids*, Pg 32-33

Additional Resource: David Powlison – *Stress: Peace Amid Pressure*