



# Small Group Discussion



**PART III Stress**  
**January 14-15, 2012**

## Key Verse

**Genesis 2:1-3** *So the creation of the heavens and the earth and everything in them was completed. On the seventh day God had finished his work of creation, so he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because it was the day when he rested from all his work of creation. (NLT)*

## Getting Started

The Better series is designed to discover God's "Owners Manual" for the body He's entrusted to you to live life on earth. Why would you think that God would "need" to or choose to rest on the seventh day?

## Stress Factors

Vern talked about stress that we create and the stress that just happens to us. This weekend we looked at how Elijah handled stress and the classic signs of un-managed stressed – sleep, hopelessness, hunger, poor choices. Our Small Group discussion we're going to look at some habits that cause stress through the life of Moses.

Moses was the leader of a new nation adjusting from several generations of a servant mentality transitioning to a conquering, independent nation. Not an easy transition to lead! As you read the following passage, notice the factors that produce stress.

**READ: Exodus 18:13-23**

**What are some of the factors for stress in Moses' life?** For instance, several verses earlier Moses notes that he had sent his wife and sons to live with his father-in-law so that he could focus on leading this nation. Absence from family is one cause of stress.



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- Mediating disputes of the people from morning until evening
- Messiah complex – no delegation to other leaders
- Belief that no one else could apply God’s word to problems like him
- Moses settled disputes rather than teaching the people God’s Laws to avoid these disputes v. 20
- Moses put all his time into settling disputes (reactive) rather than training the next generation of leaders (proactive) vv. 20-21
- Moses was too spread out rather than focusing on his strengths v. 22

## **Consider the areas of responsibility in your life. What are the primary sources of stress in your life?**

Some sources of stress can be avoided (“work smarter, not harder”), much of stress is part of life: Work, raising kids, schedules, health, finances, bills, break-down of property, school, etc.

**READ: Mark 12:30** *And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength. (NLT)*

Vern said the goal of stress is not to decrease stress, but to increase your capacity for stress. A couple would not have children if they weren’t willing to increase their capacity for stress. If an employee wasn’t willing to increase their capacity, they wouldn’t accept a promotion. An athlete that doesn’t increase their capacity for stress will be replaced by one who does.

Let’s look at three methods of increasing your capacity for loving God with more strength.

## Daily Release

### God’s Word

**READ: Joshua 1:8-9**

**How can you meditate on God’s word regularly so that you can be careful to put it into practice in your life?**



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**What is the result of a careful application of God's word into your life (Joshua 1:9)**

- **Exercise**

**READ: 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 4:8**

**How does physical discipline strengthen discipline of godly habits?**

**What have you chosen to do to institute a daily discipline of exercise?**

**What are other daily releases that take you away from stress?**

## Weekly Release

**READ: Matthew 14:22–23** *Immediately after this, Jesus insisted that his disciples get back into the boat and cross to the other side of the lake, while he sent the people home. After sending them home, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. Night fell while he was there alone. (NLT)*

**Jesus had just performed a major miracle of feeding the multitudes. What does Jesus do next?**

**When you have a major win at work, do you rest or go on to the next project?**

**How do you prepare for a week that you know will be stressful?**

## I Can't Believe I'm Not Better

So far in our Better series we've considered our body's need for exercise & stress and release.

- What have you done to start a daily exercise program?
- What will you do to increase your capacity for stress?



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## Group Prayer Time

- Pray for your group's commitments in getting fit this year.
- Pray for the courage to start.
- Take some time for the group to share prayer needs.

Check out the resources on the Harvest website that will help you through this series at [www.harvestweb.net/icanbelieve](http://www.harvestweb.net/icanbelieve)