



COVID-19 QUARANTINE HELPED TRANSFORM STRESSFUL TO STRESS-FREE



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The quarantine has surprisingly improved my stress. God has shown me the difference in the transformation from a "FUL" life to a "FREE" life and from a "Stress-FUL" to a "Stress- FREE" reality. He used the vessel of time as the illuminating apparatus for godly truth, i.e.... freedom ([John 8:32 \(NIV\)](#) "Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."). COVID-19 changed my schedule and brought my hypermobile and social lifestyle to a snail's pace. I found myself having more quiet alone time in my life without the normal routines and external stimulates.

In John Piper's book, "God is the Gospel", he asked the most important and clarifying question(s) of all time. "If you could have heaven, with no sickness, and with all the friends you ever had on earth, and all the food you ever liked, and all the leisure activities you ever enjoyed, and all the natural beauties you ever saw, all the physical pleasures you ever tasted, and no human conflict or any natural disasters, could you be satisfied with heaven if Christ was not there?" In quiet reflection of this question, I started to take inventory of my time and I came to see the shocking and embarrassing truth. My answer would have to be, "No". If I were allowed entrance into heaven, my mind would be in a miserable state. This may be too real of a statement for many people, but it is true for me. My view of heaven was primarily how it would be great for ME and MY desires. Do you see the emphasis... ME? I viewed heaven as having all the things that I liked on earth without famine, work, pain, and suffering. The ideal of an eternal union/relationship with God was an afterthought. The ideal of God's love experienced only by the spirit and mind was never pondered.

I've heard it said, that the mind is the battlefield for the flesh (temporal) and the spirit (eternal). So as an exercise to see whether my flesh or my spirit was winning, I started to evaluate my time each morning. First, I invite God and His Spirit to walk with me and give me the truth. Next, I listed some of the things that I did. Tasks and points were logged into two main categories: Team Spirit & Team Flesh. I gave points for each task based on how effective I was for that category: 1=Incompetent, 2=Competent, 3=Proficient (being competent can also mean that you are doing just the bare minimum while being proficient carries a level of mastery that is above minimum). I tallied the total and reflected. See my results on the next page.

STRESSFUL TO STRESS-FREE CONTINUED....

Team Spirit

Prayed (3 points)

Exercise (2 points)

Clean Body (2 points)

Quiet Time With God (1 point)

Work/Employment (1 point)

Team Flesh

Listened to News and Sports (2 points)

Breakfast & Coffee (2 points)

Text//Video Happy Birthday & Anniv. (2 points)

Check Messages\Facebook (3 points)

Send out Organizational Messages (2 points)

Total

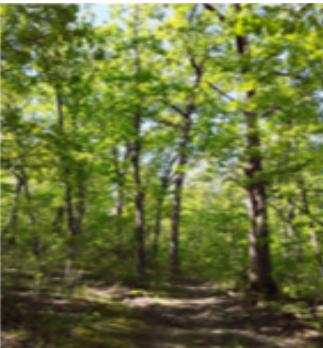
Team Spirit 9 pts

Total

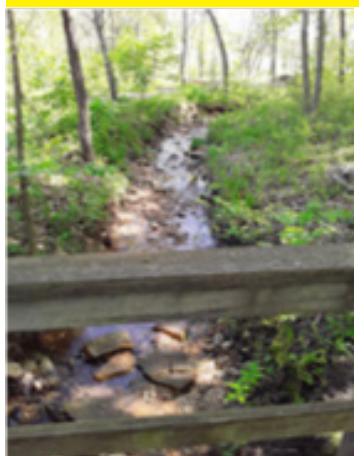
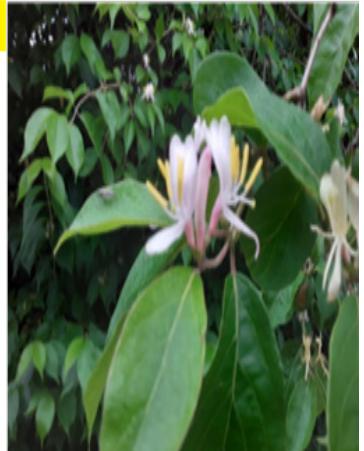
Team Flesh 11 pts

I invite you to evaluate your mornings and reflect on your effectiveness.

Here is the answer to the question of changing from “STRESS-ful” to a “STRESS-free” life. Constantly ask the Holy Spirit about what you are doing. For example, “Does this decision bring me closer to an eternal union with God or does it separate me from Him?” Don’t just ask, but wait for the answer.



The best way that I like to commune and ask these questions is to go on a nature hike. This is just quiet meditation time. Nature to me is the closest daily conduit to God and has been the point, to me, in which time touches God (eternity). I have included some pictures I took on my morning walks on the Audubon & Acorn Trails (Rolla, Missouri-May 2020).



When I am on these walks my mind is free (not full of things that immediately satisfy my flesh) and clear to listen and commune with God. It's a time to see and hear what God has for me and having this true freedom has brought me closer to a peace with Him in our eternal relationship. This, to me, is truly a stress-free life.

Genesis 3:8: "And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day."

Romans 8:6 The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.