



LESSON 1: GOD > STRESS

WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO LEARN: God is greater than any stress or worry they may experience in their lives.

WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO DO WITH WHAT THEY'VE LEARNED: To identify the major stressors in their lives and to consider what it looks like to give those over to God.

Scripture Focus: Luke 12:22-31

OVERVIEW: Students today live in a world of stress. The fast pace of life in the 21st century alone is enough to create feelings of anxiety and uneasiness. So, what is stress for today's teenagers? We can think of stress as their mental, emotional, and even spiritual state as a result of the tension caused by the demanding circumstances of their lives. When you think about all the changes facing students today like a parents' divorce, moving to a new city, preparing for college, pressure to perform in school and athletics, relationships, and so on, and then add their own physical and emotional changes, it's easy to see that a series of lessons on stress is needed. But you might ask, did Jesus address stress in the lives of His children? Yes, He did. And in this first lesson, we will discover why God is definitely bigger than stress.

TEACHER PREP VIDEO

The Jesus And Stress Teacher Prep Videos are short videos designed to help you grasp the main points of the lessons as you prepare to teach.

To access your "Jesus And Stress Lesson 1 Teacher Prep Video," click on the URL below.

- <https://youthministry360.com/jesus-and-stress-teacher-prep>

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The Bible Background is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you'll be studying. The Details give you background info for each book, The Setting informs you what's happening in and around the passage, and The Main Point gives you an overview of how the passage will be used in the lesson.

- **What do we mean by “context”?** In every ym360 Bible study lesson, you’ll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By “context” we mean at the very least helping students know who wrote the book, when it was written, and why it was written.
- **What’s The Big Deal?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don’t get a “big picture” understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God’s plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the Bible Background to help summarize the context.

THE DETAILS

- **Author:** Luke was a doctor, a Gentile Christian and a companion of Paul.
- **Time frame:** The Gospel of Luke was written around 60 AD.
- **Purpose:** Luke is the only Gentile author of the Bible. His entire purpose was to write an accurate account of the life of Jesus so as to present Jesus as Savior, fully God and fully man. It is one of the synoptic Gospels, having much in common with the Gospels of Matthew and Mark.

THE SETTING

Luke 12 includes teaching from Jesus intended specifically for His disciples. Jesus tells the parable of the Rich Fool in verses 13-21 then immediately follows with the passages this lesson will focus on. The teaching is on releasing our stress to God as it relates to “things in life” and comes in stark contrast to the rich fool who was obsessed with storing up more and more “things” in life. You may want to read Luke 12:13-21 ahead of time and be ready to point out the contrast to your students.

THE MAIN POINT

The main point of this lesson is to help teenagers recognize the sources of stress in their lives and why they cause worry and anxiety. With that accomplished, you can move on to help them understand that God is bigger than any stress they may face in life. But just the knowledge that God is bigger than their worries is not enough. In this lesson you will challenge your students to put their trust in God when it comes to the stresses in life, and to believe that He will always take care of them. God is bigger than anything we face in life. You’ll challenge your students to live out that truth each day.

LESSON PLAN

The Lesson Plan contains three elements: An introductory activity called The Lead-In; the Bible study section called The Main Event; an application-focused segment called The Last Word.

THE LEAD-IN

- **Goal:** To help students discover that some of their favorite things are not necessarily the most important things in life.
- **Set-Up:** Provide a copy of Lesson 1 “Lead-In Activity Sheet” (located in your Lesson 1 folder) and a pen or pencil for each student.

FIRST, ask your students if they’ve ever seen the classic movie *The Sound of Music*. If they have, they’ve no doubt heard the song “My Favorite Things.” (Even if they haven’t seen the movie, there’s a chance they’ve heard a cultural reference to it at some point.) If possible, you may want to find a way to play the song or even show a video clip of the song from the movie. Tell them you want to begin the lesson by allowing them to list five of their favorite things.

THEN, pass out copies of the Lead-In Activity Sheet and have them list their favorite things in the space provided. Give them a few minutes to finish the list. Then, when they’re done, lead them in a short discussion. **Ask:**

- **Who would like to share a list of their favorite things? (Allow students to share.)**
- **Look at your most favorite thing on that list. What would your life be like without this thing?**
Answers will vary.
- **Look at the rest of your list? How would not having these things impact your daily life?**
Answers will vary.

NEXT, ask students to look at the section titled “My Needed Things” and explain that there are some things they must have in order to just survive in this world. Instruct them to list up to five things they absolutely have to have to survive in this world.

When they’ve finished, **tell the students that most experts agree on five basic needs for human survival. As you call them out, see how many students had these on their lists:**

- **Water**
- **Food**
- **Shelter**
- **Clothing**
- **Companionship/Love (This last point may be a fun point of debate for your students, but don’t let it get too far off track.)**

Ask students to consider what their lives would be like without these things. (Of course, the answer is something like, “not very good.”) Then ask them to think about the two lists they’ve made. Of those two lists, which one represents the things they truly couldn’t live without? (Of course, it’s the second list.)

FINALLY, transition to the Main Event section by **saying something like the following:**

- Over the next four weeks, we are going to be looking at what Jesus had to say about stress. When we experience stress, we have an opportunity to respond in ways that honor God and protect us from added anxiousness, worry, and hopelessness. In this first lesson, you are going to find out about a little math formula and that is this: “God > Stress.” The starting point for learning this valuable truth is discovering that God is greater than any need you will ever have. Since God created you, He knows your needs, or your “Must Have List,” better than you do. Let’s open our Bibles and see what Jesus had to say about stress.

THE MAIN EVENT

- **Goal:** To help your students understand that God is greater than stress because He is always big enough to meet the needs of our daily life.
- **Set-Up:** None needed.

FIRST, begin the Bible study portion of the lesson by quoting this fact from a recent study by the American Psychological Association:

- “82% of teenagers in a recent survey admitted that they experienced extreme to moderate stress in the past school year.”

Then, lead students in a brief discussion. **Ask:**

- Do you think this is a fair picture of the students in your school, or do you think the number should be higher or lower? Why?
- What are some of the things that stress you out the most?
- Do you ever hear your friends talking about how stressed they are? What kind of effect does this have on you?

After giving the students a few minutes to respond, explain the bottom line is that young people in America are feeling stressed on a large scale. That means that if they aren’t currently experiencing stress, they can bet that someone around them is. Tell students that over the next four weeks you are going to help them see what the Bible has to say about stress.

NEXT, explain that the Bible passage for this lesson comes from the 12th chapter of the Gospel of Luke, verses 22-31. While they’re turning to the passage, provide some context for the passage by referring to the Details or Setting sections of the Bible Background. Then, once students have found the passage, read or have a student read Luke 12:22-23. Explain to students that Jesus’ disciples were just common men. And when they left their jobs to follow Jesus, they would have put themselves in a position of relative poverty. **Say something like:**

- Because Jesus had called each of them to the lifestyle of a wanderer, the disciples may have spent time worrying about having basic necessities like food and clothing. But Jesus wanted to reshape the thinking of His disciples. He starts by reminding them that life is greater than food and the body more important than clothing. The idea here is that Jesus wanted His followers to know that the human being was the greatest accomplishment in all of God’s creation. Just as the psalmist David said in the 139th Psalm, “I will praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made,” Jesus wanted the disciples to know that they were each important to God.

THEN, read or have a student read Luke 12:24 and have students summarize the verse by asking something similar to the following:

- What point was Jesus trying to make when He brought up the analogy of the ravens?
Answer: Ravens don’t worry about their provision. They just go find food and eat. God provides the food for them.

- **What does this say about who God is and what He does for His creation?**

Answer: God is a caring provider who looks after His creation.

NEXT, read or have a student read Luke 12:25-26. Explain that Jesus now gets to the heart of the matter when it comes to stressing out. Ask a student to reread verse 25 and lead students in a short discussion. **Ask:**

- **What does Jesus say in these verses about the worry His disciples might have had about the things they needed to get by?**

Answer: Jesus knew that like most people, His disciples probably spent time worrying about their needs. Worrying about their stuff, and about their quality of life ... etc. But responding to worry with inaction will do nothing to help things. Instead, Jesus wants us to lean on Him for our needs!

Explain to students that you're going to come back to tie all this together and make some good application to their lives today. But first, continue by reading or having a student read Luke 12:27-31. Explain that in verses 27-28, Jesus is basically making a similar analogy to the raven analogy He made earlier. But He adds something. Ask a student to read verse 28 again and **ask:**

- **What does Jesus seem to point to as the chief problem when it comes to worrying?**

Answer: Jesus said the problem is concerning ourselves with the riches of the world and having little faith in God as the Provider.

THEN, direct students' attention to Luke 12:29-31. **Ask the following questions:**

- **If you don't have to worry about having enough food to eat, think about the things in your life that might show up if Jesus were advising you not to stress about them. What are some of the things in your life that Jesus might include in verse 29?**

Answer: Wearing the right clothes, having the best cell phone, driving a new car, taking a cool vacation, etc.

- **Jesus knows that we have concerns in this life that we must pay attention to. There are things that we have to plan for and think about. But the key to what Jesus is saying seems to be in verse 29. What do you think is the difference between planning for and thinking about something (like a test or an interview) and "setting your heart" on it (some translations may say "do not seek")?**

Answer: It's about priority and place. When we give our stressors a place of prominence in our hearts and minds, we're giving our worries the place that is rightfully God's. There is no need to feel perpetual stress over things we cannot control! But if we remember God's control in times of worry, we are able to overcome stress and worship Him.

- **What does it mean to seek the Kingdom of God?**

Answer: Seeking the Kingdom means making God a priority. It means bending your life to live God's way. We do this by focusing on living out the Gospel, seeking to love others, and seeing the world around us through God's eyes.

- **Why did Jesus propose this as a solution to how we view the things that cause us stress?**

Answer: When we seek God first, we align ourselves with God's heart and God's plan. We begin to see that He is greater than the things that cause us stress. We see Him as a Provider and Comforter. And we begin to see all the ways He leads us through the things in life that cause us stress.

- **Last question from this passage: What did Jesus mean when He said "all these things" will be given to you?**

Answer: God will take care of our real needs. He wants us to worry less about the messy stuff of life and to focus more on Him

FINALLY, transition into The Last Word by **saying something similar to the following**:

- **Jesus' followers worried about things like having enough food to eat and having adequate clothing to wear. These were and still are the very basic necessities of life. Now, not only do we worry about food, but the type of food we eat. We worry about clothing, but also what type of clothing we wear. While our circumstances are different from those 2,000 years ago, the message of Jesus is just as relevant today. He said don't worry because God is greater than stress. In fact, God is greater than anything we face in life. Maybe God is calling you to live a more simple life or focus more on Kingdom living. Maybe He just wants you to grab on to the truth that you are the very best of His creation and He loves you beyond your ability to comprehend. God certainly wants you to live a life of peace, not stress and worry. That journey begins by remembering the simple formula: God > Stress.**

Make sure no one has any questions then move to wrap up the lesson with the Last Word.

THE LAST WORD

- **Goal:** To help students look at some examples of times in the Bible when God was greater than what people were facing.
- **Set-Up:** You will probably want a dry-erase board to help with the activity, but it's not essential.

FIRST, tell your students that in today's lesson you helped them see that God is greater than stress. Explain that it might help their faith to look at some people in the Bible who got to see this truth displayed first-hand. Explain that you're going to look at a few passages of Scripture that depict God intervening in a stressful situation. For each passage, you'll want students to answer the question: "What was God greater than?"

THEN, choose a few of the following passages to read, preferably at least two or three of them. Read or have a volunteer read the passage. At the end of the passage, **ask the question listed below**.

Passage 1: The Parting of the Red Sea, Exodus 14:19-22

- **Moses and the Israelites discovered that God was greater than _____?**
Answer: Nature (or maybe even something like "circumstances" or "limitations.")

Passage 2: 300 Versus an Army, Judges 7:19-22

- **Gideon and his 300 men discovered that God was greater than _____?**
Answer: Overwhelming odds

Passage 3: God Versus A False God, 1 Kings 18:35-38

- **Elijah and the people of God discovered that God was greater than _____?**
Answer: False gods

Passage 4: Giant Killer, 1 Samuel 17:42-49

- **Saul and his army discovered that God was greater than _____?**
Answer: Giant obstacles

Situation 5: Not Even Death, John 11:39-44

- **Lazarus and his family discovered that God was greater than _____?**
Answer: Death

THEN, once you've read the passages, ask students to think of the things they mentioned earlier that cause them stress. Help them see if God is greater than nature, giant men, and even death God is also greater than any worries they may struggle with each day. This is an amazing promise they can take with them as they go through their daily lives. Challenge students to consider what it looks like in their lives to turn to God when they are presented with a stressful situation, and how they can trust Him to see them through it.

FINALLY, close by reminding the students that stress is a part of everyone's life, but too much stress can distract us from living the victorious life God intended. **Say something like:**

• **Learning to put our faith in God and turn our worries over to Him is an act of faith. The more we do it now the easier it will be later in life. Putting our faith into motion by trusting God is the answer to finding peace in life. It is also the way to help conquer stress.**

Close the session by allowing students some time to consider things that stress them out. Have a time of guided prayer and ask the students to think of what stresses them out the most. As each thing comes to their minds have them declare that God is greater than their stress then thank Him for His greatness.

Close with your own prayer for your students, declaring that God is greater than anything in this life.

• Don't forget to distribute the devotions to your students this week. If you're printing them, have them available for students as you wrap up class. If you're texting a link, posting them on Social Media, or some other means of electronic distribution, make sure you inform students of when they will be receiving them.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU...

- *Do you have questions about a lesson?*
- *Something that worked particularly well you want to share?*
- *Something that didn't work you want to bring up?*

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns, at feedback@youthministry360.com.



LESSON 2: THE CHOICE IS YOURS

WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO LEARN: They have a choice when it comes to dealing with their stress: They can choose to give in to the worries of this world, or they can choose to focus on Jesus.

WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO DO WITH WHAT THEY’VE LEARNED: To identify, practically speaking, what it means to choose to focus on Christ instead of their stress.

Scripture Focus: Luke 12:22-31

OVERVIEW: You may have heard the phrase “be Mary in a Martha world.” That phrase is based on the scripture in this lesson. Mary and Martha were sisters, and what little we know about them, we see an interesting picture. One, Martha, worried over the details, and the other, Mary, focused on embracing the moment. We see this based on an encounter with Christ. One day when Jesus came to visit, Martha hurried about preparing the meal while Mary was content to sit and spend time with Jesus. The way both the sisters handled the daily pressures of life is an excellent model for helping teenagers understand the causes and solutions for anxiety and worry. Choosing to focus on Christ will help your students learn the Biblical model for dealing with stress.

TEACHER PREP VIDEO

The Jesus And Stress Teacher Prep Videos are short videos designed to help you grasp the main points of the lessons as you prepare to teach.

To access your “Jesus And Stress Lesson 2 Teacher Prep Video,” click on the URL below.

- <https://youthministry360.com/jesus-and-stress-teacher-prep>

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The Bible Background is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you’ll be studying. The Details give you background info for each book, The Setting informs you what’s happening in and around the passage, and The Main Point gives you an overview of how the passage will be used in the lesson.

- **What do we mean by “context”?** In every ym360 Bible study lesson, you’ll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By “context” we mean at the very least helping students know who wrote the book, when it was written, and why it was written.
- **What’s The Big Deal?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don’t get a “big picture” understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God’s plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the Bible Background to help summarize the context.

THE DETAILS

- **Author:** Luke was a doctor, a Gentile Christian and a companion of Paul.
- **Time frame:** The Gospel of Luke was written around 60 AD.
- **Purpose:** Luke is the only Gentile author of the Bible. His entire purpose was to write an accurate account of the life of Jesus so as to present Jesus as Savior, fully God and fully man. It is one of the synoptic Gospels, having much in common with the Gospels of Matthew and Mark.

THE SETTING

The city of Bethany is near the eastern side of the Mount of Olives not far from Jerusalem. Jesus was visiting in the home of Mary and Martha, sisters to Lazarus whom Jesus would eventually raise from the dead. Apparently, they knew Jesus was coming because Martha had been busy preparing both the house and the meal. Hospitality was one of the key virtues of the Jewish culture, and sitting together for a meal was an important time for both eating and fellowship in that day.

THE MAIN POINT

Students experience stress, some at very high levels. Not only are students overwhelmed with the feelings associated with too much stress, but many times they choose to handle the overload by participating in destructive behaviors.

LESSON PLAN

The Lesson Plan contains three elements: An introductory activity called The Lead-In; the Bible study section called The Main Event; an application-focused segment called The Last Word.

THE LEAD-IN

- **Goal:** To help students identify how focusing too much on one thing can cause them to miss the obvious things going on around them.
- **Set-Up:** You will need to set up a way for your students to watch a clip from YouTube. The clip can be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oSQJP40PcGI> (Or search for the Awareness Test. It should have people playing basketball.)

FIRST, tell your students that you want them to participate in an experiment. Explain that many people today say that students cannot focus on things, and you want to prove them wrong. Tell them you are going to show them a video clip that involves counting. They need to simply follow the instructions in the clip.

THEN, show the video and when the question is asked “how many times the ball was passed”, stop the video and ask for responses. After everyone has had an opportunity to answer, ask if anyone noticed anything strange that happened in the video. (Halfway through the video a person in a bear costume begins moonwalking through the group.) Some students may have caught this, and it is okay if they want to reveal this to the group. At this point you can say, “Well let’s see what was going on,” and then show the rest of the video. Then **ask the following question:**

- **Why was it so hard to catch the dancing bear over to counting passes the first time you watched the video?**
Answer: I was too busy counting passes, it was hard to see, I wasn’t expecting that to happen, etc.

NEXT, tell your students there are several videos on the Internet like this one and they are called Selective Attention Tests. The idea is that when people are focused on a task, like counting passes, they sometimes miss the obvious perhaps more important things going on at the same time. Tell them that magicians use this technique all the time and it is called “sight of hand.” The magician will get you to focus on what is happening with, let’s say, their left hand while they are hiding something with the right hand. Then ask if they are wondering what all this has to do with a Bible lesson on stress.

FINALLY, transition to the Main Event by **saying something like the following:**

- **Last week we learned that over 80% of students experience moderate to severe levels of stress. So the question is not do you have stress, but how do you handle your stress? Unfortunately, many students focus on the wrong thing when stress becomes a problem. They look to staying busy or getting involved in bad behaviors to get their minds off their worries and anxieties. In today’s lesson we are going to find out that focusing on Christ and His teachings is the way to find peace when life seems out of control. So open your Bibles to Luke chapter 10 and let’s get ready to study the Bible.**

THE MAIN EVENT

- **Goal:** To help your students discover what it means to focus on Christ as a way to help them handle the stress in their lives.
- **Set-Up:** None needed.

FIRST, begin the Bible study portion of the lesson by reminding the students that this is the second lesson in the series “Jesus and Stress.” Take a few minutes to remind the students what they learned last week:

- **The disciples tended to face issues like a lack of food, water, and clothing; so do we.**
- **Jesus taught them that if God can feed the ravens and clothe the lilies, then He is bigger than anything they may face in life. This is the same for us when it comes to the stressors in our lives.**

Set up the Bible study portion of the lesson by telling the students that they will be looking at a passage in the Gospel of Luke. Fill in the rest of the context by asking students how much they know about Luke. Use the Bible Background to guide your discussion.

THEN, read or have a student read Luke 10:38. Explain that Martha and Mary were sisters who also had a brother named Lazarus. Ask if anyone can remember how Jesus and Lazarus were connected. (Not only was Jesus very close to this family, but He would eventually raise Lazarus from the dead.)

NEXT read or have a student read Luke 10:39-40. Then, ask:

- **How many of you have brothers and/or sisters? For those who have siblings, think of some of the ways you are alike.**

Allow students to respond.

- **Now, think of some of the ways you are different.**

Allow students to respond.

- **How do we see the different personalities of the two sisters reflected in these verses?**

Answer: We see a contrast in the personalities of the two sisters. Martha was seen as bearing the responsibility of hospitality, something vital in the Jewish culture. Martha was depicted as a worker. Mary was pictured initially as someone who seemed to be less concerned about the tasks at hand.

- **What was the point of conflict between the two sisters during Jesus’ visit?**

Answer: Martha was busy preparing the dinner and Mary was sitting listening to what Jesus had to say.

- **Why do you think this caused a conflict?**

Answer: Perhaps Martha could not understand how her sister could just sit while work needed to be done and Mary couldn’t understand why work was more important than spending time with Jesus.

- **What request did Martha offer to Jesus?**

Answer: She wanted Him to tell Mary to come and help her.

THEN, continue by reading or having a student read Luke 10:41-42. Tell the students that different versions of the Bible use different words to show how Jesus described Martha. Have students call out any words their translations use to describe Martha. (May include worried, upset, anxious, bothered, and troubled). **Say something like:**

- **In today’s language, Jesus may have even said that Martha was stressed. But what Jesus does in verse 42 is put things in perspective for Martha. Let’s take a closer look at what Jesus said.**

Lead students in a brief discussion. **Ask:**

- **When Martha complains to Jesus, what is His response in verse 42?**

Answer: He says that only one thing is needed.

- **Over the centuries, there have been disagreements in the exact interpretation of what Jesus meant when He said “one thing.” Take into consideration the context of the verse, what Martha is complainin about, and what you’ve already learned about what Jesus has to say about our worry and stress. What do YOU think Jesus means when He said “there is only one thing that is needed”?**

Answers will vary. Don’t be in a rush to provide the answer let students wrestle with it. Once you’ve allowed several students to respond, explain to students that the correct answer probably lies in the same passage they studied last week.

- **Does anyone remember the last part of the passage we studied last week? We studied Luke 12:22-31. Jesus told His disciples not to stress out over meeting their needs, but to instead seek what?**

Answer: God’s Kingdom. Jesus said, “And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.” Jesus seems to be telling Martha to seek His Kingdom first, and to let the needs of the day fall in line as less important.

- **It’s important to stop and ask: Was Martha wrong to care about the preparations of the meal?**

Answer: No.

- **Then what was the problem?**

Answer: The problem is that Martha’s whole focus was on meal preparation, instead of her focus being on God (who was literally sitting in her living room). She put her worries and concerns over earthly things, even though they were valid concerns, ahead of the value of being in Jesus’ presence.

- **How are we like Martha in our own lives?**

Answers will vary.

- **What can we learn from Mary? What choice did she make?**

Answer: She valued Jesus above all else. She understood that part of having a guest like Jesus was spending time with Him rather than what was planned or cooked.

Wrap up this discussion by helping your students understand that while Martha was an excellent servant, and was right to care about her earthly responsibilities, she was creating anxiety by overdoing it. **Say:**

- **Martha wasn’t a bad person. Not at all. She just had a moment where she allowed stress to overtake her. She may have been a victim of overthinking or expected too much of herself. Martha was a servant, a doer, which is exactly what God calls us to be. But she lost sight of what mattered most. And because of this, she lost sight of her focus on Christ. We do the same thing when we let our stress and worry over our earthly responsibilities come before our worship and service to Jesus. We can’t ignore what we must do on this earth. But we must not let our stress and worry over our responsibilities come between Jesus and us.**

NEXT, tell them it is time to do a little check-up on Martha and Mary and see if the words of Jesus made any impact on their lives. **Read or have a student read** John 12:1-3 and help them see the following:

- **Martha is still serving. A servant’s heart is a precious gift and Martha is still a person who loves to do things. Point out that there is no mention of her getting upset with her sister. Chances are great that the words of Jesus did have an impact on her life.**
- **Mary is still focusing on Jesus. In fact, she goes above and beyond by pouring a very expensive portion of perfume on the feet of Jesus and then wiping the excess up with her hair. Tell your students that this is an act of pure love and that after her encounter with Jesus, Mary is able to focus even more on Him. It is**

possible that Mary had the gift of ... well giving! She is very generous with all that she has, even her time.

FINALLY, close the Bible study part of this lesson by helping your students understand that spending their lives being consumed by their tasks and responsibilities only leads to stress, anxiety, and worry. By focusing on Christ, they can find true peace that will calm their anxious hearts. **Say:**

• **Better still, by focusing on Christ we will discover the most important thing in the life of a believer and that is love. It's impossible to keep our eyes on Jesus and not be captivated by His love. It is His love that is the most important thing in our lives and it is His love that will guard our hearts from daily stress.**

Make sure no one has any questions then move to wrap up the lesson with the Last Word.

THE LAST WORD

- **Goal:** To help students look at some ways to practice staying focused on Jesus each day.
- **Set-Up:** Provide a copy of the “Last Word Activity Sheet” (located in your Lesson 2 folder) and a pen or pencil for each student.

FIRST, explain to students that you want to help them with a little application activity that will give them a better handle on today's lesson. Remind them the key to finding help for dealing with stress is to keep their focus on Christ. Explain that you are going to pass out an activity sheet that has the letters F-O-C-U-S going down the side of the paper. As you read the Scripture passages as a group, have them try and guess what word goes in each blank. Give each student a copy of the Last Word Activity Sheet along with a pen or pencil, and work through the passages together, asking for guesses after each one.

The answers are:

- **F is Fellowship or Friendship**
- **O is Obedience or Obey**
- **C is Cares**
- **U is Unfailing Love**
- **S is Strong**

Take a few minutes to talk about how each word helps in dealing with stress in life. You can do this as a discussion, asking students how they think each concept helps deal with stress, or read them aloud as you go through the list.

• **Fellowship/Friendship** – We can have a great friendship with Christ because the Holy Spirit lives in our hearts and souls. Always remember that whatever is happening Jesus is with you all the time. Fellowship with God by reading His Word and worshipping Him helps keep our focus sharply tuned on Christ.

• **Obedience/Obey** – The psalmist talked about loving to obey God's laws. When we obey the teachings in the Bible God will help us find peace in our lives.

• **Cares** – The double excitement here is that the verse states that we can give God all of our worries and cares because He cares about us. Help your students see the importance of taking their stresses and worries to God and trusting Him to do His part in our lives.

• **Unfailing Love** – Students live with a lot of stress due to broken families. They may be afraid to put their trust in God, but they CAN trust Him because His love has never failed in the past, it doesn't fail now, and it will not fail in the future. What a great stress relief to know God's love is not dependent on imperfect humans but on His perfect grace.

- **Strong** – The writer of the psalm referred to God as a strong tower but He is strong in other ways, too. He is bigger than anything we will face in this life, including our stress.

FINALLY, close by challenging your students to choose one of the five words in the activity to be their focus word for the week. Ask them to write the word down in the space on the activity sheet and to take the sheet home with them. Tell them to spend a few minutes each day praying about the word, meditating on the word, and looking up other scripture verses that contain the word. Explain that as they spend more time focusing on Christ and the things of God, they will find an incredible resource of spiritual strength to help them with the stress of daily living.

If there are no more thoughts or questions, close in prayer.

- Don't forget to distribute the devotions to your students this week. If you're printing them, have them available for students as you wrap up class. If you're texting a link, posting them on Social Media, or some other means of electronic distribution, make sure you inform students of when they will be receiving them.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU...

Do you have questions about a lesson?

Something that worked particularly well you want to share?

Something that didn't work you want to bring up?

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns, at feedback@youthministry360.com.



LESSON 3: CHOOSING TO CHOOSE RIGHT

WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO LEARN: Choosing to trust God with their stress is the right decision, even if they don't understand exactly what God is doing.

WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO DO WITH WHAT THEY'VE LEARNED: To define what "surrender" looks like and to commit to surrendering one of their main sources of stress to God.

Scripture Focus: Luke 1:26-38

Supporting Scripture: Luke 1:48

OVERVIEW: This lesson is unique among the entire Jesus Studies curriculum in that it doesn't feature the actual words of Jesus, but of Jesus' mother, Mary. As we discuss dealing with the stress that life can bring, Mary's example is simply too valuable to pass up. Mary finds herself in about as stressful a situation as you could imagine. She has just found out that she will have to tell her fiancé that she is pregnant and that the baby was not conceived through any sort of unfaithfulness but was instead conceived by God. Faced with potentially bearing the scorn of her husband-to-be and her community, plus the weight of carrying the promised Messiah, Mary could have reacted by giving in to the stress. Yet we see Mary model the exact response you studied in Lesson 1: Trusting God to both see her through the stress, and to take care of her as He executes His perfect plan.

TEACHER PREP VIDEO

The Jesus And Stress Teacher Prep Videos are short videos designed to help you grasp the main points of the lessons as you prepare to teach.

To access your "Jesus And Stress Lesson 3 Teacher Prep Video," click on the URL below.

- <https://youthministry360.com/jesus-and-stress-teacher-prep>

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The Bible Background is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you'll be studying. The Details give you background info for each book, The Setting informs you what's happening in and around the passage, and The Main Point gives you an overview of how the passage will be used in the lesson.

- **What do we mean by “context”?** In every ym360 Bible study lesson, you’ll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By “context” we mean at the very least helping students know who wrote the book, when it was written, and why it was written.
- **What’s The Big Deal?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don’t get a “big picture” understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God’s plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the Bible Background to help summarize the context.

THE DETAILS

- **Author:** Luke was a doctor, a Gentile Christian and a companion of Paul.
- **Time frame:** The Gospel of Luke was written around 60 AD.
- **Purpose:** Luke is the only Gentile author of the Bible. His entire purpose was to write an accurate account of the life of Jesus so as to present Jesus as Savior, fully God and fully man. It is one of the synoptic Gospels, having much in common with the Gospels of Matthew and Mark.

THE SETTING

The city of Nazareth is now a thriving town in Israel. Just west of the Sea of Galilee, Nazareth is about 90 miles north of Jerusalem. When Mary and Joseph lived there, the city was quite different. With a population of only around 500, Nazareth was a close-knit community but of little economic or political value. It was a poor agricultural town with no trade routes and no valuable natural resources. It is from this humble city that God chose the couple who would parent and raise Jesus, the Son of God.

THE MAIN POINT

What role do choices play when it comes to the stress we face in life? That is the main question in today’s lesson. Mary, the mother of Jesus, was faced with one of the most stressful situations a woman of her day could face. (Well, it would be pretty stressful for a woman in ANY day.) Not yet married, she discovered she was pregnant but an angel told her she was carrying the long promised Son of God. She could have done what most women would have done: hid in shame and become an outcast. But instead, Mary chose to trust what God said to her through the angel Gabriel and boldly continue her plans to marry Joseph. In this lesson you will help your students to see that there is peace and calm in the life of the person who chooses to choose right even though they may not understand what God is doing.

LESSON PLAN

The Lesson Plan contains three elements: An introductory activity called The Lead-In; the Bible study section called The Main Event; an application-focused segment called The Last Word.

THE LEAD-IN

- **Goal:** To help your students explore what the Bible says about stress and the choices people make in life.
- **Set-Up:** None needed.

FIRST, begin the Bible study portion of the lesson by reminding the students that this is the third lesson in the series “Jesus and Stress.” In case any of your students missed some of the other lessons bring them up to date with a quick refresher on the previous studies. See who can review the last two lessons. Use the following bullet points if needed.

- **Lesson 1:** Jesus taught that if God could feed the ravens and clothe the lilies surely He is bigger than anything we may face in life.
- **Lesson 1:** Since God promised to take care of our necessities we do not need to worry about those things.
- **Lesson 2:** Obsessing over the demands of our day-to-day lives will only lead to stress, anxiety, and worry.
- **Lesson 2:** True peace that will calm our anxious hearts is found by staying focused on Jesus, his commands, and His teachings.

THEN, begin the Bible study by telling your students that that passage from today’s lesson is part of what we usually call the Christmas story. Point out how interesting it is that between the four Gospel writers, only Luke and Matthew mention the events surrounding the birth of Christ. And only Luke tells the story of the angel visiting Mary. Have students turn to Luke 1 and see if anyone can tell you any of the details about who Luke was. (If you choose, provide the context for the passage using your Bible Background.) Then, read or have a student read Luke 1:26-27.

Explain that there is a lot of history packed in these two verses so let’s unpack it for your students.

- **Mary and Joseph were engaged, or some versions of the Bible use the word betrothed. This means a year before the marriage they participated in a formal ceremony to declare the intent to marry.**
- **Joseph was a descendent of King David, once the most respected bloodline in all of Israel. Some say the reference here is that Mary and Joseph were both from the house of David. Commentator John Gill says that the bloodline of David must have been in bad shape if the best representatives were, “a carpenter, and a poor virgin; and both residing in so despicable a place as Nazareth in Galilee.”**

NEXT, read or have a student read Luke 1:28-29. Then, ask:

- **Describe Mary’s response to the angel.**
Answer: Point out that when the angel Gabriel visited Mary, she was confused and disturbed.
- **Put yourself in Mary’s shoes. Why do you think she was bothered by this visit?**
Answers might include it scared her, she was caught off guard, it freaked her out, etc.
- **Why would she be so bothered by it? And if you were in her shoes, what would you think?**
Answers may vary. But help students see that, you know, when an angel appears to you it’s kind of a big deal.

THEN, read or have a student read Luke 1:30-33. Note that the angel calmed Mary's fear by telling her not to be frightened, then got right down to the business of telling her why he was there. You may find it interesting to note that what the angel was about to tell Mary may have charged her up all over again. **Ask:**

- **Let's list out all the things the angel said to Mary in verses 30-33.**

Answer: You are blessed of God; you are going to pregnant and have a son; you will name Him Jesus; He will be called the Son of the Most High; He will reign over Israel forever; His kingdom will never end.

- **So, consider Mary was already a little freaked out. How do you think she must have felt here?**

Answer: Here you really want to convey to your students the magnitude of what the angel was saying to Mary and help them get a sense of the awe and stress she must have felt after the visit from Gabriel.

- **On a scale of 1-10, what would you guess Mary's stress level was?**

Answers will vary.

NEXT, read or have a student read Luke 1:34-37. Engage your students by asking for their responses to the following questions:

- **What did Gabriel say would be the source of this miracle of the virgin birth?**

Answer: The Holy Spirit and the power of God.

- **What other miracle did the angel tell Mary about?**

Answer: That her barren relative Elizabeth was going to have a child.

- **What did Gabriel say in verse 37 that is the key to all the things that were happening?**

Answer: The angel said that nothing is impossible with God.

- **Why do you think we experience stress over choices God leads us to make?**

Answer: The bottom line is that we really don't believe that nothing is impossible with God.

THEN, read or have a student read Luke 1:38. This is where you want to camp out for a bit. Ask your students if they can think of a word that sums up this verse. After some responses lead them to see that the verse is about surrender. Tell them that even though Mary did not understand why she was chosen or how any part of the whole situation was going to work out, she still surrendered her life to the will of God. **Say something like:**

- **In the face of what was surely one of the most stressful events imaginable, Mary had a choice. She could choose to freak out and worry about the all the unknowns. Or she could choose to trust God with each of her doubts. To surrender. To let God be bigger than her stress, even though she had NO idea how her situation would work out. Our challenge is to make the same choice Mary made when we face life's stressors, especially when we face an unknown future.**

NEXT, quickly turn over to Luke 1:48 and read this verse to your students. You want to show them that Mary has come to grips with what God called her to do and is at peace with what is happening. What you want the teenagers to get from this is that choosing what is right can seem very scary at first, but as we allow God to have control over our lives He gives us peace about our decisions.

FINALLY, transition into the Last Word by saying something similar to the following:

- **Mary was faced with an incredible situation. Giving birth to the Son of God could have created some very stressful experiences for her. Instead of rebelling against God’s call, she decided to surrender her life to what God wanted her to do. You may be feeling stress just from the struggle of fighting against God’s calling on your life. When you surrender to Him and believe that nothing is impossible with God, you will discover the most stress-free place on earth is being safe in His love and care.**

Make sure no one has any questions then move to wrap up the lesson with the Last Word.

THE LAST WORD

- **Goal:** To define what “surrender” looks like and to commit to surrendering one of their main sources of stress to God.
- **Set-Up:** This activity is best utilized using colorful card stock (or note cards in a pinch) and students’ phones or tablets. It can be done without the electronics if that doesn’t work for your group. But the phones/tablets add an extra element of creativity and accountability. You’ll need enough card-stock/note cards for each student to have one. Also provide some pens or markers.

FIRST, remind your students that this lesson is about finding help for stress by making the right choice. When we make a good choice and choose to surrender our stress to God, He meets us and leads us through. When we make a bad choice and choose to get wrapped up in our stress, we rob ourselves of God’s peace and comfort.

THEN, have students think of the main source of stress in their life. Distribute the note cards and pens. Instruct students to write the main source of their stress on the cards. The more creative, the better. It would be great if they wanted to draw a symbol or picture that represents the stressor. Initials would work too. When they’ve finished, have students who’d like to share do so.

NEXT, instruct them to flip their card over. Have each of them write the phrase, “Surrendering this to God means . . .” on the back of their card. Then, challenge each student to answer the question. What does it mean to surrender this stressor to God? How does it look practically? Encourage them to think about real, “doable” ways they can give this up to God. Have them finish their sentence. When you’ve allowed enough time to go by, have students who’d like to share tell the group what they’ve written.

THEN, encourage students to use their phones or tablets to take a picture of the card. (They can take the front or the back or both.) Challenge students to make this the screensaver on their device so every time they look at it, they will be reminded of what it will take for them to follow Mary’s lead and surrender their stress to the Lord.

FINALLY, close by reminding the students that our lives will inevitably cause us stress. But like Mary, we have two choices. Challenge your students to choose like Mary chose: to trust God to be bigger than their stress and to help them journey through the tough spots in life.

If you don’t have any more questions or thoughts from your group, close in prayer.

- Don’t forget to distribute the devotions to your students this week. If you’re printing them, have them available for students as you wrap up class. If you’re texting a link, posting them on Social Media, or some other means of electronic distribution, make sure you inform students of when they will be receiving them.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU...

- *Do you have questions about a lesson?*
- *Something that worked particularly well you want to share?*
- *Something that didn't work you want to bring up?*

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns, at feedback@youthministry360.com.



LESSON 4: PEACE > STRESS

WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO LEARN: That the Holy Spirit is present in their lives to give them peace and comfort.

WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO DO WITH WHAT THEY’VE LEARNED: To remember to seek the Holy Spirit’s comfort and peace in times of stress or anxiety.

Scripture Focus: John 14:23-27

Supporting Scripture: John 14:1

OVERVIEW: For the past three weeks you have been teaching your students what the Bible says about stress. In this final lesson you will leave them with the ultimate help for times when they feel troubled. Just as Jesus left His disciples with the promise of the coming of a helper, the Holy Spirit, you are ending this series of lesson with the reality of that Holy Spirit. Your students will find peace and comfort in life because the Holy Spirit is real and lives in the lives of every believer.

TEACHER PREP VIDEO

The Jesus And Stress Teacher Prep Videos are short videos designed to help you grasp the main points of the lessons as you prepare to teach.

To access your “Jesus And Stress Lesson 4 Teacher Prep Video,” click on the URL below.

- <https://youthministry360.com/jesus-and-stress-teacher-prep>

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The Bible Background is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you’ll be studying. The Details give you background info for each book, The Setting informs you what’s happening in and around the passage, and The Main Point gives you an overview of how the passage will be used in the lesson.

- **What do we mean by “context”?** In every ym360 Bible study lesson, you’ll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By “context” we mean at the very least helping students know who wrote the book, when it was written, and why it was written.
- **What’s The Big Deal?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don’t get a “big picture” understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God’s plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the Bible Background to help summarize the context.

THE DETAILS

- **Author:** The Gospel of John was written by John, son of Zebedee, a fisherman who left his trade to follow Jesus. John also penned the book of Revelation as well as the three letters in the New Testament that bear his name.
- **Time frame:** The Gospel of John was probably written between 85 and 95 AD. John most likely wrote his gospel in Ephesus before he was exiled to Patmos.
- **Purpose:** John’s stated purpose for writing this book can be found in John 20:30-31, the last two verses in his gospel: “Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” John’s goal seems to have been to clearly communicate a full theology of Jesus as the Messiah, the promised Son of God.

THE SETTING

John 14 comes during what the ESV Study Bible calls, “the farewell discourse.” This is a great term describing exactly what Jesus is doing in chapters 13-20. Jesus is at the end of His earthly ministry and is preparing His disciples to carry the message of salvation throughout the entire world. As He prepares to go to the cross and eventually leave the earth, He wanted His disciples to know that just as He gave them comfort in life the Holy Spirit would be coming to bring that same peace and comfort.

THE MAIN POINT

Peace and comfort are the prescriptions for a stress-filled life. People today spend lots of money on exotic vacations, trips to the spa, and any number of things for the home to help them relax. All these things are good, and they all can help with stress. But God provided His children with the ultimate stress buster. God sent His son Jesus to the earth to minister to people and to take away our sin at the cross. Jesus was a great comfort to people, but He could only be in so many places at any given time. When God sent the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, He provided a 24/7 source of comfort and peace for every believer. You will help remind your students of this wonderful gift that’s inside of them and ready to help at any time.

LESSON PLAN

The Lesson Plan contains three elements: An introductory activity called The Lead-In; the Bible study section called The Main Event; an application-focused segment called The Last Word.

THE LEAD-IN

- **Goal:** To help students identify some of the things in their lives that bring comfort and peace.
- **Set-Up:** None needed.

FIRST, ask your students if any of them have ever been to one of those stores in a mall that has foot and back massaging tools. Ask if they have ever tried one out or maybe sat in a massaging chair. Tell them that in this stressed-out world, people are always looking for things that bring them relief from physical, mental, and emotional stress. Explain that you are going to let them identify some things in their lives that bring them comfort.

THEN, lead students in a discussion where they list some of their “comfort things” in life. **Ask questions similar to the following:**

- *What are some of your favorite comfort foods?*
- *If you want to be comfortable what are some of the clothes you like to wear?*
- *Do you have a favorite pillow? Where did you get it, how long have you had it, and why is it your favorite?*
- *What things do you have at your house that you turn to when you are stressed out?*
- *What kind of music helps when you are stressed?*
- *Do you have a pet that helps get your mind off your stress?*
- *Do you have a place like a vacation spot or a camp your church goes to that really helps you feel at peace?*

Take a few minutes to let the students talk about some of their answers as you read each question. Hopefully, this is a fun and interesting discussion. Once you have gone through all the questions **ask them the question:**

- **What is the one thing all your “comfort things” have in common?**

You may get a lot of different responses. But what you want to help your students discover is that as great as some of the things on their lists are, none of them offer lasting peace. All of them, even that pillow they’ve had for years, can be taken away.

FINALLY, explain that in this last lesson on Jesus and Stress they will find out that the Holy Spirit is the constant answer to their stress in life and will bring peace and comfort that is real and lasting.

Transition to the Main Event by **saying something like the following:**

- **God created us and knows everything about us so He knows we are prone to experience stress, worry, and anxiety. Today you are going to be reminded of how the Holy Spirit helps us in our times of stress and wants to bring us peace and comfort. By the end of the lesson, you will be able to be confident in the fact that the Holy Spirit lives in you and is there to guide and comfort you each and every day.**

THE MAIN EVENT

- **Goal:** To help your students understand that the Holy Spirit is present in their lives to give them peace and comfort.
- **Set-Up:** None needed.

FIRST, begin the Bible study portion of the lesson by doing a quick review of the previous lessons. **Ask if students can remember anything that stands out to them from the last few weeks.** If you need to, use the following bullet points to review:

- **Lesson 1:** We can trust God with the stress of life instead of running after worry and anxiety.
- **Lesson 2:** Choosing to focus on Christ is a way to not only deal with stress but make better choices in life.
- **Lesson 3:** Choosing to trust God with stress is the right decision even if they don't understand exactly what God is doing.
- **Lesson 3:** We should surrender to God's direction in life because He always knows what is best for us.

THEN, begin the Bible study by having students turn to John 14. Use the Bible Background to provide context for the passage. When students have found the chapter, read or have a student read John 14:23-24. When they've finished lead them in a short discussion. **Ask something like:**

- **What connection does Jesus say exists between loving Jesus and obeying Him?**

Answer: If we love Him, we obey Him. If we don't love Him, we won't obey Him.

- **Does this mean that because we sin, we don't love God? Why or why not?**

Answer: We all sin. It's part of our sinful nature. Jesus is most likely referring to a pattern or lifestyle of sin. Someone who doesn't fight against temptation and simply gives in to the sin in their lives probably doesn't believe in and follow Jesus.

- **What is the result of loving and obeying Jesus?**

Answer: The Bible says God loved us before we loved Him. When we reciprocate this love through saving faith, we know that the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in us. We are eternally bound to God by the Spirit. In a sense, God makes His home with us.

NEXT, read or have a student read John 14:25-26 and remind your students that this passage takes place at the end of Jesus' three-year ministry on the earth. As He prepares to go to Calvary, He is desperately trying to make sure His final words are important words. Explain to students that once Jesus established the importance of living the life He lived, He went on to again say He wouldn't be around much longer, but God will send something to help them day-by-day. Ask:

- **Who knows what Jesus said God would send to help them out?**

Answer: God would send the Holy Spirit (which different versions of the Bible call the Advocate, the Comforter, the Helper, and the Counselor.)

- **If you want to ask the students which word is their favorite use this guide to help you in your discussion.**

- **ADVOCATE:** One who pleads and defends the cause of another or speaks for another.
- **COMFORTER:** One who brings peace through the knowledge of God and the presence of God.
- **HELPER:** One who assists others through guidance and understanding.
- **COUNSELOR:** One who gives advice or in this case confirms the teachings of Jesus as being from God.

THEN, ask what Jesus said the Holy Spirit would do for the disciples. Point out that the disciples actually heard Jesus speak the words we have in our Bibles. After Jesus ascended to Heaven the Holy Spirit would help the disciples recall His teachings. Explain to them that the Holy Spirit today still helps to remind us what is in the Bible thus confirming the reality of Jesus and God and the power of the scriptures.

NEXT, read or have a student read John 14:27. Facilitate a discussion among your students by **asking the following questions**:

- **Does anyone know what is the common thing for Jewish people to say to each other when they are about to leave?**

Answer: Shalom

- **Does anyone know what the word means?**

Shalom means farewell, may you prosper, may you have good health, may you be at peace, etc.

- **Does it same strange to leave with an offering of peace when the world in Jesus' day was pretty calm to start with?**

Answer: Actually, during the time of Christ, the world was filled with fear over Roman oppression, worry over keeping the law, anger, and frustration. Living in this world has always been stressful.

- **Why did Jesus say the peace He offered was different from what the world had to give?**

Answer: When many people said shalom it was more of a formality, possibly even an empty word without much meaning. But from the mouth of Jesus the word peace had power. Jesus' words had the power to conquer fear and the ability to calm troubled hearts.

- **What could be the deeper meaning behind the phrase "Don't let your hearts be troubled or afraid?"**

Answer: The peace and calm that Jesus brought to the people around Him was obvious. Jesus may have been looking to His death on the cross as the way to bring permanent peace with God to our hearts. Some scholars even suggest there is a hint of the glory and peace of heaven in this verse.

NEXT, back up a bit to the first of John chapter fourteen and read or have a student read John 14:1. It is important to set up this verse by telling your students that Jesus knew the disciple's faith might be shaken by His crucifixion and that they would continue to suffer persecution. Also point out that Jesus knew the responsibility for spreading the Gospel throughout the world would be in the hands of these twelve men. With that in mind ask how important it was for Jesus to tell them to not let their hearts be troubled. You may want to use this interpretation of the verse by an unknown theologian:

- ***Don't allow yourself to be intimidated by the situation.***

Tell the students this speaks right to where they are today. To make a stand for Christ is to sometimes be in intimidating situations. People love to poke fun at Christians and downplay the importance of Christ. Remind them Christians are still being persecuted around the world today. Then add the end of the verse to the statement above:

- **Don't allow yourself to be intimidated by the situation. If you believe or trust in the power of God then you can believe or trust in Me.**

FINALLY, transition into the Last Word by **saying something similar to the following**:

- **What an incredible way to finish a series of lessons on Jesus and stress. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would come and He did not wait long after Jesus ascended into Heaven. You don't have to beg God for the gift of the Holy Spirit because it comes in your life when you place your faith in God through Jesus. The Holy Spirit is readily available to guide you and comfort you through all of life's situations, many of which will be stressful. And don't be intimidated by the situations you face in life. The power of God is greater than your stress and that power lives in you today through the Holy Spirit.**

Make sure no one has any questions then move to wrap up the lesson with the Last Word.

THE LAST WORD

- **Goal:** To help students experience the peace and comfort of the Holy Spirit.
- **Set-Up:** None needed.

FIRST, tell the students that they have read and heard a lot about the comfort and peace of the Holy Spirit today and now you want to give them an opportunity to experience that comfort and peace. Begin by asking everyone to get comfortable and as best they can shut off their thoughts about what is going on in their world and just focus on Christ. If available, you may want to display a picture that symbolizes the Holy Spirit in a place where everyone can see it. Tell them to listen as you read some great verses from the Bible about the work of the Holy Spirit.

THEN, read some or all of the following verses:

- Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.
– *Matthew 28:19-20*
- But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. –*Acts 1:8*
- Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." –*Acts 2:38*
- And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.
–*Romans 5:5*
- May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. –*Romans 15:13*
- Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you--guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us. –*2 Timothy 1:14*
- But when the Holy Spirit controls our lives, he will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. –*Galatians 5:22-23*
- Always keep yourselves united in the Holy Spirit, and bind yourselves together with peace. –*Ephesians 4:3*
- Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. If you do this, you will experience God's peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. –*Philippians 4:6-7*

NEXT, ask the students to think about the most stressful thing that is happening in their lives today. Tell them it could be a test at school or something as complicated as a family situation. It could even be a decision they are wrestling with right now. After they have thought of a response, remind them of some things they have learned over the past four weeks to help them with stress. Ask them to consider any that apply to their situation.

- **Remember God is big enough to provide for you in your stress.**
- **Do what you can, and leave the rest up to God.**
- **Stay focused on Christ.**
- **Surrender to God's direction in your life.**
- **Ask the Holy Spirit to comfort you during this time in your life.**

FINALLY, close by reminding your students that the world today is very stressful but life had always been stressful. Tell them that God's Word has many wonderful scriptures to help with stress, and challenge them to continue to look to the Bible for encouragement during their problems. Tell the students that as you close in prayer you want them to think about the stressful thing they thought about a few moments ago. If any feel led have them share those concerns with the group. Pray for the Holy Spirit to bring peace and calm to the lives of your students. After the prayer tell them you are always available to talk about any stresses they may have in life.

- Don't forget to distribute the devotions to your students this week. If you're printing them, have them available for students as you wrap up class. If you're texting a link, posting them on Social Media, or some other means of electronic distribution, make sure you inform students of when they will be receiving them.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU...

Do you have questions about a lesson?

Something that worked particularly well you want to share?

Something that didn't work you want to bring up?

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns, at feedback@youthministry360.com.