

What Keeps You Up At Night Msg 1
 Feeling Overwhelmed
 Sermon preached by Dr. Rick Mandl
 Eagle Rock Baptist Church
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Good evening and welcome.

It's great to be here with you this evening.

If you're new here relax. . .

This church is filled with imperfect people who struggle with the exact same things that you struggle with

We're not going to ask you to recite any prayers.

I'm not going to put you on the spot and make you answer a question

You won't need to know any insider lingo

Our hope is that you walk away from today having genuinely experienced God in your life.

We think you've picked a great time to join us because today, we're kicking off a brand new series called "What Keeps You Up At Night?"

And I love that title because I've never met a person who doesn't have at least some stress, anxiety or problem that from time to time keeps them up at night

Now there are no shortage of things that could keep you up at night.

If you're one of those rare people who don't worry about anything...

Well maybe I can change that.

Did you know that every year 150 people die from falling coconuts?

This is such a problem that they have even had signs made to warn you of this. . .

Here is sign that says . . .

Beware of falling coconuts

If you see this sign you need to immediately take cover.

Because if you look closely you'll see that apparently there are coconuts shooting like bombs out of the trees, aimed right at your head.

And dad, no matter what you do, remember

Don't DROP the LOLLIPOP

Your kid doesn't have one, but you do, and based on appearance, you're not letting it go even when coconuts are shooting at your head.

Something to think about

Something that could keep you up at night.

Something else that I learned about this week . . .

Something that could kill you, even though you've never thought about it . . .

In London England, in the early 19th century there was an industrial accident in which a

Giant Vat Of Beer Exploded

In a brewery, resulting in a Beer Tsunami sending a 15' wall of beer cascading down the street and drowning eight people.

Some of you hear that and you're thinking. . . **there are worse ways to go.**

But that's **one more thing you weren't thinking about that could keep you up at night.**

But **the truth is, most of the time** those aren't the kind of things that keep us up at night.

The **things that most often keep us up at night are not the unexpected**, but rather, the daily.

It's things like **FEAR**.

Fear that you won't **HAVE** enough

Fear that you won't be **GOOD** enough

Things like **CONFLICT, CRITICISM, RELATIONSHIP STRUGGLES**

Things like **GUILT** and **SHAME**

This morning what we're looking at is **FEELING OVERWHELMED**

Feeling like you've got **too much going on**, feeling like you are **at the tipping point**, where just one more thing could put you in the crazy bin, then perhaps today's message will speak to you.

I read a recent study that said that **48% of Americans don't sleep that well at night** because of all the stress in their life.

Number one stress point – Job Pressure & Work Overload

Which is why today's message is titled

Feeling Overwhelmed

Some of us are stressed out because we simply have too much to do

We are going to start off with a story of Moses in the Old Testament.

In fact, as you look at the life of Moses, you will see more than one time that he'd feel overwhelmed, like there was too much going on.

This first story was of a time when Moses was leading, perhaps, as many as two million people, and they were crying out, saying, ***"We are sick and tired of this manna. Could we please have some meat to eat?"***

And Moses cries out to God. . .

"Where am I supposed to get meat for all these people? They keep whining to me, saying, 'Give us meat to eat!'

Verse 14, you hear the frustration come out. He says,

I can't carry all these people by myself!

Why?

The load is far too heavy!" Numbers 11:13-14

He said . .

"It's too much. I can't go on.

"I'm just, I'm overwhelmed.

"I can't do it anymore.

"The burden is too heavy for me to carry on my own."

As soon as Moses, or any of you say something like this, some well-meaning Christian is going to come along and say this to you.

"Oh, don't worry. It'll be okay.

Remember, God will never give you more than you can WHAT??".

"More than you can handle"

It's going to be all right.

Everything happens for a reason.

Don't give up. You can do it. You can make it.

God will never, ever give you more than you can handle."

The funny thing about lines like that is, because you hear them over and over again, and **you assume are true**, but then upon closer investigation you find out they aren't.

They're what you might call **"Dumb Things Smart Christians Believe."**

SPIRITUAL URBAN LEGENDS

We know what URBAN LEGENDS are when it relates to just the stuff we hear on the street. . . .

For example. . .

How many of you have seen the movie. . . .

Casablanca

People are surprised to find that at no time in the movie does the lead character

. . . Rick ever say,

"Play it again, Sam."

And yet it's one of the most famous lines "NOT" from the movie.

Do we have any Star Trek Fans here?

Star Trek

I'm not talking about

- The Animated Series (1973–1974)
- The Next Generation (1987–1994)
- Deep Space Nine (1993–1999)
- Voyager (1995–2001)
- Enterprise (2001–2005)

I'm talking about **"THE ORIGINAL T.V. SERIES"**

If so, you might be surprised to know, or maybe if you're a true Trekkie you probably already know that in over

79 Star Trek episodes and 6 feature films, no one ever actually says,

"Beam me up, Scotty."

And yet that line, has become a line, that is so associated with the series, that when the actor who played **chief Engineer Montgomery Scott**, better known as **"Scotty"**

When **James Doohan**, decided to publish his **autobiography**

He titled it. . .

“Beam me up, Scotty.”

What's my point?

My point is. . . **say something often enough**, and it becomes accepted as fact.

Because of that, people assume that those lines — and many others, too — are from the films and movies that they attribute them, to.

It works the same with the Bible.

There are all kinds of things that people assume the Bible says but it actually doesn't.

Somewhere near the top of that list would be the saying

“God helps those who help themselves”

Something like **80% of Christians believe that quote is from the Bible.**

It's actually not

It's a quote from the **Ancient Greeks** that first appeared in one of **Aesop's fables**, and then was re-quoted and popularized by **Benjamin Franklin**.

But a close second on the list of things we believe that the Bible says, but it actually doesn't is the statement . . .

“God will never give you more than you can handle.”

You'll see it on T-Shirts,

Refrigerator Magnets,

Inspirational Posters

It is frequently “quoted” to people in times of trouble. . .

Someone will come alongside and say. . .

“Don't worry, everything will be alright. . . God wouldn't have given you this trial if you couldn't get through it.”

Why?

Because

“God will never give you more than you can handle”

I've got no doubt that the intention of the person who shares this bit of advice is to encourage the one who is hurting and let them know that they can make it through whatever they're facing.

I see at least 2 problems with the statement.

#1 - It's Not in the Bible

Although the Bible does say something similar, and we'll look at that in a moment.

#2 - This statement which is intended to Help, can actually be hurtful

What do I mean by that?

We'll think about it this way.

When I tell you, ***“Remember, God will never give you more than you can handle”***

What am I saying?

What I'm saying is ***“You should be able to handle this”***

“Since God will never give you more than you can handle,

If you're not handling this, it's your fault - - - not God's - - - he knows what you're made of - - he knows your limits

And because He's promised never to give you more than you can handle,

That means that if you're not handling what He's given you, then there's something wrong with you.”

Now let's unpack this.

I said that **this statement isn't in the Bible**, but the Bible does say something that sounds similar, but is different.

And that something is contained in our memory verse for this week.

It's in your notes

It's up on the screen.

It comes from 1 Corinthians 10:13 and what it says is. . . .

“The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure.” 1 Corinthians 10:13

What's that verse talking about?

TEMPTATION!

It's **not** talking about the trials and troubles. . . the hurts and heartaches of life.

It's talking about **TEMPTATION**

It's talking about **the things that we would encounter** that **might result in us falling into sin.**

And **what it's promising**, is that when it comes to those temptations, you are never going to encounter one where you can honestly say "*What could I do??*"

"I had no choice"

"Sinning was the only option open to me"

The Bible says "No"

Sometimes, God's counsel will be to **STAND AND FIGHT**.

Sometimes it will be to **FLEE**

But no matter what the temptation, God will always provide a way out.

Now that's encouraging, but it's very different than the statement,

"God will never give you more than you can handle"

Because the truth is. . . very often He will.

God will OFTEN allow you to have far more than you can handle on your own.

If you are taking notes, I call it

The gift of too much.

God will often give us the gift of too much.

Why would He do this?

Because He is going to teach us to depend on something besides ourselves.

The spiritual myth, God will never give you more than you can handle, what that basically says to you is. . .

"Pull your boot straps up. If you just try harder, you can do it."

But the truth is, God may allow us to have more than we can handle so He will teach us to **depend on other people**, and **ultimately most importantly**, to teach us to depend on His strength.

A lot of people will also say things like,

"Well, you know, God may allow you to bend, but He will never let you break."

Have you ever heard that?

The truth is **God loves it when His children are broken before Him**. . .

Where we cannot handle it all on our own. . .

Where we have exhausted our own resources and so that we tap into His ultimate, loving strength.

Look at Moses again one more time.

If you remember his story, Moses perhaps felt a lot like some of you do right now.

He actually said to God . . .

"If this is how you intend to treat me, just go ahead and kill me. Do me a favor and spare me this misery!" Numbers 11:15

How did God respond???

Verse 16,

Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Gather before me seventy men who are recognized as elders and leaders of Israel... I will take some of the Spirit that is upon you, and I will put the Spirit upon them also. They will bear the burden of the people along with you, so you will not

What???

so you will not have to carry it alone."

Numbers 11:15-17

Why?

Because, **you were not designed to do it on your own.**

??God won't give you more than you can handle??

The truth is, God will often allow you to have more than you can handle, **AND** He will give you the gift of too much.

Three things this gift teaches us, if you are taking notes. . .

The first one is this. . .

God's gift of too much,

Teaches Us To Put Something Down

The gift of too much, forces us to prioritize.

It forces us to look at **ALL** we **COULD** be doing, and to say “**THESE things are the most important.**”

There is a classic story in Luke 10, when Jesus visited the home of the two sisters, Mary and Martha, and they got confused.

Martha, if you know her story, she **thought that she could do it all.**

She thought she could have the house perfect, have it smelling good, have all the perfect dishes out, and then later on, she could spend time with Jesus.

But, she freaked out, like so many of us, because she was overwhelmed by trying to do it all.

Luke 10:41, Jesus spoke to her and said,

“But the Lord said to her, “My dear Martha, you are worried and upset over all these details!

How many things did he tell her were necessary?

There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her.”

The gift of too much, it forces us to prioritize.

It forces us to ask “What is most important? “

Also the gift of . . .

Too much, it teaches you to say “or” instead of “and”.

What do most people say today?

“Well, I can do this, **AND** this, **AND** this, **AND** this,”

So we can get the kids there, **AND** here, **AND** there,

And I can be a wife **AND** mom, **AND** a professional, **AND** a soccer mom, **AND** this, **AND** I can be this **AND** this and this ...”

The gift of too much, it forces you to say “**OR**” instead of “**AND.**”

One of the most important lessons you can learn is to, say **OR**, not **AND.**

By the way, if you’d like to read further on this, one of the best books I’ve found has got a kind of UNUSUAL TITLE

It’s called. . .

Choosing To Cheat

That’s kind of a different title for a book that’s written by a pastor, but the premise is . . .

With all the possible things that can fill your day

Things like . . .

Work. Family. Church. Hobbies. Fitness. Housekeeping. Socializing. Sleep.

With only 24 hours in each day, we simply can’t fit everything in.

And **what we choose to cheat** is a clear announcement of our values.

When you come home an hour earlier, miss a round of golf, or let the dishes sit while you play with your child, you’re making a statement about what is really important.

God daily gives me the gift of too much, and just because I **COULD** do more doesn’t mean I **SHOULD** do more.

Just because you think you **COULD** do it all, does not mean God has **CALLED** you to do it all,

And if you wake up with too much, maybe you should stop saying “**AND**” and begin saying “**OR.**”

Instead of adding to your “**to do**” list, because you’ve bought into the myth that highly productive people do more.

Instead of adding more to your “to do” list, maybe you should add some things to your “**to don’t**” list.

Realize that there is too much for you to do it all.

And if you try, you run the risk of missing out on the most important things.

Thought number one. . .

The gift does what?

It teaches you to what?

To put something down.

The second thing it does is, it teaches us

To hand something OFF,

To delegate, or to give something away.

Again, Moses, another time in scripture, was overwhelmed.

All of these people from morning until evening wanted advice..
 Wanted him to mediate and adjudicate and to settle their arguments...
 Wanted him to give them counsel and direction...
 And his life was falling apart because he believed he could do it all.
 Maybe Moses was thinking . . .

“God will never give me more than I can handle. Surely, I can handle these two million problems a day.”

Jethro, his father-in-law, spoke up in Exodus 18:17 and said to him,

“This is not good!”

Moses’ father-in-law exclaimed.

‘You’re going to wear yourself out—and the people, too. This job is too heavy a burden for you to handle all by yourself.’” Exodus 18:17-18

So, his father-in-law gave Moses some good advice.

He said, **“Go find some Godly men...”**

Some honest men who can’t be bribed. . .

Some men of integrity. . .

And have then some of them oversee a group of thousands of people, and have others oversee hundreds, and others can oversee groups of fifties, others can oversee a group of ten.

In other words, we are going to spread this thing out.

We are going to **hand some things off**, because God did not design you to do it all.

God often gives you the gift of too much to teach you to **put something down and to hand something off.”**

The problem is, too many of us, if you are like me, we are too full of pride to actually do that.

I will confess to you, that I am someone who has a hard time asking for help . . .

Maybe I ought to qualify that.

I have a hard time asking for help in areas where I should be able to handle it on my own.

For example, I have **no problem whatsoever asking for help when it comes to Home**

Improvement Projects.

Because that is an area where I have absolutely ZERO expertise.

But **when it comes to areas where I’m supposed to be competent**, it’s not EASY for me to ask for help.

In fact, **I’ll usually only ask for help as a LAST RESORT**

And that happened to me about a year ago, when I was on my way to officiate at a funeral.

I should probably preface this by saying that I have **a certain phobia** when it comes to funerals.

And that **phobia is that something will go wrong** and it **will be my fault.**

This **isn’t something that keeps me awake at night**, but it is **something I think about any time I’m going to be leading a funeral.**

PHOBIA #1 – is that I’ll miss the funeral

This hasn’t happened to me YET, but I do know ministers to whom it has happened - -

They had too much on their plate - - too many appointments on their calendar - - and sadly the thing that fell between the cracks that week was the funeral

And there the family waiting is, at the mortuary and the minister is nowhere to be found.

To me, as a minister that’s like **“The Unforgivable Sin”**

PHOBIA #2 – is that even if the service is for someone I’ve known for years and years and years, that I’ll say the wrong name, when referring to the departed.

I’ve never done that, YET - - but do I think about it?

You betcha.

But I was sitting at a funeral here in this room, that was **being conducted by another pastor**

And he made it through the funeral service flawlessly.

And I’ll never forget his introduction to our closing HYMN

The HYMN was **“DARE TO BE A DANIEL”**

And in introducing it he said, “We’re going to stand and sing **DARE TO BE A DANIEL** because **we all want to be just like DANIEL”**

Courageous, just like Daniel was when he stood up against the giant Goliath.

Now, **in case you’re not that familiar** with the stories of the O.T.

It as **DAVID** who went up against **GOLIATH**

And **DANIEL** was the one who needed courage when he went into the Lion's Den.

That faux faux happened about 35 years ago, and I'm telling you about it today, and my point is I don't want to be the punch line to some story that another pastor tells that begins with **"Let me tell you what happened at this funeral that I attended."**

So for that reason – funerals are a big deal.

Another time - a couple of years ago, **I had the date and time of the funeral right.**

I had **the name of the person I was conducting the funeral for correct.**

I got to the mortuary in plenty of time.

But as I got of my car to head to the chapel, I realized I'd forgotten my coat.

I was wearing a dress shirt, and neck tie, and my suit pants, but no suit coat.

I'd left it hanging next to the front door at home.

And when it comes to issues of etiquette and decorum, ministers do not conduct funeral services in shirtsleeves.

In the year 2020, it does not matter what you, as the person attending the funeral wears.

It does matter what the minister wears.

There wasn't time to make a round trip back home to retrieve my coat, so I did the only thing I could think of.

I found someone who worked at the mortuary who looked helpful and I asked them to help me – could they find someone on their staff who had a dark coat they could lend me for the funeral – and they did.

That wasn't easy

But it was the only thing I could think of doing

And I only did it as a last resort.

And by the way - - - **I've never again made that SAME mistake.**

Handing something off.

That's hard for a lot of us.

But God has not designed us to try and go it alone

This was a lesson that Moses had to learn

And here is what his father-in-law told him would happen in he found some people to help him to share the load

Exodus 18:22-23 – Jethro told Moses. . .

They should always be available to solve the people's common disputes, but have them bring the major cases to you. Let the leaders decide the smaller matters themselves.

They will help you carry the load, making the task easier for you. If you follow this advice, and if God commands you to do so, then you will be able to endure the pressures, and all these people will go home in peace." Exodus 18:22-23

Put something down, hand something off, and number three, if you are taking notes,

Give Something To God

Give something to God.

The challenge for so many of us is that we want to believe that we can do it all, especially if someone tells us we can't.

"You can't do it,"

"Oh, yes, I can."

"I'll show you!"

What are you holding on to right now, that God says, **"If you just let go, I'd carry it for you."**

Psalm 55:22 tells us that we are to

"Give your burdens to the Lord, and he will take care of you." Psalm 55:22

There's an old Hymn called "What A Friend We Have In Jesus"

And one line of they Hymn says "Oh what peace we often forfeit, Oh what needless pain we bear, all because we do not carry, everything to God in prayer."

So, if you have a burden, you have got more than you can handle, put something down, hand something off and give something away, to God.

Let God take it, because He wants to.

Cast your cares on Him, because He cares for you and He cares for you.

That is a lesson that I continue to have to learn again and again and again.

There are **two times during my time here as Pastor** when God had to take some burdens away from me, because that was the only way he could get me to slow down.

And each time the only way that God could get me to give these burdens to him was to take me out physically.

One time was over 20 years ago at Christmas time.

When out the blue, with no warning whatsoever, **I was hit with a case of Bell's Palsy.**

If you don't know what it is, you can google it.

It's not really common

It hits about **1 out of ever 5,000 people**

And I was the lucky one.

That took me out for over three weeks.

An unplanned vacation.

Another time was 11 years ago.

I was leading a Bible study, in the home of one of our members.

When I began to feel some intestinal discomfort.

I thought I could power through, but the pain got worse and worse, finally I did something I've never had to do before which was to bail on a lesson ½ way through.

Had to say to the folks in whose home I was . . .

Sorry, but I've got to leave.

This was Thursday evening.

I drove home, called my wife who was at another meeting and she drove me to the hospital.

They diagnosed my problem as appendicitis.

They were reluctant to call it that, and had to do multiple tests to make sure.

Because Appendicitis is most common in patients between the ages of 10-30

I told them, **I get that but I'm young at heart**

The problem was this unplanned surgery was Friday morning.

I was scheduled to conduct a funeral here on Saturday afternoon

Preach a service on Saturday night

Preach again on Sunday morning

And then conduct another funeral on Sunday afternoon.

And the funerals were for the mom of a close friend and the dad of someone on our church staff.

Probably one of my busiest weekends of the year

But I couldn't do any of it.

God made me lie down

He will do whatever it takes to get us to give our burdens to him.

I like the story of the apostle Paul in the New Testament when HE actually had too much.

You can read his story in II Corinthians 12, where he had what he called a thorn in his side, and we are not sure what that exactly was.

Scholars debate one way or the other, but he begged God three different times, **"God, you've got to take this away. I can't handle it. It's too much. Please, God, take this away."**

Chapter 12, verse 9 of II Corinthians,

"Each time (God) said, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." 2 Cor. 12:9

The power of God is made perfect when you come to the end of your strength, and you are completely weak.

Satan wants you to believe that God won't give you more than you can handle.

It's an urban legend.

It is a spiritual myth.

The truth is, God often allows you to have more than you can handle.

The story of Polycarp is an incredible story.

Read about him some time.

He was the bishop of Smyrna, and in 155 A.D.,

The enemies of Christ were killing martyring believers, and they said to this eight-six-year-old man, a hero to many,

"Deny Christ and we will let you live.

Just say, ***'Caesar is lord.'*** "

And Polycarp said the famous line.

He said, ***“Eighty-six years, Christ has been faithful to me. He has never done me any wrong. How could I deny and blaspheme the king who saved me?”***

And so, they said, ***“Okay, instead of throwing you to the lions, we are going to burn you at the stake,”***

And they did, and all of his loved ones, and friends’ tradition tells us, were saying,

“How are we going to know you are going to be okay?”

And at eighty-six years of age, he said, ***“God’s grace will be sufficient for me.***

When they burn me and I am dying, I will hold up one finger to show you as a symbol, God’s grace is enough.”

They tied him to the stake.

They put the wood around him and lit it.

The women were screaming.

They guys were trying to stay strong.

They smelled the aroma of the burning flesh, and before he died, tradition says,

“Polly Carp held up one finger and said, ‘His grace is enough.’

“And the disciples looked on and smiled and said, “Yes, God’s grace is enough.”

And then, right before his death, ***he held up a second finger,***

“God’s grace is more than enough, more than enough, for his strength is made perfect in weakness.”

Stop trying to be so strong, and be weak.

Let’s pray