

Veva Rose

Need Paul OK

From: Eric Wilbanks [eric@ericwilbanks.com]
Sent: Monday, April 25, 2005 1:17 PM
To: Veva Rose
Subject: Body by God Bible Project

Dear Veva,

The following article was adapted as a 500-word article for the Maximized Living Study Bible based on material you submitted for Dr. Paul Walker. Please review and make any critical changes ASAP. You can make critical changes directly in this email or simply reply with the word "Approved" in the subject line.

Thank you once again for your participation in this project.

Blessings!

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Beating the Burnout Blues

Paul L. Walker

On a rainy morning in Georgia, an over-worked, hassled pastor got out of bed, made sure his wife had gone to work and his children had left for school, took the telephone off the hook, and then went back to bed. In his words, "I was burned out. Two months later I resigned from the ministry. Now, what do I do?"

By definition, burnout is perhaps best described as emotional fatigue. It is a kind of exhaustion marked by chronic negativism toward work, life and other people. It is a persistent feeling of gloom that threatens our lifestyles and changes our moods. Our spirits are down, and we feel like giving up. This condition is sometimes referred to as the burnout blues.

This poses the question, "How do we beat the burnout blues?" To start with, it is important for us to strive to practice what we preach. This means we turn to the living Word of God to find the formula to live a life that beats the burnout problem.

In this regard, the Apostle Paul is our model. Here was a man called of God who was literally stretched to the limit. In comparing himself to the parade of false prophets in the church of Corinth, he presents a resume with all the potentiality not only for burnout but a disastrous flameout (2 Cor. 11:21-33).

As we read this account, we have to ask, "What was the formula that enabled him to hang tough in the face of such adversity? What can we learn from him that will help us beat the burnout blues?" In response, we pick him up in the Roman jail when he was faced with a death sentence for preaching the gospel. While there he writes to the church in Philippi and makes a startling statement for a person facing execution—"Be full of joy in the Lord always. I will say again, be full of joy" (Philippians 4:4). From the natural standpoint, such an affirmation makes no sense, but from a spiritual standpoint, the apostle Paul found a formula that gave him the inner resources he needed regardless of the circumstances or situation. Look at the next two verses:

"Do not worry about anything, but pray and ask God for everything you need, always giving thanks. And God's peace, which is so great we cannot understand it, will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Brothers and sisters, think about the things that are good and worthy of praise. Think about the things that are true and honorable and right and pure and beautiful and respected" (Phil. 4:6-8).

As a clarion call to each one of us, we hear Paul say that *this* is the way to beat the burnout blues: Pray in detail, practice the peace of God and program your thinking.

Yes, it sounds simple, but it will work! It simply means we have to trust the Holy Spirit to transcend whatever the causal factors may be in the burnout experience. It is a matter of growing in grace and living by faith. It is breaking through to a new interactive relationship of communication with God. It is taking God at His Word that we can cast our anxieties on Him because He cares for us (2 Peter 5:2). With God as our source, we can beat the burnout blues!

4/25/2005