

“Baggage: Stress/Busyness”
Matthew 6:25-34
April 10, 2016
Rev. Dave Baldrige
Palm Harbor United Methodist Church, Palm Harbor, Florida

(Video clip....Hakuna Matata)

Hakuna Matata, what a wonderful phrase, Hakuna Matata, ain't no passing craze, It means no worries for the rest of your days, It's our problem free philosophy, Hakuna Matata.
Hakuna Matata, Hakuna Matata, Hakuna Matata, Hakuna Matata

Oh I wish I could live a Hakuna Matata life. Oh to embrace this Swahili phrase and to really have no worries the rest of my days. We live in a real life in which we do have problems. Oh, but how do we handle them.

Now I want to be honest. I can put on my Christian face and speak what I call Christianese and say I have no worries, no problems, I'm never stressed----but if I said that I would be lying.

I fall short of a stress free life. I find that busyness and stress often go hand in hand. Often the busier we are the more stress we have. No time to rest and let down; no time to take a breath. We go at a fast pace. Life seems to go at a quicker pace than we want. Life keeps throwing real situations and stresses at us.

Now to be honest I often allow myself to get stressed. In a sense I do it to myself. As Sarah has “lovingly” tells me, “Dave you are doing it yourself.”

Some of us are prone to be worriers. It may have been the way we were raised; it may be linked to our personality traits. We have a tendency to be consumed and over think situations. I've been told I sometimes catastrophize things in my mind. I spend an enormous amount of energy and time being consumed about something and when the meeting or event happens it is a very positive and everything I worried about never happened.

Then I get mad at myself for spending so much times stressing about it....it seems to be a vicious circle. Oh if I could only...Hakuna Matata. But it's not that easy...in our busyness to be stress free.

Now to be honest I can be blessed, but still feel stressed. Now I know there is a saying that says, “Too Blessed to be stressed,” but for me I have some of both much of the time. I know that I'm blessed in the midst of my stress. So I guess that means I am blessed, stressed and therefore perplexed.

I'm not going to ask you to raise your hands if you've ever had a panic attack, but let me tell you they are no fun. It feels as if your heart is beating out of your chest.

So with our baggage of stress and busyness how do we cope? It is hard to get heart and head on the same page. I don't want to be stressed, my mind and soul says "don't be stressed," but I still have a difficult time with the baggage.

During a rough patch many years ago a song that was very important to me was the song by Contemporary Christian artist Twila Paris. In fact in 1995 it won the Dove Award for Song of the Year. You will be very pleased that I will not be singing it for you and I couldn't find a good video clip...but I would like for you to hear the words. Perhaps you can write the song down and find it on iTunes or on YouTube. Some of the words that spoke to me during a time when I was trying to get heart and head on the same page said this: (God Is In Control by Twila Paris)

This is no time for fear
 This is the time for faith and determination
 Don't lose the vision here carried away by the motion
 Hold on to all that you hide in your heart
 There is one thing that has always been true
 It holds the world together

God is in control
 We believe that His children will not be forsaken
 God is in control
 We will choose to remember and never be shaken
 There is no power above or beside Him, we know
 Oh, God is in control, oh God is in control

He has never let you down
 Why start to worry now?
 Why start to worry now?
 He is still the Lord of all we see
 And He is still the loving Father
 Watching over you and me

Watching over you, watching over me
 Watching over every thing
 Every little sparrow, every little thing
 Oh, every little thing,

God is in control
 We believe that His children will not be forsaken
 God is in control
 We will choose to remember and never be shaken
 There is no power above or beside Him, we know
 Oh, God is in control, oh God is in control
 Oh God is in control
 Oh God is in control

Oh, I believed that, but at times I was struggling to feel that.

Here is what Jesus says:

Jesus says...

Do not be anxious about your life.

Do not be anxious about what you eat.

Do not be anxious about what you drink.

Do not be anxious about what you put on.

And yet we are anxious and stressed. **Matthew 6:26 English Standard Version (ESV) ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?**

I love that last line. The question: Are you not of more value than they? And so I ask you “Are you of more value to God than a bird in the air.” xxxxx You bet you are.

Jesus then says, “Can you add a single hour to this life?” The answer is---No. He then says, “Can you add inches to your height?” He doesn’t say this, but worrying about either one of those is a waste of time. And yet we carry the baggage of stress.

Look at the lilies they grow and God takes care of them. Look at the grass. It has its own life cycle. Will God not also take care of you? And then Jesus says, “Oh you of little faith.”

Oh but I try so hard. Sometimes I do good and it’s like I just have a little baggage and then other times it is like I’m lugging the largest piece of baggage around. Oh how to have that kind of faith? How to rest in Him. How to slow down.

Carl, our Student Ministries Director gave me a video in preparation for this message. It briefly mentioned a man by the name of Bernie Krause. I was intrigued so I found more information about him. The following is taken from an article based on a speech delivered at the San Francisco World Affairs Council on January 2001 (from Wild Sanctuary Inc.) In 2013 he gave TED Global talk.

“For those unfamiliar with my work, I have spent more than half of my 62 years recording the sounds of living organisms and natural habitats. To me, this is the most beautiful music on the planet. It is also its collective voice. Armed with various types of sound recorders, a pair of earphones and various microphones, I search out rare undisturbed sites, set up my equipment, and sit quietly and patiently for hours waiting for this symphony of the natural world to unfold before me, all to capture those precious moments on tape.

To support these efforts, I create finished soundscapes for CDs and large, interactive media installations for museums and other public spaces. As time has passed, however, these activities have become increasingly difficult.

In 1968, when I first began my odyssey, I could record for about 15 hours and capture about one hour of useable sound – a ratio of about 15 to 1. Now it takes nearly 2,000 hours to obtain one hour of untainted natural sound.”

Noise, busyness, sound, rush, hubbub, constant movement. Maybe, just maybe we need to slow down.

Psalm 46:10 “Be still and know that I am God.”

Going to do something strange now (that surprises you doesn’t it?). Going to ask you to be still and silent. To de-stress. To try and not be consumed. To look at the verse on the screen and just be still. No talking, but you are allowed to breathe. (2 minute silence)

Okay, did you realize that you didn’t have to think about your breathing. God was in control!

Oh in times of stress and busyness to know that God is in control. To have faith. To be still and know that He is God.

Matthew 6:34 English Standard Version (ESV) ³⁴ “Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.”

And you know what....God is with you today....and tomorrow.

Karen Martin my Administrative Assistant does the layout for the Direct from Dave and does a great job. I thank her for finding this that you saw earlier this week: **(image) My child you worry too much! I’ve got this, remember. Love God**

He’s got this baggage of stress and busyness....if we let Him. If we put it down and let Him have it. Last week in the Multi-Purpose Room someone said concerning baggage... “It’s like I put it down and then it just comes back up again.” Yes, sometimes it’s like baggage with an elastic cord on it that as soon as we set it down it comes back up. It’s difficult.

Oh to trust Him in our stress. To trust Him to order our steps and days.

The great theologian Charlie Brown puts it this way:
(Image)

“Sometimes I feel like I’ve done all that I can do.”

Charlie Brown: “Then it might be time to walk away, let go and let God do it! Not everything is meant for you to handle. Trust God.