

Physical and Spiritual Exhaustion

Recently my granddaughter, Celine, turned two years old. Although she is now able to feed herself, handle her little utensils and wipe her own hands and face, she is still helpless to provide for herself with food and care. There are two families with precious, new babies in the church now. One is two months old and the other just a few weeks old, as of this writing. They don't even know they are alive yet and are totally helpless if left to their own selves.

Caring for these little ones is a huge responsibility and one which brings great joy and fulfillment. Even so, all of you who are parents or have cared for little ones know how exhausting this can be. Sometimes one can get so tired he or she could almost drop! This can also happen when one is a caregiver to a sick or disabled loved one. Meanwhile, when we get "physically exhausted" while providing such care to others what should we do to replenish our own supply of energy? Although sleep may be sporadic, it is still possible to grab bits and pieces of it and of course we continue to replenish our own nourishment, and to take care of our own basic physical needs. We don't want "exhaustion" to turn into "utter exhaustion."

Physical exhaustion is not the only fatigue we can experience. For a Christian, there is also "spiritual exhaustion." What is this, and what should we do about it? In his book "My Utmost for His Highest," Oswald Chambers explains it the best:

Are You Exhausted Spiritually?

The everlasting God . . . neither faints nor is weary" (Isaiah 40:28).

Exhaustion means that our vital energies are completely worn out and spent. Spiritual exhaustion is never the result of sin, but of service. Whether or not you experience exhaustion will depend on where you get your supplies. Jesus said to Peter, "Feed My sheep," but He gave him nothing with which to feed them (John 21:17). The process of being made broken bread and poured out as wine means that you have to be the nourishment for other people's souls until they learn to feed on God. They must drain you completely – to the very last drop. But be careful to replenish your supply, or you will quickly be utterly exhausted. Until others learn to draw on the life of the Lord Jesus, directly, they will have to draw on His life through you. You must literally be their source of supply, until they learn to take their nourishment from God. We owe it to God to be our best for His lambs and sheep, as well as for Him.

Have you delivered yourself over to exhaustion because of the way you have been serving God? If so, then renew and rekindle your desires and affections. Examine your reason for service. Is your source based on your own understanding or is it first grounded on the redemption of Jesus Christ? Continually look back to the foundation of your love and affection and remember where your Source of power lies. You have no right to complain, "O Lord, I am so exhausted." He saved and sanctified you to exhaust you. Be exhausted for God, but remember that He is your supply. 'All my springs are in you' (Psalm 87:7.) Oswald Chambers.

In Christ,
Pastor Mike