

# The Preacher



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ute this publication for all  
ministers in your state/  
region.

## What is Stress Doing to Me?

Every year at least \$60 billion is lost due to stress related physical illnesses. Heart disease, which is associated with stress, results in an annual loss of more than 135 million workdays in the United States. It is estimated that 75-85% of all industrial accidents are caused by the inability to cope with stress. The cost of these accidents in the US is more than \$32 billion in a given year. A staggering 230 million prescriptions are written annually to relieve feelings of stress and anxiety in the US. A whopping 25 million Americans suffer from high blood pressure, more than 8 million have stomach ulcers, and over 12 million people turn to alcohol in response to our stress-filled age.

Here's a list of other stress related symptoms: migraine headaches; chronic fatigue; bruxism (gnashing of teeth); heart disease; gastric or duodenal ulcers; anorexia nervosa; motor disturbances; and stuttering are often connected with prolonged and excessive stress. Other signs include muscle twitching or tightness; insomnia; shortness of breath; asthma; heart fluttering; and substantial weight gain or loss.

Stress will affect the way that we think or feel. Judgment disorders are associated with stress. Also, conduct disorders (hostility/aggression); neuroses; psychoses; addictive behaviors; and anxiety. Chronically and extremely stressed people do not think as well. They are more likely to distort situations, be indecisive, and have unproductive and ruminative patterns of thinking. Memory and concentration

may also be impaired.

Fight or flight is the usual pattern of a stressed person. Physical aggression such as irritability, argumentativeness, or a tendency to overreact to relatively minor situations in the fight response. The flight response involves fantasy, emotional detachment, or passivity.

Stress is also associated with frequent mood swings, feelings of being overwhelmed, depression, loss of motivation, preoccupation or absent-mindedness, and spiritual flatness. While none of these symptoms by themselves may be due to stress, a combination of them make it very likely that a person is under significant stress.

After twenty-five years of pastoring, and thirty-four years of overall ministry, I can identify with the information given. In fact, on a few occasions the stress was so bad I thought I was going to physically die.

The challenge is not to become stress free, but not to stress out.

Paul said, "We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed but not in despair..." (II Cor. 4:8) The word stress or distress means to hem in closely, cramp, narrowness of room, calamity, anguish.

Paul unstressed his stress by "carrying around in his body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may be revealed in his body." (II Cor. 4:10)

May you and I right now confess the life of Jesus in our bodies and let stress be placed on the outside of our bodies where it belongs.

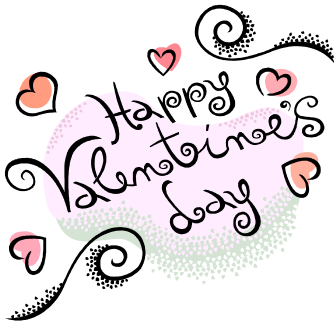
# Church of God and Church of God of Prophecy Bahamas Ministerial Conference



Pictured left to right: Tim Harper, Bill Leonard, and Billy Wilson

Reverend Billy Wilson, International Minister of Outreach invited me to speak at the Bahamas Leadership Conference on “How to Minister in a World of Crisis”. I also spoke in the Tabernacle Church of God of Prophecy on Sunday Morning and the Cathedral Church of God on Sunday evening.

What a beautiful group of people that both movements have in the Bahamas. God is blessing the cooperative initiative.



## Minister of the Day

This is a new ministry that we began in January here at CMC. Each work day, a minister is prayed for and recognized as someone special to us and God.

Our staff gets together and prays for the minister and we sign a card and mail it to him/her letting them know that they were thought of and prayed for on that day.

Take your spouse out for a nice dinner—this will help reduce stress this month and take care of **Valentine's Day** for you as well!!!!

## CISM Certification

In December, Luann and I attended this important training, certified by the Government, in Atlanta. We are now qualified to defuse and debrief individuals who have encountered a critical incident, such as 9-11, fire, murder, etc.

Pastors, if you're interested in being certified, go to [www.aacc.com](http://www.aacc.com) for more information.

## Singles Intensive

Terry McDaniel, Administrative Secretary to the Director, went to Austin, Texas in December for this event. She said it was extremely helpful and rewarding to her.

We recommend this to all singles. Call Terry for details at 800-762-5656.

## Ministerial Representative Training

November was the date, Cleveland, Tennessee was the place. Our Ministerial Representatives from different states were trained to reach out to ministers that are in need or having a crisis.

These individuals are on the front lines taking care of our wounded shepherds.

## Pastor's Care Time

I would encourage every minister to take time to be cared for and to care for another minister on a regular basis. Just be a friend to another minister, that's all!!!!

If you would like to have Dr. Leonard come and speak to your group/congregation, please contact Terry McDaniel at 800-762-5656

## Kentucky Ministerial Training

Reverend John Black, Ministerial Care Board Chairman, and Overseer J. David Stephens championed this event with CMC and Dr. Leonard.

It was a time of on-site training as to the Center for Ministerial Care process.

It was a great time of information, inspiration, implementation, and coordination.

## Oklahoma Prayer Conference

My wife, Luann, and I conducted a Marriage Conference for Bishop Wayne Wicker and his ministers.

I was also privileged to speak at the evening service both on Thursday and Friday night. Many were delivered from depression and introduced to a new friendship in ministry.

Bishop and Sister Wicker are to be commended for their leadership and love for the ministers of Oklahoma.



Pictured left to right: Bill Leonard, Luann Leonard, Blinda Wicker, and Wayne Wicker