

How many of you ever had the electricity go out in part of the house only to find you needed to flip a breaker. In older homes the fix is changing a fuse. A fuse is an electrical safety device which usually has a thin piece of metal in it that will melt if too much electricity goes through it. When a fuse does what it is designed to do it burns out if the current gets to great and stops sending electricity thereby protecting whatever it is designed to. This fuse is from an older home. It protected the kitchen appliances from getting too much electricity. It kept the appliances from exploding or burning out, or catching fire, by shutting off the circuit when the electricity spiked.

We have God given fuses in our own lives. When troubles come into our lives and threaten to overwhelm us, when it's more than we can handle, we turn to these fuses. It is part of God's plan that we have some way of relieving the tension, when it gets to great. Friends can be a fuse for us, helping to take the pressure off by sympathizing with us, listening, and sharing our burdens. Family can be a fuse for us guiding us, comforting us, accepting us, and loving us. A counselor can listen and guide us to new understandings and insights. The church can be a fuse by giving us comfort, peace, support, and reminding us of the eternal. But even more important than these other fuses in our lives, God can be our fuse. We can pray, and talk to God anytime day or night. I saw a sign outside a church that said, "prayer, the best wireless communication." People for years have sung Take it to the Lord in prayer in the hymn What a Friend we have in Jesus. Those words were penned by Joseph M. Scriven back around 1855. Scriven was born in Ireland and when he was 25 he was in love with a beautiful girl, the day before their wedding his fiancé died in a tragic drowning accident. Heartbroken, Scriven left Ireland and sailed for Canada. He became a school teacher and eventually after several years fell in love once again. Unbelievably Eliza his second love fell ill and she too died before they could be married. About that time Scriven's mother became seriously

ill. Unable to travel back to Ireland to be with her he sent her a letter and included the poem that eventually became our hymn What a Friend We Have In Jesus. When I learned this story, I was astounded that both times when he was about to be married the girl died. How awful! And then when his mother lay dying he sent those words to her to comfort her. This was a man who knew for himself God's comfort and presence, who knew personally God's solace. Solace, is an old fashioned word that means comfort, support, consolation, relief. Scriven eventually became a Baptist minister and although he never married spent the remainder of his life giving his all so that others might know his friend, Jesus. O that we too would know that solace, that comfort and relief through Christ.

What do we need relief from? I believe that many of us are troubled, tired and trapped. I got to watch my granddaughter Payton who turned one this week go to sleep. She was in her crib, and it was nap time. She was sleepy, but it almost seemed like a game. She had to feel the edge of the crib for a while, play with the stuffed bunny and make his ears flop. Then she turned over and over getting into just the right spot, then she sang a little song to herself, then she played with her fingers as if counting and then finally she fell asleep. It was like a game, how much fun could she squeeze in before sleep came. Too bad many of us don't go to bed with such an attitude. Too many of us do what is often called crash and burn. We don't look at sleep as something that robs us of our fun, but as an escape for our wounded souls. And if we are kept awake it's not because we're singing or playing, it's usually because we are worrying, about our debts, or our blunders, or our futures, or our jobs or our families, the list goes on.

But Jesus has an answer for us. If and when we are plagued by the three T's troubled, tired, or trapped. If and when our loads are too much for us to handle on our own. If and when we feel we just can't tote that barge and lift that bale another time. Jesus says, come unto me all who are weary and carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest. Ah, that sounds like relief for our worn out souls.

Are you troubled? Troubled about how to make the ends meet? Or as you hear the news are you Troubled by the state of the world today? Or maybe you are more focused inward, Are you troubled by your failures and blinded by the hopelessness of life? Or there maybe some of you that feel troubled by some test results, or troubled by the unknown? Friends, Jesus' words are for you come unto me all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens.

Maybe you are tired: Tired out by the mundane minutia of daily living, tired out by the drudgery that seems to have become your life? Maybe you're tired of always worrying, of never really resting, of the perpetual motion that seems to have taken over your world? Or Maybe you are tired out by the constant crisis of life, of always putting out fires. Well Jesus words are for you, "I will give you rest"

Maybe you feel trapped: Trapped in an aging body, trapped in a dead-in or stress filled job, Maybe you are trapped in the mindset that keeps you stuck in the futility of life, maybe you are trapped in hopelessness and depression. Or maybe you feel trapped in misunderstandings and tension filled relationships. Jesus words are for you, Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

People of God we are not the first to come to Jesus seeking help. Generations have turned to the one person on earth who claims to have an answer to our weighed down lives. And Jesus does not promise a religion, he does not reply with rules, he does respond with rhetoric. He simply offers rest. And with that rest comes relationship and redemption.

Friends, Jesus's gift is for you, For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. May you rest, and rest, and rest.

