October 2, 2017

EXPERIENCING SENSORY OVERLOAD?

When I crawl in bed at night, sometimes my mind doesn't want to turn off--like a computer that has too many files open at the same time. The houseguests who are coming this weekend, the latest terrible shooting on the news, packing for an upcoming trip, the phone call from a friend whose son is at the point of death, a list for shopping that needs to be done first thing tomorrow morning. My mind flits from one to another. Oh, no, they're not all *bad* thoughts. It's just that there are so *many* of them.

What can I do to prevent sensory overload?

Well, first of all, while we need to keep up with what's going on in the world, watching hour after hour of TV news only floods my mind with things I usually can do nothing about. So I must set limits.

Secondly, when friends have big problems in their lives, the best thing I can do for them is to listen intently--and pray. Even there, I've learned I need to set time limits.

Keeping paper and pencil by the bed for jotting down in the night those things you need to do can better put them out of your mind until morning and will probably let you go back to sleep.

Ultimately, however, if you're going to find peace, you have to replace bothersome thoughts with the eternal truths of God's Word. Truths like, "You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you" (Isaiah 26:3). Old stand-bys like "casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7). The Bible tells us to "take every thought captive to obey Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5).

Yes, there comes a time when you have to bring your thoughts into captivity to Christ. I like the way my mom put it: "God, if *You* never go to sleep, then there's no use both of us staying awake!" So true!