

Jesus' Strategy for Stress

Part 2 *"Peace, Be Still"* Mark 4:39

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, Dec. 8

Satan (as "the god of this world" 2 Cor 4:4) uses the *"cares of this world..."* (Mer'imna: distractions) to "*choke* (Symptni'gō: to crowd / strangle) *the word*" (Mark 4:19) (God's purposes and priorities)

So as to Rob us of His Peace, Protection, Power and Provision. (John 10:10)

While Pressures can come from outside sources (most of which are beyond our control) the real battle is an "inside" problem. How we perceive and respond to life's pressures determine how these "stressors" will affect us.

Jesus' Strategy for Stress-less life.

Last week we focused on three of this principles.

1. **IDENTIFICATION**: Who Am I? (*Rō. 12:1-31 1 John 3:1-3*)
2. **DEDICATION**: Who am I Trying To *Please*. (*Jn 5:30; 8:29; Rev 4:11*)
3. **PRIORITIZATION**: What am I here To *Accomplish* (*Rō. 12:1-3; Eph. 2:10; 5:15-17*)
4. **CONCENTRATION**: I Must Focus On What's *Important*.
(What should be First!)

You know who you are, you know who you're trying to please, you know what you're trying to accomplish, and then you focus on it or Satan will cause you to become distracted.

Mk 4:19 *"And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it (God's word and will!) becometh unfruitful."*

A. Beware of the tyranny of the urgent. (Col. 1:17-18) *"He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church... that in all things he might have the preeminence."* Prōteu'ō: to be *first* in rank and influence

1) The good is the enemy of the *best*. "I'm not doing anything wrong!"

But what are you doing that is "RIGHT?" Jms 4:17 *"to him that knoweth to do good, (kalos:valuable) and doeth it not, to him it is sin."* (hamartia, From Hamartano: literally meaning to miss the mark, and so not share in the prize!)

a) If Satan can't get you to stuck in overt sin, He'll get you sidetracked by secondary things.

Heb. 12:1,2 *"let us lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us (competes) and run with patience the race set before us, Looking unto Jesus..."*

b) Satan loves to get us caught up in the "thick of thin things!" 2 Tim.2:25,26

B. Jesus Was The Master At Focused Concentration. (Luke 2:46-48)

Jn 9:4 *"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work,"*

Luke 9:51 *"when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,"*

John 17:4 *"I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gave me to do."*

C. Distractions Delay And Devastate Us! Phil. 3:13 *"This one thing I do..."*

1) Lack of Focus keeps otherwise good and sincere people spiritually *impotent*! (Mk 4:19)

2) They'll find themselves among those who'll be disappointed in heaven. (Phil. 3:17-20)

"be followers together of me...for many walk...whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things."

a) These are so preoccupied pursuing the "wood, hay, stubble" of this world (1 Cor 3:12) that they have little time, energy, or appetite for God, His word, church, or purposes.

1 Cor. 3:15 *"they shall suffer loss, (detriment) yet they shall be saved, yet so as by fire"*

Conclusion:

Jesus' strategy for a Stress-less life involves:

Identification (Who am I?) Dedication (Whose am I?)

Prioritization (Why am I?) 4. Concentration (on the Critical)

In Luke 9:51 *"Jesus steadfastly set his face toward Jerusalem"*

On his way several "would be disciples" wanted to join him but basically say:

"Lord, I'll follow you but let me first..." verses 57-61

Notice Jesus' response to them. IT WASN'T: *"That's OK, I'll wait for you."*

But rather: *"No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." vs 62*

He also said: *"Remember Lot's Wife"* Luke 17:32

It's easy for us (like them) to get caught up in the "Martha Syndrome" (Luke 10:41,42) becoming

"careful and troubled about many things. But one thing is NEEDFUL"

Chrei'a: required, demanded... YOUR BUSINESS!

Application:

1) Why does Satan try to keep us from concentrating on Christ?

Because by beholding, we become! (We're conformed by Concentration.)

2 Cor 3:18 *"We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord*

Are changed... (Transformed) By the Spirit of the Lord."

2) How does Satan try to keep us from concentrating on Christ?

➤ Distraction 2 Tim. 4:10 *"Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world..."*

➤ Deception Jn 8:44 *"the devil is ... a liar..."*

➤ Disappointment Jn. 10:10a *"The thief comes to steal, kill, destroy"*

That's why God challenges us to: *"Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind..." (Ro. 12:2)*



Jesus Invites us *"who are weary and heavy laden, come unto me and I will give you rest.*

Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, ye shall find rest to your souls"

(Mt. 11:28,29)

Ultimately the choice is ours.