



Face the Issue:

This week we continued our series on our way to Easter, The Journey. Jeremy shared with us the story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. He was on His journey to the cross and beyond. Christ remained focused on the reason He was making this journey, US. There were lots of things going on around Him that could have distracted Jesus and caused Him to waiver from His purpose but He did not lose His focus.

In our lives, we are all on a journey of completion as well. Christ has promised to walk this journey with us and to help us on the way. We have many things around us that can cause us to lose our focus and stray from that walk. The common name given to this is STRESS.

Consider these quotes on stress. What you think they mean:

"It's not stress that kills us; it is our reaction to it."

—Hans Selye

"Adopting the right attitude can convert a negative stress into a positive one." —Hans Selye

"The greatest weapon against stress is our ability to choose one thought over another." —William James

Prevention magazine says, "Almost nine out of ten adults have experienced serious stress. More than four out of ten adults suffer adverse health effects from stress, and some estimates suggest that 75 percent to 90 percent of all physician office visits are for stress-related complaints."

What are some common causes of stress?

How do most people cope with stress?

What causes you stress?

Into the Word:

One of the leading causes of stress is our thoughts. How many thoughts do you think you have in a given day? Research shows the average person has about 60,000. That is a thought every second and a quarter.

Thoughts stressed Jesus. On the cross, he had to deal with the knowledge that God had forsaken him because of our sin (Mark 15:33–34).

David had a lot of stress with Saul trying to kill him and then conquering a country and ruling a kingdom.

Read Psalm 13.

How did David work through his thoughts in this Psalm?

What does this tell you about the importance of being honest about our stressful thoughts?

What does David eventually do with his negative thoughts?

Apply The Word

During His last meeting with His followers, Jesus knew that we were going to face stressful times on our journeys and that we would need help staying focused. In John 14:27, Jesus said, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”

On your own this week, read the following verses: Hebrews 4:14–16; 7:25; Psalm 18:6; 34:8; 62:8; Isaiah 53:3, 12; Jeremiah 20:11; John 16:33. Write down what each verse tells you about God, and how this can help you deal with stress.