

CONSIDER THE LILLIES, HOW THEY GROW

Statement...we finally reach a popular/less demanding part of Jesus' famous SERMON ON THE MOUNT, his CONSIDER THE LILLIES section, where he talks about topics relevant to our daily lives.

CONSIDER THE LILLIES OF THE FIELD, HOW THEY GROW, THE BIRDS OF THE AIR AND HOW THEY ARE FED. DO NOT BE ANXIOUS ABOUT YOUR LIFE OR WORRY ABOUT TOMMORROW. LET TODAY'S TROUBLES BE SUFFICIENT FOR TODAY

We are DOWNRIGHT UPTIGHT people. Stress is an EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER that affects all people, regardless of our age/station in life.

Question: How has stress/anxiety affected your life?

THE STRESS JESUS SAW... staring at the crowd, Jesus saw a sea of anxious faces: people trying to survive, worried about their next meal, how to make ends meet. They had no freedom and little hope of life improving. They lived as prisoners of Rome, doing as they were told. Most people wondered if God had forgotten them or if things would ever get better.

THE STRESS JESUS HAD...Jesus lived under constant pressure, moved from one crisis to the next, harassed by people who felt threatened by him, and swarmed by crowds who pulled/tugged on him. Despite his heavy load, he took time with people. He enjoyed walks and spent time with his friends. No matter where he was, he never overreacted. He stayed calm because he was PREPARED-spiritually/mentally focused. When things got hectic, he would head for the hills, withdraw, or retreat with Disciples to a SECLUDED SPOT to renew his spirit in prayer.

PRESENT IN THE PRESENT....Jesus lived in the present; he took it one day at a time. He focused not on 'WHAT IF'S but on WHAT IS/WHAT COULD BE. He managed more levels of stress than we will ever know and yet he lived a life unparalleled in human history. What a great reminder! The world doesn't revolve around us. The FUTURE doesn't hinge on WHAT WE DO. The world did revolve around Jesus, yet he never let stress/anxiety cause him to say/do things that were not in keeping with his life's purpose.

SEEK GOD'S KINGDOM FIRST...we complicate our lives more than anything else does. Jesus knew that we gain nothing by focusing on problems; we gain perspective by focusing our minds on positive things. Jesus drew a line in the sand when it comes to living with proper focus.

SEEK FIRST GOD'S KINGDOM, THEN ALL ELSE WILL FALL IN PLACE

As Disciples, our highest priority, the goal toward which our lives should be directed, is serving Him.