

Introduction:

- Everyone experiences the feeling of being stressed at some time or another.
 - A story is told of a woman whose little girl was throwing a temper tantrum as the two went up and down the aisles of a busy grocery store. The toddler sat in the cart screaming and flailing about. As she continued shopping, she could be heard calmly muttering, "Don't yell, Susie. Calm down, Susie. Don't get excited, Susie." A woman passing by commended her saying, "You certainly are doing a great job trying to calm down your little girl." My little girl?! Lady, I'm Susie!
- Guilt, worry, fear, busyness, perfection are all emotions that cause us stress. There are more but these are to get us going down the runway tonight.
- *"The Lord is my shepherd; I have all that I need. He lets me rest in green meadows; he leads me beside peaceful streams. He renews my strength. He guides me along right paths, bringing honor to his name. Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me. You prepare a feast for me in the presence of my enemies. You honor me by anointing my head with oil. My cup overflows with blessings. Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will live in the house of the Lord forever." (Psalm 23:1-6, NLT)*
- *"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd sacrifices his life for the sheep." (John 10:11, NLT)*
- *"I am the good shepherd; I know my own sheep, and they know me," (John 10:14, NLT)*
- At the heart of the Ps 23 is a statement of faith. David has faith in God as two things To overcome stress we know two things about God and we need to respond in one way, faith.

I. Two Things David Knows About God**A. The Lord my Shepherd**

1. Scriptures to think about, noting what Shepherds do: They lead, provide, protect, care for, carry and watch over. Kings in the OT we referred to as shepherds of their people because this is what good kings did.
 - a) *"Save your people! Bless Israel, your special possession. Lead them like a shepherd, and carry them in your arms forever." (Psalm 28:9, NLT)*
 - b) *"He will feed his flock like a shepherd. He will carry the lambs in his arms, holding them close to his heart. He will gently lead the mother sheep with their young." (Isaiah 40:11, NLT)*
 - c) *"Listen to this message from the Lord, you nations of the world; proclaim it in distant coastlands: The Lord, ..., will gather them and watch over them as a shepherd does his flock." (Jeremiah 31:10, NLT)*
 - d) *"Now may the God of peace— who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, and ratified an eternal covenant with his blood— may he equip you with all you need for doing his will. May he produce in you, through the power of*

Jesus Christ, every good thing that is pleasing to him. All glory to him forever and ever! Amen." (Hebrews 13:20-21, NLT)

2. The Lord - yhwah, the name that could not be spoken because of its sacredness. David is speaking about the God who is above all gods.
 - a) This is the divine glorious name of God!
 - b) He is creator.
 - c) He is changeless.
 - d) He is good!
 - e) Yahweh is know as the Faithful Presence!
3. He is **MY** GOD! He is **MY** Shepherd!
 - a) My is a first person, singular pronoun.
 - b) And when added to a finite verb it is spoken for emphasis.
4. As my Shepherd
 - a) The Shepherd is ALL I need! WOW!
 - b) The Shepherd lets me rest in green pastures - "comfort food"
 - c) The Shepherd leads me beside peaceful streams - refreshing, living water. Not stagnant pond.
 - d) The Shepherd renews my strength. He renews my courage, my inner self. My confidence that all is possible in Him.
 - e) The Shepherd leads me in righteousness/right living/ His ways!
 - f) The Shepherd, His rod and staff protect and comfort.
 - (1) *"What's more, I am with you, and I will protect you wherever you go. One day I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have finished giving you everything I have promised you."* (Genesis 28:15, NLT)

B. The Lord is my Host

1. He prepares a feast - in the presence of my enemies. He wants the enemy to see how we are taken care of. In the midst of threats God provides. *"Even strong young lions sometimes go hungry, but those who trust in the Lord will lack no good thing."* (Psalm 34:10, NLT)
2. You anoint my head to honor me.
3. My cup (because of the way you pour) overflows with blessings.
4. Your goodness and unfailing love (hesed) pursues me. Someone who is good host is looking out for the good of the guests.

II. Three Ways David Responds To God

- A. I have all I need. vs. 1 David trusts God to provide. "What else do I need but you?"
- B. I will not be afraid, vs. 4 David trusts God to protect.
- C. I will live with God forever, vs 6 David trust God with his future.
- D. Faith is center part of this chapter. In verse 4 David talks with God. I will not be afraid because you are with me. Both the Lord my Shepherd and the Lord my host require faith in order to receive the benefits of this relationship.

III. When you trust in the Good Shepherd

- A. You can relax because you are safe.

- B. You can lie down in peace because you are secure
- C. You can renew yourself because he feeds and provides living water.
- D. Green pastures provide rest from the rat race.
- E. But you do have to receive what He provided by faith. Trust is a big issue for some.

Conclusion:

- Trust Him church!

The Ten Commandments of Stress Reduction

1. Thou shalt not attempt to be perfect.
2. Thou shalt not attempt to be all things to all people.
3. Thou shalt be willing to leave some things un-done.
4. Thou shalt not spread thyself too thin.
5. Thou shalt schedule time for thyself.
6. Thou shalt learn to say "no."
7. Though shalt be willing to do "nothing" for a period of time.
8. Thou shalt not feel guilty for saying "no" and doing "nothing."
9. That shalt allow thyself to be unkept and unsocial for a period of time.
10. Thou shalt not be thine own worst enemy by beating thyself up over any of the above.
(Anonymous)