

GOD'S FOURTH STRESSBUSTER

Psalms 23:3

August 5, 2007 Sunday a.m.

INTRODUCTION

- A. A new survey released by the American Psychological Association reveals that money is the biggest cause of stress for most Americans. The survey conducted in late January, asked 1,000 people to list the most significant factors contributing to stress in their lives.
 - 73 percent of Americans said money was their primary cause of stress, and 33 percent said money was a contributing factor to the stress they experience. Other significant factors listed in the survey were work, physical health, and children.
- B. We continue our series, "God's StressBusters" based on Psalm 23. God's antidotes or answers are also found in this chapter.
 - 1. We saw the first source of stress in verse 1 was "worry".
 - 2. The second—busyness in verse 2.
 - 3. The third—emotional damage or distress in verse 3.
 - 4. Today we see another source of stress in verse 3—indecision.
- C. Life is a series of choices and decisions.
 - 1. We make decisions, then our decisions make us.
 - 2. Decision making can be stressful.
 - 3. Some of you right now are facing the stress of making decisions about finances, health, relationships, school, jobs, etc.
 - 4. The Bible acknowledges the stress of indecision—James 1:6 & 8.
- D. Thankfully there is an antidote for this kind of stress.
 - 1. In Psalm 23:3b David says—"He guides me in paths of righteousness."
 - 2. The antidote for indecision is to let God guide you. The "paths of righteousness" literally means "on the right road". This verse means that....
 - a. The Good Shepherd not only feeds us, he leads us.
 - b. ...provides, he guides us.
 - c. ...protects, he directs us.
 - 3. How? First lets consider.....

I. THERE ARE SOME MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT GOD'S GUIDANCE.

- A. First, some think we cannot know God's will.
 - 1. They may quote Isaiah 55:8-9.
 - 2. The Bible, however, says we can know God's ways—Psalms 143:10 & Ephesians 5:17.
- B. Second, some think God's will is always unpleasant.
 - 1. They are afraid God will call them to be a missionary to Iraq.
 - 2. While its true God may call us to sacrifice something for our own good, his will isn't usually unpleasant—Romans 12:1-2 & Psalm 37:4.
- C. Third, some think knowing God's will is a highly emotional experience.
 - 1. They expect to be swept off their feet and experience a "quiver in their liver".
 - 2. Sometimes God's will can be dramatic, but usually there's no handwriting on the wall or lighting bolt in the sky.

II. HOW THEN CAN WE KNOW GOD'S WILL?

- A. First, to know God's will you must make sure you know God.
 - 1. This means we must have a love relationship with God.
 - 2. The Lord can't be our Shepherd until the Shepherd is our Lord.
- B. How does the Good Shepherd guide us? What steps are involved?
 - 1. The first step is to admit we need a guide.
 - a. David did this—"He guides me".
 - b. This is hard for most, especially men—Isaiah 53:6.
 - c. God can't guide us if we don't ask him to.
 - 2. The second step is to ask in faith for God's guidance.

- a. Jesus says this—Matthew 7:7.
 - b. David did this—“He guides me”---David believed God was guiding him.
 - c. James says we need faith too—James 1:5-8.
3. The third step is to listen for God’s guidance.
- a. Job says this—Job 33:14.
 - b. What do we listen for? How does God speak today?
 - i. The Bible is the primary way.
 - ii. Circumstances.
 - iii. Other people.
 - iv. Impressions—“knower”.
 - v. Common Sense—Isaiah 1:18.
 - vi. Pain-“God whispers in our pleasure, but he shouts in our pain.”
4. The fourth step is to trust God when his guidance isn’t obvious.
- a. Life is a journey and sometimes knowing God’s will is too—Proverbs 4:18.
 - b. In the meantime we must trust God to do what’s right— Proverbs 3:5-6. Why?
“For his name’s sake”—Psalms 23:3.

CONCLUSION

- A. Some of you are stressed out today because of ...
 1. Worry.
 2. Busyness.
 3. Emotional Damage.
 4. Indecision.
- B. The answer is right before our eyes—Psalm 23:1-3.