

October 20, 2019  
UNDER PRESSURE – Part 1  
**“Under Pressure”**

**The United States is the most anxious nation in the world.**

**Philippians 4:6-7 (NIV):** “<sup>6</sup>Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

**Stress is our *body's* reaction to some sort of trigger, and it often leads to what's been called the fight or flight or freeze responses.**

**Anxiety is an *emotional* response to triggers like stress and fear, characterized by feelings of tension, worry and loss of control.**

**Anxiety shows itself as we have this overwhelming urge to control things, especially things we have little or no control over. (Cloud)**

***Feelings* of anxiety are not a sin, but anxiety can lead to sinful behaviors.**

**Jesus:** ““Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with ... the anxieties of life.... (Luke 21:34 NIV)

**God is on our side and fighting for us!**

**The key to overcoming the pressures in your life is not a plan but a person!**

**Psalms 23:1-3 (ESV):** “<sup>1</sup>The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. <sup>2</sup>He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. <sup>3</sup>He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.”

**Sheep need a shepherd who will keep them safe and lead them in the right direction.**

**The Good Shepherd doesn't hide us from life – he wants to lead us *through* life.**

**Psalms 23:4-5 (ESV):** “<sup>4</sup>Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. <sup>5</sup>You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.”

**We need to know that the Good Shepherd is already with us, leading us ahead, *through* the challenges.**

**Two big questions – do I believe Jesus is there, and am I following his lead?**

**Jesus:** “<sup>28</sup>... ‘Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup>Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup>For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.’” (Matthew 11:28-30 NLT)

**Jesus invites us to take *his* yoke upon us – he’s not doing this to give us *more* to carry but he’s going to help us carry the load we’ve already got.**

**Jesus is leading me *through* “the valley of the shadow of death,” at his pace.**

**Psalms 23:6 (ESV):** “Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.”

**The problem for most of us, including those of us who are Christians, isn’t the *truth* of the promise, but our *remembering* it when we face challenges.**

**Part of the value of regularly participating in a church is because out of sight, out of mind is so easy for us – it’s easy to overlook, forget, get distracted.**

**Psalms 121:1-2 (ESV):** “<sup>1</sup>... From where does my help come? <sup>2</sup>My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.”

**At the root of it all, we need to look to Jesus, who can overcome anything that causes our burdens and fears.**

**Next Week – Under Pressure: The Way of Peace**

Get the *Life Journal* Bible Reading Plan at [gateway-community.org/Find-it](http://gateway-community.org/Find-it)

Follow Randy on Twitter @HagemanRandy