

# Through Many Tribulations(2) - Struggling With Stress

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[ 0 : 00 ] We got last time, we were together a couple of weeks ago looking at the, under the title of Through Many Tribulations, we saw in a general sense how in Acts, we looked at from Acts 14, at how this was the teaching the Apostle gave to those that he was then in the process of leading in their Christian experience.

These towns that he went to, Derbe, Derbe, Lystra and so on, that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God. And we saw in that study how suffering in the part of God's people is within God's purpose for them.

Not outside of what he has designed for them, but outside the whole of his plan for them. It fits in, in its own place as he himself uses it in the plan that he has devised and ordained for their lives.

And secondly, we saw how it is essential in itself too for our Christian development, for our Christian growth, for our development in our understanding of God and our relationship to God and to each other and to the world in which we live and to eternity and all of these things.

Suffering has its own place in that education of God's people where it is used in his purpose and essential to their development. And I want tonight just to begin to open out the theme a little more, but still looking at it in fairly general terms.

[ 1 : 32 ] And then we'll begin, God willing, next time to look at it in a bit more detail in a personal way, at least in a way that takes examples from the Bible. Examples such as Elijah, for example.

We're going to look at, God willing, his situation where he fled from Jezebel into the wilderness, where he lay down under the juniper tree, and where God came and met him there and dealt with him.

And that will actually give us insight into how, in his personal experience, his situation, the anxiety he had there, the discouragement that he faced, how God dealt with that.

So there's so much in that for ourselves as well. But tonight we want to look at, in a general way again, the matter of anxiety or stress.

Because it really amounts to pretty much the same thing that Jesus is saying here to the disciples. Why are you stressed? You could translate it that way. Why are you stressed about what you shall eat, what you shall wear, about the things of tomorrow?

[ 2 : 35 ] Where he's using this word anxious. And that is really something that you find right throughout the Bible. It's there in the Psalms that we read. The Psalmist's anxieties, how he took that to God, how God answered him.

You find it in the writings of the Apostle Paul. We'll look at a couple of quotations from Paul's letters this evening. And how he counsels us not to be over-anxious about anything, but to bring it to God and so on.

So anxiety, stress is something which the Bible has a lot to say about. And therefore it's so relevant for ourselves. Because stress is something we're very familiar with.

We're very familiar with the term. And it's something that leads to all kinds of other difficulties for us. Such as discouragement, anger, depression, fear.

These sort of things. Stress lies behind that or is foundational to that. So it's important to us that we understand what stress is. What is stress?

[ 3 : 35 ] What does it arise from? How do we deal with it? How does the Bible tell us we should deal with it? It's really the point we want to make. It's not left to our own wisdom as to how to deal with the stress issues of our lives.

The Bible tells us for Christians. And that's really our starting point. That we as Christians need to be Christians. Need to be God's people. Need to be in a right relationship with God.

As we'll see in a moment. So that's the first question we're going to ask tonight. What is stress? How do you detect it? What is it about? Secondly, we'll look at dealing with stress Christ's way.

Dealing with stress Christ's way. Following the direction that we're given in this passage. That's Jesus spoke to the disciples here in this Sermon on the Mount.

As it's usually called. So what is stress first of all? Well, stress is something, as you know, is built into the fabric of the creation.

[ 4 : 39 ] It's impossible to live without experiencing stress of some kind. And as you look out over the physical creation itself. You actually find that there's tension, pressure, stress built into the very fabric of the creation.

Where do diamonds come from? They come from stress. They come from pressure. They come from pressure exerted by the creation itself, by the earth itself.

Until the carbon, which is essentially what diamonds are, are actually pressed so hard. So that you can actually then take the diamond out when you're mining it.

And process it into such a precious jewel. And pressure, pressure, stress is what causes earthquakes, what causes tsunamis. All of these things. Stress is built into the fabric of the creation.

But when you come to human stress, it's a fact of human life. As we've said, you'll find so often people refer to us suffering from stress. If you ask some people, why are they off work?

[ 5 : 44 ] Why are they signed off work? Sometimes that's how it's actually put. They're off with stress. It's not even defined any more than that. Any more detailed than that. It's just something we associate with the conditions of life in this world as we live it.

Particularly in the kind of demands that are made upon us today. Stress is very much a part of our experience in this life. But how do you recognize it?

And what is it about? Well, as we said, verse 25 here uses the word anxious. And you'll find that repeated down through the passage here. And you'll find the word elsewhere in the New Testament writings as well.

Why are you anxious? Do not be anxious. Why are you anxious? Don't be anxious about tomorrow. Don't be stressful. So the important thing really for us is to know the Bible's way of enabling us or helping us to manage stress.

That's really the key for our study this evening. And the key to how we deal with stress is about managing our stress. Because stress can be helpful to us or else it can be damaging to us.

[ 6 : 55 ] And all of that pretty much comes back to how we manage it, how we handle it, how we approach it, how we deal with it. Because, as we said, there's such a thing as helpful stress.

Helpful stress because certain types of stress will help you to focus on some of the most important issues of life. Think, for example, of driving.

Those of you who drive, many of us, most of us perhaps do. Well, you need a certain amount of stress to actually drive safely. You need the stress of being able to keep to the rules of the road.

You need stress. The stress that helps you to be watchful against other drivers and possible accidents taking place. Driving is a stressful business. And, indeed, if anybody has had any cardiac problems or surgery of different types, medical opinion will also will always tell you, well, you shouldn't drive for a couple of months or whatever until you've made some recovery.

Because it's a stressful thing to drive. So that's stress that's helpful to us because it helps us to focus on those issues that are important. I mean, if I hadn't been stressed in some way, I wouldn't have come with a sermon tonight.

[ 8 : 15 ] I wouldn't have made preparation for the pulpit tonight. So there's a kind of stress. There's that stress that's helpful to us where it gives you focus, where it helps you to really attend to things that are important.

And when you apply that in spiritual terms, it's also important that we recognize helpful kinds of stress. Helpful, that is, if we manage them properly.

Think, for example, of when God highlights in the Bible our sinfulness. When God brings home to us and hits our conscience over the guilt of our sin, over our relationship to God that's not right until it's put right by His grace and by our coming to Christ and our trusting in Christ.

Well, that's stressful. To know of yourself as a sinful human being, as somebody who is not right with God, who does not have the relationship with God that God Himself requires of us, who has, in Adam, fallen into sin and sinfulness, who needs to be born again, who needs to come to give obedience to Christ, to fall at His feet, to accept Him.

All of these things, as the Bible brings that to us and impresses that upon us, you don't take that on board without stress. But it's a helpful stress.

[ 9 : 33 ] Because it's a stress that really is a God-provided signal for us that there are things wrong in our lives, that need to be put right. If we're going to get rid of that stress, if we're going to deal with that stress, even if we're not rid of it altogether, but if we're going to deal with it properly, then God is saying to us, this is something you have to attend to.

If you're driving, again, you go back to the driving analogy. We'll use the driving analogy a few times tonight, different ways. But if you're driving, and all of a sudden, the warning light comes on, or a warning light comes on on the dashboard, if you're like me, that don't necessarily recognize what that warning light is about, but you know that there's something wrong there.

And if it keeps on flashing, or if it's just on all the time, well, you know that there's something wrong there in the system of your car, and it needs to be attended to. You can go on ignoring it.

You can just choose to pretend it's not there, but that's not going to be very helpful, is it? It's a helpful sign. It's a helpful stress, because you're seeing something there that needs to be put right.

That's how life is. God gives us the warning lights through His Word. And as they flash, as the stress of knowing that things need to be attended to, we need to attend to them.

[ 10 : 54 ] We can ignore them, but that's going to end in disaster, isn't it? And we'll see tonight how Jesus actually guides us as to how to attend to. That's stress. That's a helpful stress.

But there's also an unhelpful stress. There's the kind of stress that's unhelpful. For example, when you find people that have come to fall out, or get into dispute, and an argument, if that goes on unresolved, then that's not a helpful stress.

That's something that's damaging, or likely to do even more damage the longer it goes on. Overwork. That's an unhelpful stress. That's something we're all, I'm sure, guilty of.

Trying to do too much, or trying to keep up with other people, or measuring yourself against other people's lives, and seeing how you compare with that, that can bring huge stress to someone, if that's really how they set about trying to organize their lives.

And that is something that will lead to problems. It's obvious from our own experience, isn't it, that unhelpful stress, stress that we haven't managed properly, stress that we haven't dealt with properly, we're told by doctors and medical people, that that's associated with so many things that are physical and emotional disorders.

[ 12 : 14 ] Heart disease, ulcers, high blood pressure. All of these things that we're told are actually connected with stress that's gone on in our life for some time, and that we haven't necessarily attended.

It doesn't mean, of course, that everybody who has heart problems has them because they're stressed that they haven't dealt with properly. I'm not suggesting that. But where it is the case, it does often lead to emotional and physical disorders as well.

So that's something to do with stress. Life is full of stress. And we couldn't live life without having experience of stress of one kind or another.

The circumstances we have in our homes, in our relationships, in our work, as we go from place to place. They're all stressful to some extent. And then the question is, well, how do we manage that?

How do we deal with those issues in life that cause us stress? How do we try and ensure that as far as possible, it's a helpful stress, it's been helpful to us, it's pointed us in the right direction, we've dealt with it, or, on the other hand, if we've not, and it proves to be unhelpful stress, how do we recognize what it is?

[ 13 : 33 ] Well, that's secondly what we want to deal with from this passage, looking at it more closely, dealing with stress, Christ's way. And I think when you look at this passage, and anxiety here, although it's mentioned specifically, anxious about what you will eat, what you will drink, what you will put on, what you will clothe, I think it's fairly obvious that Jesus does not intend that we confine it just to those three issues.

It's anxiety in terms of our life in this world, and worrying about, or being anxious about, being stressed out, about how things will go with us, how things are going to be tomorrow, how we're going to cope with this employment, how we're going to cope with unemployment.

These are all stressful things, and you could say that the word anxious really can be extended to all, virtually all areas of life. So there are three things that the passage teaches us in the management of our stress, dealing with stress, Christ's way.

First of all, we have to study our identity. Who are these disciples? Secondly, we have to set our priority.

What is our life about? What gives purpose or meaning to human life? And thirdly, we have to speak to the Lord about it.

[ 15 : 00 ] We have to take our stress to Jesus, to Christ himself. First of all, study your identity.

Now, in saying that, this is to disciples. This is the point that we're starting at. Disciples of Jesus, followers of Jesus, those people who know that Christ is indeed their Savior.

That's the proper basis from which to begin dealing with stress in a proper and a meaningful way. And that's important to yourself and to myself.

If we try and deal with stress, whatever kind of stress it is, whatever gives rise to it, and we've not actually come to Christ for salvation, we've not come to know Him as our Savior, we don't have a proper basis from which to deal with whatever stress we have in life.

This is the basis that Jesus is talking to these people as His disciples. And He's saying to them, you have a Father in Heaven. You are His children.

[ 16 : 02 ] That's really what we're saying. Study your identity. The proper basis from which to deal with stress is first and foremost to be in Christ, to be saved, to be His disciples, to be His followers, to know Him as your Lord, to know God as your Father.

That's what you and I must ensure first and foremost. No matter what else we have in life that are important things, many, many important things, nothing is more important than that your relationship to God is what it should be.

That you are indeed saved, that you're a child of God. That's what I'm saying. Look at the number of times you find the word Father used throughout this passage. Verse 26, verse 32, where He says there, Look at the birds of the air, they don't sow, neither do they reap or gather into barns, yet your Heavenly Father feeds them.

And later on you find the same in verse 32, the Gentiles seek after these things, but your Heavenly Father knows that you need them all. He knows already.

He knows all about your needs. So that's really where you study your identity. How do I deal with my stress? Well, I deal with it firstly by ensuring that I'm a Christian.

[ 17 : 19 ] That my relationship with God is a relationship of a child to a father. We'll see how important that is when you come to the third point, which is to pray, to bring your stress to Christ, to God.

To have Jesus as your Savior, to have God as your Father. You see the deliberate contrast that He's showing in this passage here. What He says in verse 32, The Gentiles seek after all these things, and your Heavenly Father knows that you need them.

The Gentiles, at that time, were people outside of the Jewish people. The Gospel, remember, had not yet gone out into the world. So the Gentiles were those people outside of, those people who knew God.

The Gospel would go out into the Gentile nations, the pagan nations of the world, even to reach ourselves, eventually, as it's done. But here He is saying, the Gentiles, these people out there, He's saying, those who don't know God, yet who haven't come to God, they are seeking after these things.

That's their worry. That's their anxiety. They're anxious about these things. It's understandable, He's really saying, that they would be anxious about things because they don't have a Heavenly Father. They don't have.

[ 18 : 33 ] what you have. He's saying, your Heavenly Father knows that you need these things. And that's, in the same way, He's using the illustration of the birds of the air and the flowers of the field.

See what He's saying there? Look at the birds of the air. They neither sow, nor reap, nor gather into barns. They don't worry about where their next meal is coming from.

They don't worry about building up a store in a barn or having a return financially that they get anxious about. Yet, He says, your Heavenly Father feeds them.

Are you not of more value than they? Do you not mean more to God than these birds of the air or the lilies of the field?

Can you, He says, actually produce something as beautiful as one of these? Not even Solomon in all His glory was not arrayed like one of these.

[ 19 : 37 ] But, if God so clothes the grass of the field, will He not much more clothe you or you of little faith? You see, He's addressing them in a way that says, what you have to begin with is who you are, your identity, your children of God.

You expect God to look after you. You expect your Heavenly Father to provide for you. That means, it relieves you of the anxiety. Things may not go the way that you had planned.

Things may be exceedingly difficult at times in your life, but your Father has not stopped looking after you. These things, as we said last time, are not outside your Father's plan for you, your Father's purpose for your life.

Study your identity. Who are you? Always remember, as a Christian, you're a child of God. You have your Father in Heaven.

That's not going to mean a stressless life. Far from it. But it does mean there's a purpose to your life.

[ 20 : 45 ] There's a meaningfulness to your life that you don't have on any other foundation. Study who you are. When you're challenged, when you have causes for anxiety, things which make you anxious, things which actually come into your way that causes you distress, that makes you question, that begin doubts in your mind, perhaps.

Go back to this question, Who am I? Who am I as a Christian? Not just what am I, but who am I? I'm a child of God. I have the privilege, the huge privilege, of knowing God as my Father, of knowing that I am a provider in Heaven for me.

He's not going to lift me out of all the difficulties. He's not going to transport me out of stressful situations. Otherwise, my life wouldn't benefit from these.

But He can use them and He can actually teach me through them how I can use the stress of my life for my benefit and to bring Him praise and to bring Him glory.

So, first thing is study your identity. Who are you? And of course, as I said at the beginning, that's a question for you and for me really to think about seriously tonight. Am I a Christian?

[ 22 : 07 ] Am I saved? Do I have God as my Father in Heaven? Not just as my Creator, but as my Savior, my Redeemer. Have you taken your sin to God?

Have you confessed your sin to Him? Have you opened up your heart to Him? Have you asked Him into your life? Have you given Him a welcome? Have you received Him as He offers Himself in the Gospel continually for us?

Have you made the best use of Christ's death and resurrection as we saw this morning? Is that true of you or not true of you yet?

Well, how are you going to deal with the stress of your life on any other basis but being in Christ, but having God as your Father? That's where we begin. Study your identity and if it's not yet the identity of a child of God, that's something you've got to attend to first.

Fix that. Come to Christ. Accept Him and then you'll have these promises for you. Secondly, set your priority. What is your life about?

[ 23 : 15 ] Well, knowing who we are as Christians will lead straight into knowing what life is actually about. Who it is we have to please in the way we live our lives.

You're very familiar, I'm sure, with the sat-nav in your car. If you've got a sat-nav in your car to give you directions on your journey, most cars I'm sure nowadays have that.

When you're setting out in a journey, if you're going to use that sat-nav, what's the first thing you do? You set your destination. You program in where you're actually wanting to get to. Your destination is so important.

And that's the second thing. Set your priority. What is your life about? Where do you want to get to? And this is obvious from the passage itself, isn't it? When you look at verses 19 to 21 there, for example, don't lay up for yourself treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy, where thieves break in and steal.

That's what leads to anxiety. If we're confined to the things of time, to the things of this world. But he says, lay up for yourself treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust destroys, where thieves do not break in and steal.

[ 24 : 22 ] For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. He's saying, don't just confine things to this life. Always be thinking about what your destiny is, what eternity is about, where you really want to get to.

So you set the sat-nav of your life. You set the priority. What is your life about? And that will largely determine the route that you need to follow to get there.

When you set the sat-nav, put in your town or your address, whatever it is, your postcode, the thing then calculates your address. Sometimes, sometimes it will, as it determines the route for you, as it works it out, sometimes it will have to adjust it.

For example, sometimes you'll get a traffic jam or some problems on the road and sat-navs can then work out nowadays an alternative route for you.

but God's directions will always be the right route for us. Sometimes when we're in unfamiliar territory, if we've been there maybe a few times before, sometimes you get a question, I'm not sure if this is actually the right way.

[ 25 : 36 ] Or the one beside you says, are you sure you've programmed the sat-nav right because I don't think we're going the right direction. You've been there, I'm sure. Well, God's never like that. The directions God gives us in His Word are always right, are always safe to abide by.

They're always going to lead you to your destination in heaven if that's really what we've set as the priority for our life. And that will mean that when we face the challenges, the unexpected things in life, the difficulties, the pains, when you even come across defections from the faith, people have gone aside and turned back and no longer follow Christ.

All of these things are challenges and stressful things and when doubts begin in our minds, then ask yourself, not just, who am I, but what is my priority? Where is my destination?

How is what's happening now in my life, how does it fit into that? How is it going to help me if I follow God's directions finally to reach that destination that God intends for me?

Let me just quote from one of the great books of all time, The Pilgrim's Progress. I remember when Christian and The Pilgrim's Progress had reached the place that was called The Hill Difficulty.

[ 26 : 56 ] Came to The Hill Difficulty and the correct route was up the hill. There were alternatives round both sides of the hill to the right, to the left, but they did not lead to safety.

They were much easier to follow, much easier than the route up the hill. Difficulty, much less stressful than making your way up the hill to the top and then round the other side. But that's the right way.

That's the way that he needed to follow. And as he had just about reached the top, you remember that he met two individuals who were just fleeing in the opposite directions back the way down the hill.

They were called Timorous and Mistrust. And this is how the Pilgrim's Progress put it. I'll read the whole passage. I think it's a wonderful passage.

Now when he had got to the top of the hill, there came two men running fast towards him. The name of one was Timorous. The name of the other was Mistrust. The Christians said to them, Sir, what's the matter?

[ 27 : 58 ] You run the wrong way. Timorous answered, The further we go, the more danger we meet with. Therefore we turned and we're going back again.

Yes, said Mistrust, for just before us lie a couple of lions in the way. We don't know whether they are sleeping or waking. We can only think that if we come within reach, they will just pull us to pieces straight away.

Then, said Christian, you're making me afraid. But where shall I fly to be safe if I go back to my own country, that is prepared for fire and brimstone.

That's the condition of lostness that he came from. And I shall certainly perish there. If I can get to the celestial city, I am sure to be in safety there.

I must venture. Then he says, To go back is nothing but death. To go forward is fear of death. But everlasting life beyond it.

[ 28 : 59 ] I will still go forward. Then Bunyan says, So Mistrust and Timorous ran down the hill and Christian went on his way.

That's how it must be for us too. Not the way of Timorous and Mistrust. Not the way of doubt or doubting God. But up the hill difficulty and on as he knew, as he came to tell us, the lions were actually chained.

And there's such a wonderful lesson in that. If we step back really and stop persevering or going on in the Christian life, the things that we see at a distance ahead of us might make us really, really afraid.

The prospect, the anxiety starts to kick in. And it's only as Christian got nearer the lions he realized they were chained and could not actually come together in the middle. He could pass between them very safely.

You see, he could only see that the nearer he got to them. And the point to that is you have to go on trusting God, following his directions, going on to face the trials, the afflictions, the tribulations, the difficulties, the challenges of life.

[ 30 : 12 ] So, don't deviate from the route that God sets you. Continue to trust in him. Continue to believe his word. Continue to take advice from other Christians, especially older Christians.

If you're a young Christian here tonight or a young person, listen to what they have to say. Gain from their experiences. But set your priority.

What is your life about? Who are you in this world to please? It's not yourself, it's not your parents primarily, it's God, isn't it? Your father in heaven.

Thirdly, dealing with stress Christ's way, study your identity, set your priority, thirdly, speak to your Lord. Where do you take your stress?

You take it to him in prayer. You know the song, chorus, the hymn that goes, oh, what griefs we often bear because we don't take things to God in prayer.

[ 31 : 16 ] Oh, what joys we often forfeit, what griefs we bear. It's all about prayer and you take your stress to God in prayer. Look at chapter seven here, just cast your mind, your eye ahead to chapter seven and verses seven to eleven there, I'll just read through them because they're very relevant to what we're saying.

Ask and it will be given you. Seek and you will find. Knock and it will be opened to you. He doesn't say it will happen immediately. He doesn't say it will happen in the way you expect it to happen, but it will happen.



For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. Which of you, if his son asks him for bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent?

If you then who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more? Will your father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask?

Now the good things are not always painless things. They are very often painful things. But they are good things. if they keep us in the right direction, if the stress of them keeps our focus, if we come and bring them to Christ and find his help.

[ 32 : 34 ] You remember when Paul wrote to the Philippian church, that this is in fact what he said in chapter 4 of Philippians, where you find him addressing the need to bring all things to God in prayer, and where he adds some promises to that.

This is what he said. don't be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.

And then he says, and the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Then he goes on to speak about whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is pure, if there is any worthy of praise, think about these things.

Practice these things and the God of peace will be with you. Two fantastic promises, the God of peace and the peace of God.

These are the two great issues he says in relation to prayer that you will experience in an answer to prayer. And then when you go to 1 Peter, we went through it not so long ago, again 1 Peter, let me just quote this one before we finish, 1 Peter chapter 5 and verse 6.

[ 33 : 53 ] Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties, all your stress onto him because he cares for you.

The word there is the caring for you is on the part of God as your father. And he says be sober-minded, be watchful, your adversary the devil prowls around like a roving lion.

And it's important that we realize just why he put these verses so close to these verses dealing with prayer. There's always the enemy lurking around just watching to catch us off guard, to just get in there when we cease to pray as we should.

We've lost sight of our focus and our identity and our priority. We stop speaking to our Savior. He's waiting in the wings. He's waiting just nearby to pounce, waiting to devour.

He says, resist him. He says, firm in your faith. So these three things, and I hope these are helpful to us this evening as we deal with the stresses of life.

[ 35 : 02 ] We've seen what stress is very briefly, how it can be helpful, how it also is harmful if it's not managed in the right way. And dealing with stress Christ's way, study your identity, who are you, set your priority, what's your life about, and thirdly, speak to your Lord, where do you take your stress.

Matthew 11 verses 28 to 30, as we know are verses that are so well known in the teaching of Jesus. And you know what they say, come to me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

He is addressing those who are stressed, those who are anxious. Come to me, he says, lay your stress upon me, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. It doesn't mean for that we won't find any stress any longer.

It doesn't actually want us to understand that we come to Jesus first, and then that's it. That's the only time we come to him and begin the Christian life. What he's saying to us there is, keep on coming to me.

[ 36 : 19 ] With all your labor, with all your heavy loads, with all your anxiety, just keep on coming to me. Because one thing you can be sure of, the Lord will certainly be able to carry all the weight of your anxiety and yourself.

May he bless his word to us. Let's pray. Lord our God, we give thanks that you give us directions in your word for the course of our life in this world.

And we give thanks that in relation to those things which bring us to be anxious and to be at times near overwhelmed, we give thanks that you are there for your people, that you direct them as their father in heaven.

we pray that we may know that throughout the course of each and every day. Bless those who are tonight experiencing stress of mental or physical kinds.

We pray Lord that you would enable them to bring them to you as their father in heaven, help them to set the priority of their life as you direct us, and help us all especially to use that avenue of prayer that we may personally come to you and bring these matters before you.

[ 37 : 35 ] Hear us we pray now for Jesus' sake. Amen. Let's now sing in conclusion Psalm 23, the well-known Psalm 23 in the Scottish Psalter.

A Psalm which more than any other probably helps us to know how to deal with the stresses of life. Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want. He makes me down to lie in pastures green.

He leadeth me the quiet waters by. My soul he doth restore again, and me to walk doth make within the paths of righteousness, even for his own name's sake. Yea, though I walk in deaths doth fail, yet will I fear none ill, for thou wert with me, and thy rod and staff me comfort still.

To the tune of St. Columba, the whole psalm, the Lord's my shepherd. The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want, he gave me now to life, in pastures feed, he leadeth The quiet waters high My soul will be done Restore again And be to what thou make Within the paths of righteousness

In for His own things sake Yea, though my walking deaths are filled Yet will I fear not ill For thou art with me and thy own And thou be come for chill My deep blood that's furnished In presence of my foes My head thou dost with oil and oil

[ 40 : 32 ] And like a bull her clothes Goodness and mercy all my life Shall surely follow me And in God's house forevermore My dwelling place shall be I'll go to the side door to my left this evening And now may grace and mercy and peace From God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit Be with you now and evermore Amen