

50 Days of Transformation

Week 3: My Physical Life

Introduction

Welcome to Week 3 of 50 Days of Transformation. We are exploring seven areas of life where we need transformation: spiritual, physical, mental, emotional, financial, relational, and vocational.

Week 1 — Goal setting for each of the seven areas

Week 2 — Spiritual health, through the Parable of the Prodigal Son

Week 3 — Physical life, focusing on stress, through Psalm 23

Anchor Verse

"² Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect." - Romans 12:2 (NLT)

(1-2) So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you. - Romans 12:1-2 (MSG)

The Problem: Chronic Stress

Chronic stress is dangerous to our physical health — it damages the brain, weakens the immune system, and raises blood pressure. Our bodies were designed for sprints of stress, not an unending marathon.

"A peaceful heart leads to a healthy body." - Proverbs 14:30a (NLT)

It's not always what we eat that makes us unhealthy — it's what eats at us. Psalm 23 is a complete, practical model of stress management: six verses, seven antidotes to the seven most common sources of modern stress.

The Seven Most Common Sources of Modern Stress

- Worry
- Hurry
- Crowds
- Too many choices
- Loss of privacy
- Diversity that leads to conflict
- Fear of the future

Psalm 23 (NLT)

"1 The Lord is my shepherd; I have all that I need. 2 He lets me rest in green meadows; he leads me beside peaceful streams. 3 He renews my strength. He guides me along right paths, bringing honor to his name. 4 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. 5 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. 6 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)

Seven Spiritual Habits for Reducing Stress

Habit 1: Look to God to Meet All My Needs

"The Lord is my shepherd; I have all that I need." — Psalm 23:1 (NLT)

Worry grows when we expect people to meet needs only God can meet. If God is our shepherd, provision is God's responsibility — sheep don't worry about pasture, water, or predators.

"Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else?" — Romans 8:32 (NLT)

If God gave his Son, he won't withhold the smaller things. Stress reduction starts with worship.

Affirmation for the week:

"The Lord is my shepherd. I have everything I need."

Habit 2: Obey God's Instructions About Rest

"He lets me rest in green meadows." — Psalm 23:2a (NLT)

The shepherd makes the sheep lie down — rest is a command, not a suggestion. A Sabbath means: rest my body, refocus my spirit in worship, and recharge my emotions. Jesus modelled this by regularly withdrawing to quiet places.

Habit 3: Recharge My Soul with Beauty

"He leads me beside peaceful streams. He renews my strength." — Psalm 23:2b-3a (NLT)

Beauty restores; chaos drains. Get outside daily, start the day with God rather than media, surround yourself with beauty, and consider a news fast.

"And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise." — Philippians 4:8 (NLT)

Habit 4: Go to God for Guidance

"He guides me along right paths, bringing honor to his name." — Psalm 23:3b (NLT)

Indecision breeds stress. Go to God for direction: ask, read the Word, wait on God's timing, and listen.

"If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him." — James 1:5 (NIV)

Habit 5: Trust God in the Dark Valleys

"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." — Psalm 23:4 (NLT)

Grief is God-given and healthy; fear is not. "Fear not" appears 365 times in Scripture — fear locks us in - grief leads us through.

Habit 6: Let God Be Your Defender

"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." — Psalm 23:5 (NLT)

David never retaliated against Saul — he let God be his defender. When we stop defending our own reputation, a heavy burden lifts.

"So if you are suffering in a manner that pleases God, keep on doing what is right, and trust your lives to the God who created you, for he will never fail you." — 1 Peter 4:19 (NLT)

Habit 7: Expect God to Finish What He Starts in Me

"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 23:6 (NLT)

This addresses fear of the future. David's word is "surely" — expectant faith, not fearful speculation. Even in the worst case, our destination is secure.



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Summary: The Shepherd's Seven Habits

- Look to God to meet all my needs
- Obey God's instructions about rest
- Recharge my soul with beauty
- Go to God for guidance
- Trust God in the dark valleys
- Let God be my defender
- Expect God to finish what he started

Set a Goal

If all we do is talk about what the Word says, but we don't act on it, we should not expect much. This word works if we work it.

Set a goal. Write it down. Pray over it. Act on it.

