

follow the Shepherd. (Psalms 5:8) "*Lead me, O LORD, in thy righteousness because of mine enemies; make thy way straight before my face.*" (Psalms 25:5) "*Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.*" (Psalms 139:10) "*Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.*" (Psalms 143:10) "*Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness.*"

- 3) The Lord always leads in paths of righteousness to bring honour to His name. He wants His sheep to walk in right paths that do not shame His name. God is always wants our lives to honour His name. As Christians, we represent God to the lost world. If we follow path of unrighteousness, we shame God's name before unbelievers.

*God Leads Us Along* – by G. A. Young

In shady, green pastures, so rich and so sweet,  
God leads His dear children along;  
Where the water's cool flow bathes the weary one's feet,  
God leads His dear children along.  
Sometimes on the mount where the sun shines so bright,  
God leads His dear children along;  
Sometimes in the valley, in darkest of night,  
God leads His dear children along.  
Though sorrows befall us and evils oppose,  
God leads His dear children along;  
Through grace we can conquer, defeat all our foes,  
God leads His dear children along.  
Some through the waters, some through the flood,  
Some through the fire, but all through the blood;  
Some through great sorrow, but God gives a song,  
In the night season and all the day long.

**Conclusion:** Have you been neglecting God's green pastures and His still waters? If so, take your Bible to your quiet place and spend more time with the LORD. If sin or Satan has gotten you down or if you have strayed from God's way, you need to ask the Lord to restore your soul. Let Him bring you into line again. Listen for the Lord's sweet voice and follow Him down the paths of righteousness that will benefit you and glorify His name.

**Song:** Surely Goodness and Mercy **292 (#2)**

# Psalm 23:2-3

12 August 2018 PM – Psalm 23:2-3 – Ps23 – Scott Childs

**Introduction:** David's many hours as a shepherd in his youth enabled him to portray a vivid picture of the Lord's care for us.

**Transition:** This evening let us take a walk with David on the paths of the paddock and listen to him describe how the Lord shepherds us.

## 1. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures

### a. Our Shepherd causes us to lie down

- 1) Philip Keller, author of *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23*, states, "*Owing to their timidity they [sheep] refuse to lie down unless they are free from all fear.*" He goes on to say that their fears include friction with other sheep, the torment of flies or parasites and the need of finding food.
- 2) The presence of the shepherd calms the fears of the sheep. They trust him. The shepherd does not force his sheep to lie down, but he removes all causes of fear so that they are at ease to lie down.
- 3) So it is that the LORD removes our fears so that we can relax under His protection. (Philippians 4:6-7) "*Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*"

### b. Our Shepherd causes us to lie down satisfied

- 1) The shepherd locates or cultivates *green pastures*. He knows just what his sheep need. The Lord also **knows** what we need for green pastures spiritually. He has given us His Word and His Holy Spirit to help us gain from it.
- 2) When a sheep lies down in lush green pastures, it is because its hunger is fully satisfied. He is full.
- 3) If we will trust the Lord with our fears and spend quality time feeding our souls in the lush green pastures of His Word, we will be able to lie down in peace. Fearful worry and lack of time in God's Word will needlessly rob us of peace.

## 2. He leadeth me beside the still waters

### a. Our Shepherd leads us

- 1) He leads or guides his sheep with care and tenderness. This word “*leadeth*” emphasises that the purpose of the shepherd’s leading is to direct the sheep to a place of refreshment.
- 2) He does not drive his sheep. He *goes before* them to show them the way. He *calls* them to follow his leading.
- 3) The Lord desires to lead you as well, but you must be willing to follow Him. You must trust His leading. You must be like David when he prayed in Psalms 86:11, *“Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.”*

### b. Our Shepherd leads us beside still waters

- 1) If a shepherd does not lead his sheep to a good water source, in desperation, they will drink water from polluted water holes that will make them sick.
- 2) Sheep get some water from the early morning dew on the grass, but that is not sufficient. The shepherd knows where the clean, cool, *still* (lit. resting) waters are located and he leads his sheep to them. Sheep are afraid to drink from moving waters.
- 3) The Lord wants to lead us spiritually to His still, calm, refreshing waters. In John 4, Jesus told the woman at the well about His living water that could quench her spiritual thirst. Still waters also picture quiet refreshing times spent with the Lord.

## 3. He restoreth my soul

### a. Our Shepherd cares

- 1) The word “*restoreth*” means to bring back, to restore, to refresh, and to repair.
- 2) Keller tells that occasionally sheep, especially ewes heavy with lambs, become cast or turned over on their back and cannot get back upright. Without help they will die. The shepherd must restore them to an upright position.
- 3) Jesus, the Good Shepherd, is always gracious ready to restore us when we are in trouble.

### b. Our Shepherd lovingly restores our soul

- 1) Like sheep, we sometimes get down and cannot seem to get back up. Sin may trip us. Guilt may defeat us. Satan may oppress us. Burdens may weigh us down.
- 2) Our souls desperately need our Shepherd to lift us up and restore us. When David confessed his sin he prayed, (Psalms 51:12) *“Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.”*
- 3) At other times, sheep wander off and are separated from the flock. The shepherd then must go find the wanderer and restore it to the flock. If we are careless, we may drift away from the Lord, become carnal and lose our way. It is then that the Good Shepherd seeks to restore us to our proper walk with Him.
- 4) Whether we are down or go astray, we must obey what the Holy Spirit had Peter write, (1 Peter 5:7) *“Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.”* We must pray with the Psalmist, (Psalms 42:11) *“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.”*

## 4. He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake

### a. Our Shepherd leads or guides us

- 1) This word for “*lead*” simply means to guide.
- 2) Sheep need a shepherd to guide them every day down the right paths to the new paddock. If left unguided, sheep will follow the same paths day after day and graze the paddock so short that it will become unproductive.

### b. Our Shepherd guides us in right paths

- 1) The Lord our Shepherd wants to guide us every day (Jn 10:2-5). He wants to lead us in *paths of righteousness* so that we will not follow the paths of sin so commonly trod. God’s righteous paths lead to blessing and peace. He wants what is best for us. He always knows what is right. We often struggle to know.
- 2) Instead of trying to lead my own life, I must be willing to