



Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

² He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.

³ He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

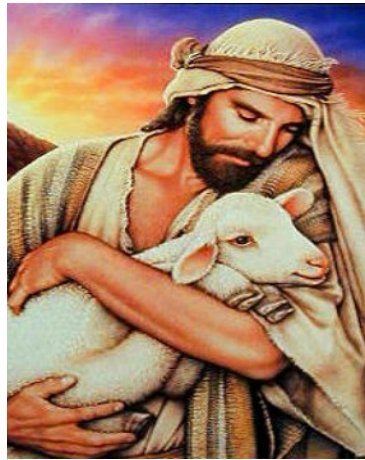
⁴ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.

I've been thinking about prayer and shepherding recently and especially David's prayer in Psalm 23. Whether as an Elder focusing on Disciples making Disciples or counseling couples, I've thought about shepherding God's flock. What does that mean? How do I really care for my sheep? What is it I really want for them? If you know anything about sheep, sometimes it can be like herding cats! But, herding is the wrong word describing shepherding. Sheep are not like cattle, they cannot be herded; they must be led! How? I think of Col.3:12 "Since God called you to be the holy people He loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." This, I believe, is God's prescription for shepherding His people. So, as I pray about my role in caring for those entrusted to my care, I want the "Good Shepherd" to be my guide.



Lord, thank you that you are my shepherd and that you have called me to come alongside to help you in this task. Thank you that I'm not alone and that you have equipped me with everything I need to serve you. Oh how peaceful and restful it is to be led by you to places of lush fulfillment where I and your flock can dine on your word. Will you show me how to lead your flock there, to that quiet place.

Lord, so many of your flock are experiencing turbulent waters right now, health issues, financial stress, parent child problems. Will you help me to lead them to your still waters where they can be refreshed by your name; body, soul and spirit, and their thirst quenched by your living water. Lord, some are facing the dark valley of death and it's so easy to fear what we have never experienced before. Lord, thank you for your promise to go with them moment by moment through the trial, comforting them. Thank you Lord, that no matter what may come, you are always providing abundant life, supplying overflowing grace above and beyond all we could ask or think. Thank you for being a merciful, good, good Father, where we will always be safe in your strong and loving arms.

I think of a couple we helped recently, coming out of a conservative and legalistic background. We led them emotionally and spiritually to a safe place where Jesus was, to feel at ease and loved in a way they hadn't experienced before. They opened their hearts to us, the Lord and each other which led to finding true emotional/spiritual healing and a more intimate relationship with The Gentle Shepherd.

April 2023

Mission

Freedom Ministries of the Quad Cities exists to help couples and individuals experience freedom in Christ through identifying and resolving spiritual and emotional conflicts thus strengthening, empowering and helping fulfill their relationship with Jesus Christ and others.

**“LOVE NEVER GIVES UP, NEVER
LOSES FAITH, IS ALWAYS HOPEFUL,
AND ENDURES THROUGH EVERY
CIRCUMSTANCE.”**

I Corinthians 13:7

The King of Love My Shepherd Is (based on Psm 23)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WLDpOqnylnA>

The King of love my Shepherd is,
Whose goodness fails me never;
I nothing lack if I am his
And he is mine forever.

Where streams of living water flow
With gentle care He leads me,
And where the verdant pastures grow
With Heavenly food He feeds me.

Perverse and foolish I have strayed,
But yet in love he sought me,
And on his shoulder gently laid,
And home, rejoicing, brought me.

In death's dark vale I fear no ill
With you, dear Lord, beside me;
Your rod and staff my comfort still,
Your cross before to guide me.

You spread a table in my sight,
Your saving grace bestowing.
And O what joy and true delight,
From your pure chalice flowing.

And so through all the length of days
Your goodness fails me never.
Good Shepherd, may I sing your praise
Within your house for ever. H.W. Baker 1868

Praise and Prayer

Praise

- ◆ For relationships healed and marriages strengthened.
- ◆ For God's love that continues to fill us with love for others.
- ◆ For the freedom we have in this country to minister to couples and individuals who are struggling.

Prayer

- ◆ For our schedule, that God will get the people in at the right time in His schedule.
- ◆ For each individual and couple who are scheduled to come, that their hearts will be open and receptive to God's love.
- ◆ For family, friends and neighbors that they would know the goodness of our Lord during this Easter season.

Birdies for Charity

If you have a desire to help individuals and couples find freedom in Christ, please prayerfully consider using the enclosed form to donate to Freedom Ministries of the Quad Cities. The John Deere Classic Charitable Corporation sponsors Birdies For Charity in association with the John Deere classic golf tournament, July 5—9, 2023. The goal of the program is to obtain pledges (donations) for non-profit organizations. Only flat donations will be accepted, they will no longer be accepting per birdie pledges. You may pledge a one-time flat donation or send your check along with your form. All pledges are due by June 16, 2023.

You may still guess the number of birdies for a chance to win a two year lease on a 2023 Lexus! The deadline for contest entries is June 16, 2023.

Donating through the "Birdies For Charity" event is easy and 100% of your donation, plus additional BONUS BUCKS, go directly to us. Simply fill out the enclosed pledge form, noting the amount you wish to give, your name and address and mail the left half of the form to Freedom Ministries in the enclosed envelope or mail it directly to the Birdies office.

Thank you!



Testimony

It is hard to find words to express our appreciation to you for sharing your time, life, and ministry with us. If we ever had a perfect week, it was that one. We felt so honored and blessed to be allowed to sit in on the counseling sessions. We learned so much by watching the two of you work together. We walked away with more confidence and encouragement than we have had in a long time. Thank you too, for sharing your life story with us. May God continue to richly bless you as you serve Him by serving others.

If you no longer want to receive the newsletter, please contact us. Our email address is: freedomministries@att.net or write to: Freedom Ministries, P.O. Box 953, Moline, IL 61266-0953