**Psalm 23:1-3 -- “He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name sake.”**

This is David's testimony to the faithfulness of God to his soul. He is old and looks back upon a life shepherded by his God. He can testify after years of experience, “The LORD is my shepherd!” (**Psalm 23:1**)

As his shepherd, the LORD had shown himself to be David's **provider**, **protector**, and **director (guide).**

The LORD had chosen David to be his own. The LORD had sought out David and found him even when David had not been seeking him. The LORD had come to David, where he was, and saved him as he was -- a sinner! The LORD had cared for him all his life; he had watched over him; and he had preserved him all the days of his life.

As a shepherd, the Lord had shown himself faithful to provide David with the **peace**, the **comfort**, the **goodness** and, the **satisfaction** of God’s salvation (**Psalm 23:2**)

David’s testimony also declares that – **restoration** -- is to be found in the one and only Shepherd of mankind, the Lord Jesus Christ! David declares “**He restoreth my sou**l!” **Psalm 23:3**

The Lord is my shepherd, he restoreth my soul – He **recovers** my soul from death and destruction.

The Lord is my shepherd, he restoreth my soul – He **relieves** my soul in its distresses

The Lord is my shepherd, he restoreth my soul – He **revives** me when I am in spiritual decline

The Lord is my shepherd, he restoreth my soul – He **refreshes** me when I am weary

The Lord is my shepherd, he restoreth my soul – He **restores** me when wandering\

The rest of the verse defines what happens when **the soul is restored –** “He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name sake.”

In divine restoration, God always leads his people into the paths of righteousness!

**First: As lost sheep we were led to the place where we received the righteousness of our Shepherd Saviour - the Lord Jesus Christ.**

**All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags** –

**Isaiah 64:6** – “But we are all as an unclean thing, and **all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags**; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.”

**We have no righteousness which can recommend us to God** –

**Romans 3:10** – “As it is written, **There is none righteous**, no, not one”

In that situation:

**God provides us with a righteousness which He will accept in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ** –

**I Corinthians 1:30** – “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption”

**We receive God’s righteousness when we submit ourselves to it in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ –**

**Philippians 3:4-9** – “(4) Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: (5) Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; (6) Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. (7) But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. (8) Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, (9) And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith”

**Once we receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour – the righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed (charged to our account) to us.**

**As Christians - we are new creatures with new hearts and with new desires to live righteously in this present world –**

**Titus 2:11-12** – “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world”

**Second: Once converted the Shepherd leads His sheep into paths of righteousness for the glory of God –**

**Psalm 23:3** – “He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness **for his name's sake**.”

**There are a multitude of paths upon which God leads his sheep -- all of them lead to righteousness – all of them are designed to produce righteousness in the Sheep.**

**Enoch walked in a path of fellowship and communion with God –**

**Genesis 5:22 and 24** – “And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters … And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.”

As the Sheep walk in fellowship with their God – they grow in righteousness.

**Abraham walked in a path of faith, trusting God all the way –**

**Hebrews 11:8-10** – “By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”

**Romans 4:18-21** – “Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.”

As the Sheep walk by faith and not by sight – they grow in their understanding of true righteousness.

**Moses walked in a path of forsaking all to follow the Lord Jesus Christ –**

**Hebrews 11:24-27** -- “By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.”

Our Shepherd often calls upon His Sheep to forsake all and follow Him – As His Sheep forsake one thing and then another in this world – they learn what it is to walk in righteousness.

**All Christians walk in a path of obedience to the revealed will of God –**

**Psalm 37:3** – “Trust in the LORD, and do good …”

As Sheep we learn to hear and know the voice of our Shepherd. As we learn His word and do it – we learn how to walk in righteousness.

Do good = Do right!

**All Christians walk in a path of love for their God –**

**Ephesians 5:1-2** – “Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And **walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us**, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.”

As the Sheep follow their Shepherd – they learn to live a life loving Him and others. In walking in love – they are walking in righteousness.

**All Christians walk in a path of chastening –**

**Hebrews 12:5 and 11** – “And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him … Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward **it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness** unto them which are exercised thereby.”

The good Shepherd always corrects His Sheep – the Father always corrects His children – As we are corrected and learn from it – we are learning to walk in righteousness.

**All Christians will walk upon a path which leads them to heaven –**

**Proverbs 4:18** – “But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”

The Shepherd is always leading His Sheep toward heaven – Heaven is a place of perfect righteousness – the path that leads there is a path of righteousness.

As we walk with our Shepherd toward our home – we learn to walk in righteousness.

**Third: The Shepherd leads his sheep in a multitude of ways**

**The Shepherd leads His Sheep by teaching them the Truth -- the Bible –**

**Psalm 25:4-5** – “Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.”

**The Shepherd leads His Sheep by teaching them trough providential circumstances –**

**Psalm 37:23-24** -- “The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.”

**The Shepherd leads His Sheep through answering their prayers –**

**Psalm 61:1-2** – “Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.”

**The Shepherd leads His Sheep by the Spirit of God –**

**Romans 8:14** – “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

**Fourth: The Shepherd leads his Sheep into the pathway of righteousness for one express reason or one motive –**

**Psalm 23:3 –** “For his name sake”

All the paths in to which The Shepherd leads His children will result in bringing Him glory.

QUESTIONS: Do you desire to walk the paths of righteousness?

Do you desire to walk upon the path of righteousness which leads to heaven?

Do you desire to be made holy so you will enjoy God and His heaven?

**Note**: Jesus Christ is the only way you will achieve those desires!