



water from rock

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen- March 2, 2024

The Lord be with you.

Do you ever feel like your life is going in circles? Ever fear that then maybe you're going nowhere? I mean, something happens to you out of the blue and you can't make any sense of it. Doesn't it have any rhyme or reason to it. And sadly, today's post Christian culture, it's leaving many people feeling like Shakespeare's Macbeth- that life is a tale told by an idiot full of sound and fury signifying nothing.

Well, there were times that I let myself get worn down, discouraged and I wonder if maybe I'm going in circles. I, I won't tell you my life story. But there have been things that have happened to me that I, I still don't understand. But when I feel like I'm going in circles, I like to get out my bible and turn to the wonderful 23rd Psalm, the Shepherd's Psalm. And I'm always encouraged by its words as it says, the Lord is my shepherd. That means that you and I we we have a shepherd who is leading us. He's guiding us. He's caring for us.

The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his namesake.

These are the Holy Spirit inspired words of King David, the great psalmist of Israel. As David is looking back over his life thinking about the many ups and downs and many turns in the road. And these are the words of a man who has lived much done much, a man who has sinned greatly and been greatly forgiven. And as David thinks back over the years, David remembers when as a young man, no, no more than a teenager, he remembers caring for his family's little flock of sheep as he was shepherding them. And David over the years has come to see that, that he has a shepherd. He is a shepherd of whom he can say he leads me in right paths for his name's sake.

After all the things that have happened to David facing down giants, defeating armies, but you know, also hiding out in caves and, and yes, strain from God. After all that has happened, David can look back and say the Lord leads me in right paths. And as a shepherd, David had led his sheep in that hot dry wilderness of Judea. And as a shepherd, he had to have some smarts, he had to have some skill in knowing the right paths to take his sheep, to take them to a water hole to take them to green pastures. David would also have to know that there were sheep rustlers that right. That's right, sheep rustlers, those who would mark out wrong pathways that would deceive an inexperienced shepherd into leading his sheep into trouble.

And as David looks at his life of victory and defeat the agony and the ecstasy, David can save for his life and for all of us who love the Lord, we can say he leads me in right paths. I'm not going around in circles. Our shepherd knows what he is doing. There are no dead ends with God. There are no blind alleys.

Notice David says, the Lord leads me in right paths for his namesake. David knows that a shepherd's reputation that a shepherd's good name is at stake in knowing how to lead his sheep in right paths. I mean a shepherd who takes his sheep out into the Judan wilderness and loses any of



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them would be the laughingstock of the countryside. No, the Lord leads me in right paths for his name's sake.

Read the Bible and see that the Lord is jealous for his name. God wants his name to be honored to be revered. Jesus even commands us in the Lord's prayer to pray. Hallowed be thy name. May people revere hold in highest honor, the name of the Lord.

So so we can be sure of what David says here. The Lord leads me in right paths for his name's sake. I'm thinking that there must have been times in David's life when, when he wondered, he wondered about where God was leading. Yes, the Lord led him to green pastures and quiet waters. But you know, the Lord also led him through the valley of the shadow of death. I mean, David had long years of running from King Saul time. He was even fleeing from his own son, Absalom.

I turned in my Bible for a moment over to acts the book of Acts chapter 13 and verse 36 where it says of David. David served the purpose of God in his generation. That means that there is purpose, there is meaning, there is reason in all that David endured and all that you and I endure as well. And you know, David can go on to say in this beautiful 23rd psalm. He he can say that goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. And that goodness and mercy will lead me all the way home where I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Maybe it does feel sometimes like you're going in circles. But for the sake of the Lord's name, we we we can say he leads me in right pals for his name's sake. Even when it doesn't feel like it, even when I can't see very far down the road, he leads me in right paths.

Fannie Crosby is known as the mother of modern church congregational singing most of our church hymn books as some of the more than 8000 hymns that Fannie wrote. But you know, when Fannie was only six weeks old, she lost her vision, but she went on to a life of great purpose and joy. And I wanna close with one of Fannie's hymns that celebrates the Lord's leading in your life and mine all the way my savior leads me.

What have I to ask beside?

Can I doubt his tender mercy?

Who through life has been my guide?

Heavenly peace, divine us comfort here by faith in him to dwell for.

I know whatever befalls me.

Jesus does all things well

And that's what David learned to say too. All the way my Savior leads me.

I am Tim Smith, a, a fellow traveler. Thank you for listening. Until next time.