

The Good Shepherd III

He leads me in the paths of righteousness
(Go To Meeting)

Steve Durham—February 11, 2023

Good morning everyone, and welcome back to part three of the Good Shepherd. I'm going through this very slowly, but Psa. 23 is so packed with so many things. The last two times we covered verses 1-2, and the first part of v 3, and today we're going to cover the last phrase in it:

Psalm 23:3: "...**He [God] leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.**"

We'll read Psa. 23 for the record here. It's worth reading over and over again, actually on a daily basis. It has so much to meditate on and so much for us in our walk with God and our calling and this spiritual walk that we have with Him.

Psalm 23:1: "The LORD is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.... [look at all the action words] He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. 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. You prepare a table for me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall **dwelt in the house of the LORD forever**" (vs 1-6). *Let those words sink in!*

Psa. 23 is a metaphor; it's written by David, inspired by God *to encourage, inspire, and comfort God's people* on this journey that we've been privileged to have. The calling that God has given it to us, to the Kingdom of God and to the Family of God, eternal life is our goal; God's goal for all of us.

Today we're gonna go through, "...**He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake**" (v 3).

- What does that mean?
- What is David talking about?
- What does it mean for us today?

It meant a lot to David. It means a lot for us. God has inspired it through the ages, through in His Word for our benefit.

Today, hopefully, we can discover some things from that, go over it and learn things and rehash things that we've known, but learn maybe a new view of it. The last time we just for the record,

remember we talked about Christ is our *Good Shepherd* and notice the word "Good."

Our works are filthy rags, but good works in us come through the Holy Spirit; they're of value, they're from Christ, from God. Christ is our Good Shepherd and we are his sheep.

John 10:10: "...I have come so that they may have life, and may have *it* more abundantly."

Physically we have, in God, an abundant life. We don't have a lot of riches and such, but we have everything we need. This is also referring to *eternal life!*

Verse 11: "I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep." *We are His sheep!*

Psalm 100:3: "...we are His people and the sheep of His pasture."

Look at all the action words in Psa. 23. It describes a journey. I had this mental picture of sheep laying in a field and a pasture, and that's what they were, and they never went anywhere.

As you read through this, that's not true. They're on a journey, not in one pasture, but moving from one location to another. That's what the shepherds did, they moved them through the fields, through the air around in a circuit and came back home in the autumn.

Sheep are always on the move, and it's healthy for them to be on the move. We move through our growth in God in the conversion process, growing grace of knowledge. We move from one spot, hopefully to another. That's the way sheep prosper and are healthy, and that the Shepherd will lead them in that sheep.

Some of the paths are in green pastures along well-worn paths through canyon plateaus and over hills and down in the valleys. Then back in autumn they come back home.

This was the same with David, even when the sheep lie down in green pastures, that's just a temporary rest for the weary, and they get up and they go again.

He finds shade for them and they digest their food and they're able to sit and relax and then they get up and they move on. From that point on in the

Psalms, the sheep are on a move on the move from lying down.

The shepherd "...leads them beside the still waters" and through valleys, and we'll see next time "...the valley of the shadow of death...: all the days of their lives. "...**He leads me in the paths of righteousness...**" Notice that *in* the paths, *not to* the path *with goodness and mercy constantly following them!*

Sheep are creatures of habit, just like we are just like people. If we don't keep moving, if we are left to ourselves, and don't have a shepherd who knows the good things for us and keeps us on the move, the sheep would eat all the grass, eat it down to the roots, and sometimes even dig up the roots and just destroy the pasture. Then it would be a muddy, barren field that would have disease and parasites growing that would make the sheep sickly. They wouldn't be able to find shade or water on their own. Their eyesight is very poor, as I mentioned last time, and they don't have a good sense of direction. So, left to themselves, they'd get lost. They're not like a horse, turn horse loose and it goes back to the barn.

Sheep get lost, they can't find their way. They can't make it on their own; they really can't. They need to be led and they need a shepherd who knows where the good things are for them for their benefit. No other class of livestock requires the same amount of personal care and handling and direction.

To lead, it requires the sheep to follow. The sheep have to want to follow, which they do because they trust the shepherd.

Christ is our Example! Even Christ said as of the Lamb of God, as our Example, He said:

John 5:30: "I have no power to do anything of Myself; but as I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father Who sent Me." *He relied on the Father!*

Verse 19 "Therefore, Jesus answered and said to them... [the Jews] ...'Truly, truly I say to you, **the Son has no power to do anything of Himself**, but only what He sees the Father do. For whatever He does, these things the Son also does in the same manner."

Paul said that, too; Philippians 4:13: "I can do all things through Christ... [our Shepherd] ...Who empowers me."

The sheep need that example to follow. They know that when they get up, they have energy because they trust in the shepherd, that he's going take them somewhere that's going to benefit them.

David learned this, as well; he learned to follow the shepherd's example.

1-Peter 2:21_[transcriber's correction]—*Peter wrote:* "For to this you were called because Christ also suffered for us... [we're going to suffer in life; that's the purpose to learn obedience, to grow] ...leaving us an example, that you should follow in His footsteps." *That's what the sheep do!*

Verse 22: "Who committed no sin; neither was guile found in His mouth."

Christ likens Himself to a sheep that's being slaughtered or to be sacrificed (Isa. 53)

Verse 23: "Who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; *when* suffering, He threatened not, but committed *Himself* to Him Who judges righteously... [the Father] ...Who Himself bore our sins within His own body... [Christ] ...on the tree... [the purpose] ...so that we, being dead to sins, may live unto righteousness; by Whose stripes you were healed. For you were as sheep going astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls" (vs 23-25).

Matthew 16:24: "And Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone desires to come after Me... [here's what we have to do]: ...let him deny himself, and let him take up his cross and follow Me.'"

It's required in our life if we're going to be successful, if God is going to grow His Family, we have to be willing to deny ourselves, willing to follow and earnestly, sincerely desire to do that. The Good Shepherd is there to help us and when we need help, we ask Him.

Hebrews 13:5—*He says*, "... 'In no way will I ever leave you; no, I will never forsake you in any way.'" *What a promise!*

Deuteronomy 31:8: "And the LORD *is* He Who goes before you.... [as a Shepherd] ... He will be with you; He will not fail you nor forsake you..."—*a good shepherd does that!* His name and his reputation is on the line.

"...Do not fear; nor be dismayed" (v 18).

Knowing that you're certainly not going to be fearful or dismayed in any way, because you know that Christ the Good Shepherd is there.

Sheep lacked this typical animal sense of direction, and so do people. We get lost, don't we? David did! David had a couple bloopers in his life later on in his life. David had a couple places where he got off the path of righteousness! He got lost, lost his way, wandered off the right path and got on the rocky, rough, dangerous path. Some of those paths

in the mountains, in the valleys, and on the hillside had drop offs. That's a danger.

So, during times of trouble, whether we cause it or it's outside, whatever it is, when there's times of trouble. When the sheep run into that **Christ is there!**

Psalm 138:7: "Though I walk in the midst of trouble, You will revive me..." *Tie in Psa. 51 is David's Psalm of repentance!*

"...You shall stretch forth Your hand against the wrath of my enemies, and Your right hand shall save me.... [that's what the shepherd would do with his shepherd crook, the rod and the staff; save the sheep] ...The LORD will perfect His work in me ... [that's the purpose] ...Your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever; do not forsake the work of Your own hands" (vs 7-8)—***we're God's workmanship!***

Ephesians 2:10: "For we are His workmanship, being created in Christ Jesus unto the good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them."

Psalm 34:17: "The righteous cry, **and the LORD hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles.** The LORD is near to the brokenhearted..." (vs 17-18).

Looking all the different troubles and trials, we go through the sorrows and the suffering, the brokenhearted.

"...and saves those who are of a contrite spirit" (v 18).

And that certainly puts us in a meek humble contrite way when we're, we have our hearts broken.

Verse 19: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of them all. He keeps all His bones; not one of them is broken. Evil shall slay the wicked; and those who hate the righteous shall be condemned. The LORD redeems the soul of His servants; and none of them who take refuge in Him shall be condemned" (vs 19-22). ***Very encouraging!***

Isaiah 41:10: "Do not fear; for I *am* with you; be not dismayed..."

The sheep know the shepherd is there; they don't fear and are very comforted by that knowledge.

"...for I *am* your God. I will strengthen you; yea, I will help you; yea, I will uphold you with the right hand of My righteousness" (v 10).

David said, 'Create in me a clean heart and don't take your Holy Spirit from me,' ***walking in the paths of righteousness!***

So, during these trials and troubles that we have in life, we can benefit from these words of Psa. 23 very much. It gives us comfort as we try to stay on the path of righteousness and follow the Shepherd.

It's very difficult because our nature is to wander, to get off track. But the primary job of the shepherd in pasturing his sheep and carrying for them is to lead them in the right way:

- to food and water
- to fend off predators
- to give them rest and shade
- to keep them free of parasites, burrs, cuts and bruises

At the end of the day, he looks at them. He takes care of them each individually and takes care of them. To make sure that they were comforted and healthy at peace by providing protection and reassuring them that all will be all right. Christ does have to us as well if we let Him.

The shepherd is and was responsible for making the physical and emotional health, welfare and safety of the sheep available; providing that for them on a regular daily basis, ***just as Christ does for us!***

David, through the inspiration of God, tells us that our life's journey is to follow Christ our Shepherd.

We enter into a covenant and Passover is coming up to remind us of that covenant that we enter into. He is the Lamb of God. He is our Sacrifice. His example, His life and death and His blood helps us to make it to the end of the path, ***that path of righteousness!***

It's a covenant with the Shepherd to enter into eternal life in His Kingdom and in His Family forever. That Shepherd, ***our Shepherd Jesus Christ leads us in the past of righteousness!*** There's an end result. There's a goal at the end of that, and He'll make sure that we make it.

He leads us by giving us His Holy Spirit allowing us to learn to love God and our neighbor with 'agape' love; we couldn't do it without that. As we lie down to rest today, we remember the Sabbath. We keep it Holy. He's in it, He's there with us. We remember the Holy Days that are coming up through the year, the cycle is yearly. The Passover comes up. We meditate daily. We pray, we read His Word. We are fed.

As we rise up to work, we do everything in word indeed to honor God. We understand the mysteries of God in doing that; we grow in that.

Colossians 3:17: “And *in* everything—whatever you do in word or in deed—*do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.”

As we search for our daily bread that He provides. We go to work or whatever. We need to do something. We can’t just sit there. We get up and we do something. The green grass He promises to give us that grass.

Matthew 5:6: “Blessed *are* those who hunger and thirst after righteousness...”

We’re hungering and thirsting after physical, *but also ultimately the spiritual!* He provides that:

“...for they shall be filled” (v 6).

Cool, still water. We need to drink cool water physically, but we also need that spiritually, we need the Holy Spirit.

John 4:13: “Jesus answered and said to her... [the woman at the well] ...‘Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; rather, the water that I will give him shall become a fountain of water within him, springing up into everlasting life’” (vs 13-14). *That’s the purpose!*

He is our salvation if we stay on the path of righteousness. Remember, He is the only way:

Acts 4:12: “And there is no salvation in any other, for neither is there another name under heaven which has been given among men, by which we must be saved.”

We’re gonna go, we’re gonna break these three sections down because it epitomizes and tells us what the Good Shepherd does for us.

John 14:6: “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.’”

As we follow him in the past of righteousness toward the end, we follow the Shepherd Who is these things, Who provides these things; He personifies them.

So the word *path* means *the course of conduct* for a person. The word righteousness in the original language means *to adhere to a moral standard* like honesty, justice and uprightness.

Where do we get that? *Through the Word!* We find these things in Christ. That’s what He is.

That’s what He says, and He provides that for us. Christ tells us how to follow Him in the paths of righteousness in order to reach the Kingdom, which is our goal.

We’ve gotta stay away from those rocky cliffs with those drop-offs in those rough areas and follow in the path of righteousness.

Christ tells us in Matt. 7, talking to the Pharisees and He says that there are two ways, two paths. Sometimes the sheep get off a little bit, but they’re a parallel path. They’re walking along, but it’s not the path of righteousness, but eventually, if they continue, they’re going to be off the mark and down the road they’ll be way over here. They’ll be lost! Once again wandering off thinking that they’re with Christ, thinking that they’re on the right path.

Matthew 7:13: “Enter in through the narrow gate... [remember the door] ...for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter through it; for narrow... [and straight] ...*is* the gate and difficult *is* the way that leads to life, and few are those who find it” (vs 13-14).

We could talk about that and it seems like there’s even fewer as we go along that stick with it, that stay on that path. Then He gives us some warnings that show us to broad and the destructive way.

Verse 15: “But beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep’s clothing... [they look like part of the flock] ...for within *they* are ravening wolves. You shall know them by their fruits. They do not gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles, do they? In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, but a corrupt tree produces evil fruit. A good tree cannot produce evil fruit, nor can a corrupt tree produce good fruit. Every tree *that is* not producing good fruit is cut down and is cast into the fire. Therefore, you shall assuredly know them by their fruits” (vs 15-20).

That’s what we look for. Some think that they’re okay while they’re really on a broad path. They may be self-deceived, they may be deceived, or they may know what they’re doing and just destructive.

Verse 21: “Not everyone who says to Me ‘Lord, Lord’ shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but the one who is doing the will of My Father, Who *is* in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy **through Your name**?.... [giving sermons and messages] ...And *did we not* cast out demons through Your name? And *did we not* perform many works of power through Your name?’ And then I will confess

to them, ‘I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who work lawlessness’” (vs 21-23).

There are many ways that can be done.

You can just come out and say ‘the Law is done away.’ That would be blatant, but there are other ways to do that, as well. Anything that is not the Truth is lawlessness; it’s off the mark. There are many that do that and few that follow the path of righteousness.

Verse 24: “Therefore, everyone who hears these words of Mine and practices them...”

Very important, you have to **hear it** and then **process it** and **do it!** James tells us that.

“...I will compare him to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock” (v 24). *The narrow way is the path of righteousness!*

Colossians 3:1: “Therefore, if you have been raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at *the* right hand of God. Set your affection on the things that are above, and not on the things that are on the earth.... [not in that broad and wide path] ...For you have died...” (vs 1-3).

How have we died? *Through baptism!* ‘I’ve been crucified with Christ. Should I live? Indeed, it is no longer I, but Christ lives in me for the life that I am now living in the flesh, I live by faith, that very faith of the Son of God,’ **not our faith, but this faith of Christ**, the Shepherd who loved me and gave His life for me.’

Verse 3: “For you have died, and your life has been hid together with Christ in God. When Christ, *Who is* our life, is manifested, then you also shall be manifested with Him in glory” (vs 3-4).

That’s at the end of the path! He says, ‘I do not nullify the grace of God for if righteousness is through the works of law, then Christ died in vain.’

That’s another subject I’ll just mention that you might want to go and listen to *The Two Righteousnesses* that are online at truthofgod.org Very important to listen to right now before Passover. But there are two ways. There’s a way that is keeping the letter of the Law that won’t get you to the end of the path. But the other righteousness is through Christ.

The broad way, v 5: “Therefore, put to death your members, which *are* on earth: sexual immorality, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil desires, and covetousness, which is idolatry.”

The narrow way, v 10: “And have put on the new man, who *is* being renewed in knowledge

according to *the* image of Him Who created him”—*Jesus Christ!*

Verse 12: “Put on then, as *the* elect of God, Holy ...”—*our calling!*

Isn’t that an amazing thing? Think about that: *the elect of God!* How are we Holy? *Through the Holy Spirit!*

“...and beloved, deep inner affections, kindness, humility, meekness *and* long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so also you *should forgive*. And above all these things *put on* love... [this is how we walk on that path] ...**which is the bond of perfection**” (vs12-14)—*at the end!*

Verse 15: “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which you were called into one body, and be thankful.... [praise God; thank Him] ... Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (vs 15-16).

He’s gonna show us those paths! He’s going to lead us down it; the Shepherd does that.

Psalms 16:11: You will make known to Me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy.... [the sheep are happy when they’re around the Shepherd; they know He’s a Good Shepherd] ...At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”

Psalms 119:104: “Through Your precepts... [the Law, the Word] ...I get understanding; therefore, I hate every false way.” *I hate that broad way. I want on the narrow way.*

Verse 105: “Your Word is a Lamp to my feet and a Light to my path.”

He will teach us His will. He’s gonna teach us what His will is. Christ knew the will of the Father, and He’s telling us what the will of the Father is.

Psalms 143:10: “Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God; may Your good Spirit lead me on level ground of uprightness. O LORD, for Your name’s sake quicken me... [grant me Your Holy Spirit] ...in Your righteousness bring my soul out of trouble” (vs 10-11). *He certainly does that!*

Psalms 25:4: “**Show me Your ways, O LORD; teach me...**”

Look at the desire and the passion here to want to know the way. David knew, in the latter part of his life he wrote this Psalm. He’d gone through some troubles and he’s calling back to God.

“...teach me your paths. Lead me in Your Truth and teach me...” (vs 4-5).

- very teachable
- very submissive
- very yielding

Not calcitrant, stubborn or rebellious; that’s the broad way. Yielding and submissive, Christ was tender and lowly.

Verse 5: “Lead me in Your Truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation; on You do I wait all the day long.”

Sheep wait, they have, they’re very patient and they know that the shepherd is going to provide for them. God is showing us that we need to have a sincere desire to be ***taught the paths of righteousness***, not something that we naturally learn. We have to follow the Shepherd:

- listen
- open up
- be teachable
- be submissive
- let Him lead us
- let Him guide us and show us

Eventually we get it through the Holy Spirit. Be:

- teachable
- obedient
- yielding
- submissive
- having a spirit and an attitude of submission

in order to learn and follow the path of righteousness!

The Palestinian sheep paths were rough, up and down teacher in spots and very dangerous. Same way with us: life today is that way, and a lot of the trials and troubles are for our benefit. When you get in trouble, God is there; He’s going to help you.

Psalm 121:1: “I will lift up my eyes to the hills: from where does my help come? My help comes from the LORD Who made heaven and earth. He will not allow your foot to be moved... [He’s not gonna let you stumble; He’s gonna keep you on that path] ...He Who keeps you will not slumber” (vs 1-3). *He’s on the job 24/7.*

Verse 4: “Behold, He Who keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade on your right hand. The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD shall preserve you from all evil; He shall preserve your life. The LORD shall guard your going out and your coming in from this time

forth, and even forevermore” (vs 4-8).

He’s our Helper and ***He leads us in the paths of righteousness!***

Psalm 31:1: “In You, O LORD, have I taken refuge, let me never be ashamed; deliver me... [part of the theme of Passover and Unleavened Bread] ...in Your righteousness. ***Bow down Your ear to me...***” (vs 1-2). *Listen to me, and He’s ready to listen!*

“...deliver me quickly; be my strong Rock, a fortress of defense to save me; for You are my Rock and my fortress; therefore, for Your name’s sake lead me and guide me. Pull me up out of the net that they have hidden for me, for You are my strength. ‘Into Your hand I commit My spirit; You have redeemed Me, O LORD God of Truth.’ I have hated those who take heed to lying vanities, but I trust in the LORD” (vs 2-6).

- trust in that narrow way
- trust the Shepherd

Proverbs 3:5: “Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and ***lean not to your own understanding.***” *You’re going to have a problem if you do that!*

Verse 6: “In all your ways acknowledge Him...” *Don’t try to control it yourself!*

- acknowledge Him
- put it in his hands
- trust Him

“...and He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and depart from evil” (vs 6-7).

Depart from the ways of the paths of this world that lead to death. *There’s a way that seems right to a man, but the end are of the ways of death.* That road, that broad way, the Way:

- Christ is the Way
- He’s the road
- He’s the path
- He’s the journey
- He’s the direction
- He’s the manner
- He’s the habit
- He’s the way
- He’s the course of life
- He’s the moral character

All those I looked up under *the way*. That’s a definition. Why doesn’t the world walk in the path of righteousness? *They aren’t called, God hasn’t*

chosen them to give the Holy Spirit! But there's another piece of this that God tells us in:

1-Corinthians 2:10: "But **God has revealed them to us by His Spirit**, for the Spirit searches all things—even the deep things of God. For who among men understands the things of man except *by* the spirit of man, which *is* in him? In the same way also, the things of God no one understands except *by* the Spirit of God. Now, we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that *is* of God, so that we might know the things graciously given to us by God; which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in *words* taught by *the* Holy Spirit *in order to* communicate spiritual things by spiritual *means*.... [that's how we understand] ...But *the* natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand *them* **because they are spiritually discerned**" (vs 10-14).

- Isn't that a blessing that we know where the path of righteousness is?
- Why don't we walk it ?
- Why are we so stubborn?
- Why are we so rebellious?

I guess that's the part we have to learn, to give up wanting to do it *our own way* and:

- trust in God
- trust in the Shepherd

There are other bad shepherds out there in the broad way, always have been. We go through Ezek. 34 and see that leaders can lead on the wrong path into the broad and wide way, into the dark path, out of the Light. They're not in the Light and they stumble and fall.

Jeroboam was probably one of the best examples of that, and we still have them around today, the Jeroboam way, the kings of Israel, all of them, Ezek. 34, the bad shepherds of Israel. Today, of course, we have a leadership. We could go on and on about all the different leadership styles that we have, which are bad, seemingly. If you have good leader they don't show up very well. They don't want to get in the middle of it.

The difference between a Good Shepherd and a bad shepherd is the desire to care for and maintain the flock in good health and commitment of the Holy Spirit there and calling. They'll learn someday; the kings and priests that are in training today will be there to help lead the way.

The Shepherd's reputation and good name depends on how he cares for the flock in:

- His namesake

- He's going to make sure the sheep are able to walk in the path and complete the journey
- He doesn't want anyone to perish

2-Peter 3:9: "...He is longsuffering toward us, not desiring that any should perish..."

Philippians 1:6. "Being confident of this very thing, that He Who began a good work in you will complete *it* until *the* day of Jesus Christ." *He's going do that!*

- He is *the Way*
- He's also *the Truth*
- He was in the beginning

John 1:1: "In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with the God, and the Word was God. He was in *the* beginning with God. All things came into being through Him and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him. In Him was life, and the Life was the Light of men. And the Light shines in the darkness, but the darkness does not comprehend it" (vs 1-5).

John 17:14_[transcriber's correction]: "I have given them Your words, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world."

They're not on that broad path. They're on the narrow path.

Verse 15: "I do not pray that You would take them out of the world, but that You would keep them from the evil one." *Protect them, give them the Holy Spirit!*

Verse 16: "They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in Your Truth; Your Word is the Truth" (vs 16-17).

- Christ is the Word
- He's the Truth
- He's the Life

Psalm 119 is full of the Truth, full of the Law.

Psalm 119:160: "Your Word is true from the beginning, and every one of Your righteous ordinances endures forever."

John 18:37_[transcriber's correction]: "...Everyone who is of the Truth hears My voice."

John 10:3: "To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice..."

The Sheep know the Shepherd. They hear His voice and He knows them. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

At night they would all mix the herds together or the flock together. In the morning, the shepherd would call and his sheep would come. The other sheep would stay, and the next shepherd he would call and his sheep would go out. They know the shepherd's voice.

Psalm 119:140^[transcriber's correction]: "Your Word is very pure; therefore, Your servant loves it."

Verse 142: "Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Your Law is the Truth."

- Christ is the Truth
- He is the Light
- that is his character

Verse 143: "Trouble and anguish have taken hold upon me, yet, Your commandments are my delight."

Why? Because they're true; you can trust them! They're sound. They don't move!

Verse 144: "The righteousness of Your testimonies is everlasting give me understanding, and I shall live. I cried with my whole heart... [look at the desire and the zeal] ...answer me, O LORD; I will keep Your statutes" (vs 144-145).

Verse 174: "I have longed for Your salvation, O LORD, and Your law is my delight."

Verse 176: "I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek Your servant... [Why?] ...for I do not forget Your commandments"—*I'm on that path of righteousness!*

He's the Life—the Way, the Truth and the Life—**eternal life!** That's what it's the end of the path of 'righteousness for His namesake.' God wants a family.

John 11:25: "Jesus said to her, '**I am the Resurrection and the Life.** He who believes in Me, though he die, shall live *again*.'"

How encouraging. He's gonna make sure even if we die on the path, we're going to make it to the end. ***IF*** we stay, do the things we're supposed to do and stay close to Him. Repent of the things we need to, and follow Him.

Verse 26: "And everyone who lives and believes in Me shall not die forever..."

Then he says something I've always marveled at this.

"...**Do you believe this?**" (v 26). *Do you get it? I'm standing before you. I am Life!* Then he resurrected Lazarus and proved it.

John 4:24: "God *is* spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in Spirit and in Truth.

Everyone who walks on that true path of righteousness will have God's Holy Spirit dwelling in them and have life from Christ in them. *He won't fail you!*

John 15:26: "But when the Comforter has come, which I will send to you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of the Truth, which proceeds from the Father, that one shall bear witness of Me."

Romans 8:8: "But those who are in *the* flesh cannot please God... [in that broad way] ...However, you are not in *the* flesh, but in *the* Spirit, if *the* Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you..." (vs 8-9)—*through:*

- baptism
- laying on of hands
- repentance
- seeking Him
- changing
- having a submissive, humble, teachable attitude
- a contrite spirit

It's dwelling in you!

"...But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. But if Christ *be* within you, the body *is* indeed dead because of sin; however, the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. Now, if the Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus from the dead is dwelling within you, He Who raised Christ from *the* dead will also quicken your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwells within you. So then, brethren, we are not debtors to the flesh, to live according to *the* flesh" (vs 9-12).

We don't live that broad way; we don't follow that wide way. ***We walk the narrow path!***

Verse 13: "Because if you are living according to *the* flesh, you shall die; but if by *the* Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you shall live. For as many as are led... [down that path of righteousness] ...by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God" (vs 13-14).

They'll make it for His name's sake into the Kingdom of God, into the Family of God forever.

Verse 15: "Now, you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear, but you have received *the* Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that we are *the* children of God" (vs 15-16).

God calls things what they will be as though

they are. We are the children of God, we are begotten, but we will be. He's going to make sure that we make it.

Verse 17: "Now, if *we are* children, *we are* also heirs—truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer together with Him, so that we may also be glorified together with Him. For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time *are* not worthy *to be compared...* [think about that; that's the goal] ...with the glory that shall be revealed in us" (vs 17-18).

We know how we receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). You begin seeking. God calls and draws (John 6:44). You have this desire; you know you need to change and repent. You repent and come to God. You're baptized and hands are laid on and you receive the Holy Spirit. Then the journey begins in earnest.

There's a difference between being led by the flesh, the letter of the Law, and the Spirit of the inward part and having God's Holy Spirit makes it possible to be led in the paths of righteousness and obtain eternal life at Christ's return. He's going to give it to us; it's a gift! (Rom. 5:17). You can't earn it. *You can't earn it!* Just like salvation:

Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord." *It's a gift!* Righteousness is a gift, as well.

Romans 5:17: "For if by the offense of the one man death reigned by the one, how much more shall those who receive **the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness** reign in life by the One Jesus Christ."

- not of ourselves
- not by ourselves
- not by our selves or our power

but through Jesus Christ, we received that gift!

It's imputed to us. When we ask for forgiveness, we repent of sin. We ask for forgiveness, and God justifies us through the blood of Christ. We're seen as white as wool. We're seen as Jesus Christ in the eyes of God and our Mediator, our Advocate, and our High Priest goes before the Father in the Holy of Holies and advocates our case. Christ is that High Priest for us!

The blood of Christ is shed on our behalf, and we're seen as righteous. We're given that gift upon repentance, baptism, laying on of hands and receiving the Holy Spirit. You can't earn it. Read and listen to *The Two Righteousness*.

For His name's sake. He does it all for His name's sake. To bring honor and glory to His name. In ancient Israel, one's name was inseparably linked to his reputation and standing; same way with the shepherd. If he had barren pastures and he didn't care for the sheep; they were sick, starving, thirsty and they died, he had a bad name.

But the Good Shepherd doesn't! God leads us in the past of righteousness because He is a righteous Shepherd where you.

Psalms 31:3: "For You are my Rock and my fortress therefore, for Your name's sake lead me and guide me."

Who's going to be there? *It's difficult!* We have to have the desire to do it, but we have to do something, too; we can't do it on our own. Works are required. Law is required, but the gift of righteousness is free; it's a gift. We have to do something.

Psalms 15:1 *tells us who's gonna be there:* "LORD, who shall dwell in Your tabernacle? Who shall dwell upon Your Holy hill? He who walks uprightly, and works righteousness..." (vs 1-2)—*good works!*

The righteousness, the Holy Spirit in us requiring and causing us to do the works of God. Have the mind of God and come 'to the measure of the fullness of the stature of Christ.'

"...and speaks truth in his heart. He does not slander with his tongue, nor does evil to his neighbor, nor takes up a reproach against his neighbor, in whose eyes a vile person is despised..." (vs 2-4).

He sizing Christ for the abominations that are done.

"...but he honors those who fear the LORD; he who swears to his own hurt and does not change it" (v 4).

God does not change (Heb. 13:8). There's no variation nor of shadow of turning (James 1:17). *He goes straight; He's the Light!*

Verse 5: "He who has not put out his money at usury, nor has he taken a bribe against the innocent. He who does these things shall never be moved."

When you have that and you've been called to a new creation, a new creature, and you're moving down the path of righteousness. God has given you a new heart.

Ezekiel 36:26: "And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit within you. And I

will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you shall keep My ordinances and do *them*" (vs 26-27).

This is called *circumcision of the heart*. It was a new concept to the world in Jesus' time and the Pharisees and the religious establishment, *circumcision of the heart*.

Romans 2:29: "Rather, he *is* a Jew who *is* *one* inwardly, and circumcision *is* of the heart, **in the spirit and not in the letter**... [the two righteousnesses] ...whose praise *is* not from men but from God."

Christ is the only way. He's the end of the road. He's the path of righteousness that we walk in and He takes us to eternal life. It's a gift; salvation is a gift. But we've got to endure and we've gotta persevere.

Hebrews 12:1: "Therefore, *since* we are surrounded by such a great throng of witnesses..."

We do, even in our life today, we've known people, saints who have lived and died and have been a good example to us to keep going, and we have Heb. 11, *the faith chapter*.

"...let us lay aside every weight... [that broad way, lay it aside all works of the flesh] ...and the sin that so easily entraps *us*; *and* let us run the race..." (v 1).

It's down the path we're trotting. It's kind of a marathon, but it's likened to a race because there's a reward at the end.

"...run the race set before us with endurance, having *our minds* fixed on Jesus... [the Shepherd] ...the Beginner and Finisher of *our* faith; Who for the joy that lay ahead of Him endured *the* cross, *although* He despised *the* shame, and has sat down at *the* right hand of the Throne of God" (vs 1-2).

1-Cor. 15:51—This is a mystery! The world doesn't understand what we're talking about here. They don't understand walking in the path of righteousness for His name's sake. What's at the end? They don't understand that the Family of God, the Kingdom of God.

1-Corinthians 15:51: Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed, in an instant, in *the* twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for *the* trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruptibility, and this mortal must put on

immortality. Now, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruptibility, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory'" (vs 51-54).

Verse 55: "O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory? Now the sting of death *is* sin, and the power of sin *is* the Law. But thanks *be* to God, Who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in *the* Lord" (vs 55-58).

Hebrews 13:20: "And *may* the God of peace, Who raised our Lord Jesus from among *the* dead—that great Shepherd of the sheep—through *the* blood of *the* everlasting covenant, perfect you in every good work in order that you may do His will; accomplishing in you that which *is* well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to Whom *be* *the* glory into the ages of eternity. Amen" (vs 20-21).

Amos 3:3: "Can two walk together unless they be agreed?"

We follow the Good Shepherd. He leads us to the same goal. So, ***let's follow Him in the paths of righteousness*** that He has called us to and be with Him in the Kingdom of God. If we do:

1-Peter 5:4 is what our goal is, and this is why it's so amazing about the 23rd Psalm:

1-Peter 5:4: "And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you shall receive an unfading, *eternal* crown of glory."

So let's hang in there!

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- 1) Psalm 23:3, 1-6, 3
- 2) John 10:10-11
- 3) Psalm 100:3
- 4) John 5:30, 19
- 5) Philippians 4:13
- 6) 1 Peter 2:21-25
- 7) Matthew 16:24
- 8) Hebrews 13:5
- 9) Deuteronomy 31:8
- 10) Psalm 138:7-8
- 11) Ephesians 2:10
- 12) Psalm 34:17-22
- 13) Isaiah 41:10
- 14) Colossians 3:17
- 15) Matthew 5:6
- 16) John 4:13-14
- 17) Acts 4:12

- 18) John 14:6
- 19) Matthew 7:13-24
- 20) Colossians 3:1-5, 10, 12-16
- 21) Psalm 16:11
- 22) Psalm 119:104-105
- 23) Psalm 143:10-11
- 24) Psalm 25:4-5
- 25) Psalm 121:1-8
- 26) Psalm 31:1-6
- 27) Proverbs 3:5-7
- 28) 1 Corinthians 2:10-14
- 29) 2 Peter 3:9
- 30) Philippians 1:6
- 31) John 1:1-5
- 32) John 17:14-17
- 33) Psalm 119:160
- 34) John 18:37
- 35) John 10:3-4
- 36) Psalm 119:140, 142-145, 174, 176
- 37) John 11:25-26
- 38) John 4:24
- 39) John 15:26
- 40) Romans 8:8-18
- 41) Romans 6:23
- 42) Romans 5:17
- 43) Psalm 31:3
- 44) Psalm 15:1-5
- 45) Ezekiel 36:26-27
- 46) Romans 2:29
- 47) Hebrews 12:1-2
- 48) 1 Corinthians 15:51-58
- 49) Hebrews 13:20-21
- 50) Amos 3:3
- 51) 1 Peter 5:4

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- Isaiah 53
- Psalm 51
- Ezekiel 34
- Acts 2:38
- John 6:44
- Hebrews 13:8
- James 1:17
- Hebrews 11

Also referenced: Messages {truthofGod.org):
The Two Righteousness #s 1 & 2

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