

The Lord Is My Shepherd

by David Ford

David Ford's sermon emphasizes the Lord's role as our shepherd, providing peace and restoration in times of trouble.

Duration: 1:01:43

Scripture: Psalm 22:1, Psalm 23:1, Psalm 24:3

Topics: "Love Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher reflects on the story of Jesus turning water into wine in John chapter 2. He encourages listeners who may feel like their best years are behind them to trust in God's sovereignty and believe that they may be on the verge of the greatest chapter of their lives. The preacher emphasizes the importance of finding peace in the midst of life's storms and highlights the story of a young boy who had lost his family but still had faith in Jesus. He also discusses the need for revival in America and the importance of delivering messages from the throne of God rather than just giving talks. The preacher concludes by discussing the concept of grace and how it is the undeserved activity of God in our lives, enabling us to walk in dependence on Jesus and experience His transforming power.

Transcript

Well, let's have a word of prayer, those that are here this afternoon. Amen. Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for your faithfulness and your goodness to us.

Lord, I pray that you illuminate our minds into your word. I pray that we come to the Scriptures to see Jesus. For they are they which testify and speak of you, Lord Jesus.

And may we come to your word to see Jesus, and in that revelation of Jesus, may our lives be transformed, utterly changed, sanctified by the Word of God, sanctified by the power of the Spirit of Almighty God as well. So, Lord, I pray today, speak, Lord, in the stillness. While we wait upon thee, hush our hearts to listen in expectancy.

Speak, O blessed Master, in this hallowed hour. Let us see thy face, Lord, and feel and know your touch of power. Father, we thank you.

We bless your holy name. And all God's people said, Amen. Take your Bibles, if you have them, this afternoon and turn to the book of Psalms.

Psalm chapter number 23, Psalm chapter 23, 23, if you're Latino. And Psalm 23, a wonderful chapter known and memorized by many from childhood. But this chapter has become dear to my heart more in the last two months than ever in all of my life.

We'll begin reading in verse number one. We'll read the whole chapter. 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. He restores my soul.

He leads me in the paths of righteousness for his namesake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.

Thou prepares the table before me in the presence of mine 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 will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. And everybody said, amen. If Psalm chapter 22 is referenced to the cross of Jesus, and it is, I say if in terms of since it is.

And chapter 24 has to do with Jesus and the crown. I love chapter 24. Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Who shall stand in his holy place? He that has clean hands.

If we're going to receive anything from the Lord in this conference this weekend, we must come with clean hands and a pure heart. Who has not lifted up his soul unto vanity nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord.

And we've come to receive his blessing. Amen. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord.

Life, life and praise God for that life. So chapter 22 is the cross. Chapter 24 is the crown.

Chapter 23 is the crook. Written by David, a psalm of David. The Lord is my shepherd.

Quickly, he's a master provider. The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want.

Now it doesn't say the Lord is my shepherd. I get everything I want. It says the Lord is my shepherd.

I shall not want. You can turn that around because the is is not there in the actual Hebrew. You can actually in application say it this way.

When and where the shepherd is Lord, I shall not lack. Is he Lord of your life? Is he Lord of my life? Lord of every thought and action. Lord to send and Lord to stay.

Lord in writing, speaking, giving. Lord of all things to obey. Lord of all that is of me.

Now whenever more shall be. Thou art king in my life. And yet in this verse right here is capital letters, Lord.

The covenant making God. The covenant keeping God. God taught Adam and Eve to cut covenant.

In the shedding of blood and clothing them with coats of skin. All throughout Genesis. You have in chapter 22 offering up of Abraham his son Isaac.

God provided himself a lamp. All throughout the word of God. That God is a covenant keeping God.

He cut covenant on the cross of Calvary 2000 years ago. You and I through faith in Jesus Christ. Are glad recipients of all the blessings of the new covenant.

Andrew Murray said a covenant is an end of enmity and uncertainty. Isn't it a blessing to know that because the Lord is my shepherd. You and I could come to him in prayer with with certainty.

Because the covenant ends uncertainty. You can say with glorious rejoicing and glad renown. Jesus is my shepherd.

Jesus is my Lord. He's king of kings of my life in every area. For to this end Christ both died and rose and lives again.

That he might be Lord. Lord of all. I don't make him Lord.

He already is Lord. But my response to him is in surrender to him. The Lord.

The covenant making and keeping God is my shepherd. I shall not want. I shall not lack.

When Jesus is Lord. When Jesus the shepherd is Lord of our life. He promises to supply all of our needs.

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

He restores my soul. He leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Not only is a master provider Jesus.

He's a master leader and restore. But look at the verses there. He makes me to lie down in green pastures.

You say, David, what does this have to do with a conference on persecution in the church? Let me tell you this. I'm going to start now and end where I begin. Look at Stephen, the first martyr of the church of Jesus Christ.

What happened when Stephen was facing martyrdom? When stones were begun to be hurled at him and persecution and a certain death was coming to his life. He lifted up his eyes and he saw Jesus standing at the right hand of the father. Regardless of what turmoil you go through and the travail you go through and the adversities of life you go through friends.

You and I deem a fresh revelation of Jesus and who he is. That's where Stephen was. I'll never forget flying back into Chicago, Illinois years ago, having lived in Wheaton, Illinois.

And I met with a dear brother from Romania, Joseph Sohn, Dr. Joseph Sohn. We met at a restaurant, his wife and I and he and I. And he talked about how in Romania, he was a well-known minister over there. And they tried to get him and persecute him.

They threatened to kill him. And Dr. Sohn said this to them in Romania. He said, listen, listen, listen.

He said, you can take my body, you can cut me up, you can kill me and you can shed my blood. But always remember this. Every drop of blood that pours forth from my body will only go to water the growth of the church of Jesus Christ in Romania.

And so instead of killing him, they sent him to the US and wouldn't let him come back for many years. I'll never forget in Durban, South Africa, years ago, walking early one morning on the beach. We had just come into Durban for ministry.

And I went out early one morning onto the beach to walk around. It was our first day there. And a boy walked up to me, nice clothes, but dirty, a bag and some books and things in his arm.

I said to him, tell me your story. He said, a few weeks ago, he said, my home was petrol bombed. He said, who did it? And I was familiar with who did it.

He said, but I know this. He said, although my mother was killed and although my father was killed and although my twin brother was killed, and all of a sudden that boy looked up and tears began to stream down his eyes. He said, although I know that they were killed and their life was snuffed out, that someday those men who murdered and killed and bombed our home and killed my parents and they burned to death.

He said, someday every single one of them will have to bow their knees to Jesus and say, Jesus is Lord, Jesus is Lord. I knew that boy knew something of the Lordship of Jesus Christ. And when times are turbulent, as I believe they're coming to the world, and times are distressful, the Bible prophesies the troubling times, we need a fresh revelation of Jesus.

We need a fresh revelation of the person of Jesus. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not lack. Anything I need for grace, he'll supply.

Whatever we're facing in life, listen, the trials in life are like the hardships that hold us to the cross by nails, so that in crucifixion we can walk and experience resurrection power in life. So take whatever adversity you may be going through right now and see it as the nails as it were crucified with Jesus and in that death ushers out and pours forth resurrection power and life. He's your shepherd.

He's truly indeed our shepherd. I shall not lack. He makes me to lie down in green pastures.

He's the leader. That's a beautiful passage right there because what it speaks of is this, that a shepherd goes and he finds grassy area where the grass is freshly growing. It's tender.

It's easy to eat. But as a leader, he says, he leads me in the pastures. He leads me in those pastures.

Pastures are wide areas. You think God's done with your ministry? You think you're beyond what God wants to do with your life? And yet you may be on the verge of God expanding your ministry like you've never known in all of your life. Because Jesus, the good shepherd, he makes me to lie down in green pastures.

I heard a pastor say years ago facing difficulty in his church. He made the comment. He said that he was troubled about things and he was trying to take care of this and this and this and this.

He said, finally, one day God brought conviction to his soul. And he said to him, son, if you'll just lay down, I'll show you what I can do. And by faith, he didn't shirk his responsibilities.

But by faith, he laid down as it were in faith in the green pastures. I think of the pastures of the word of the living God, how God nourishes us and feeds us on the word of God. I was rising through and taking time just the other day.

In the first Corinthians chapter number one, Paul, an apostle, sent of God. He says there who Jesus, he will confirm you unto the end. And that word there, I didn't bring the notes really to look at it closely.

But the word confirm means to make stable, to stabilize. So whatever you and I are facing, Jesus will stabilize us to the very end. You say, but where are we as a nation? Where are we going as a nation? There seems to be so much instability all around us.

The average age of the world's greatest civilizations from the beginning of history has been about 200 years. During those 200 years, those nations always progressed to the following sequence. From bondage to spiritual faith.

From spiritual faith to great courage. From great courage to liberty. From liberty to abundance.

From abundance to complacency. From complacency to apathy. From apathy to dependence.

From dependence back again into bondage. You say, where are we today? I say we're probably in this country anyway. Somewhere along the apathy and dependence side again.

Sliding deeply into dependence, which is precursor to going back into bondage again. But the blessing of it is this. I was at a conference years ago and a brother from the New England states was there.

He wrote on Evan Roberts and the Welsh revival. And someone had said, it seems like, brother, it seems like Kevin, Kevin was his name. It seems like this gross darkness covering the land.

Everywhere we turn, there seems to be darkness everywhere. And they had a conversation and Kevin Adams and I were talking later. And I said, brother, it reminds me of what Jesus, what the word of God says in Isaiah.

Gross darkness shall cover the land, but the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. Stephen persecuted to be stoned to death, but the glory of the Lord had risen upon Stephen. That's the answer.

It's all not just about Jesus, although that's true. It has to be Jesus. He makes me lie down in green pastures.

I tell you what, when God took the children of Israel, took them to Goshen, famine everywhere else, dryness everywhere else, not in Goshen. Beloved, when you're in Christ, regardless of what happens to you and I all around us, you may be in the depth of loneliness right now. But when you're in Jesus on the inside, that's where strength and peace comes in all of our hearts and lives.

He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leaves me beside the still waters. That's peace as a leader.

He leads us in the pastures, plural pastures. Maybe you're coming to the end of a ministry somewhere, but God has a whole new direction for you, a whole new chapter of ministry. Isn't that hopeful? Isn't that encouraging that God isn't done with you yet? Look at John chapter 2. Jesus turned the water into wine.

And what was their response? Oh, oh, but you saved the best for the last. Does that meet someone's heart condition right now? You think maybe your best years are behind you? You think maybe your years of freedom and usefulness are way somewhere in your past? Do you not realize that maybe through the death to self and just accepting the sentence of death and your circumstances as they are, that God is sovereign, that he's Lord of your circumstances? He knows where you are. His eyes are ever on you every

second, every moment that you live.

Do we dare doubt that you may be on the verge of the greatest chapter of your life? He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside the still waters. That's peace.

Do you know sheep won't drink from fast moving water? Waters have to be slow moving or still. That's peace. Beloved, there's peace in the midst of storm and traveling all over the world.

And in all of our lives, people here could tell stories of how in the midst of the storms all around them, on the inside, there's peace. If you go back into Hebrew and look at the Hebrew letters for the word peace, there's four Hebrew letters. But if you go back to beyond contemporary Hebrew and walk back in the etymology of the Hebrew language in the letters, I won't go into detail now, but the four letters, the first one symbolizes fire or destruction.

The second one is the symbol, right to left in Hebrew. The second letter has to do with the crook. It's symbolic of authority.

The third one is the tab. It's symbolic of a nail or covenant or to bind to. The last letter for the word peace is the letter mem, M-E-M.

We get our M from it, from Hebrew all the way down through to our English language. And it's like an M with a, it comes back underneath it to the left, the pictographic Hebrew letter. What peace literally means in the word picture form is this, to destroy the authority that binds to chaos.

When Jesus spoke to the chaotic, tumultuous waters, what did he say, church? He said, peace, be still. Is it not true when you have that daily quiet time in the morning and you meet with God in adoring silence and you humble your soul before the word of God and you listen to the Holy Spirit in the text that when God speaks to your soul, he administers peace to you. You can have storm all around.

You don't know how you're going to pay the bills coming next week or that are already there. You don't know how your ministry is going to stay afloat. Can I encourage you? He, the shepherd, still leads us beside the still waters.

Jesus is our peace. And it only takes but for you now to get along with God and get away and hear from God and the holy word of God. And isn't it amazing how all the troubling waters come to peace? All the disturbances come to peace when we hear from God.

Oh, there's peace, but it doesn't end there. Keep on going. He leads me beside the still waters.

He restores my soul. I love that text. I love that verse.

It's the power of God. You know, the picture that David's using here is this, that a little sheep sometime and David knew as a shepherd. Sometimes the sheep will go out, brother, and he would lay down and he had all this wool on him, you know, and he would lay down in the field somewhere.

And unknown to him, there was a little depression in the ground right there. And he would roll over on his back and he couldn't get back on his feet because of so much wool. Have you ever been there? Maybe someone bumped you over when you rolled into that depression.

Maybe you're aching so much on the inside of your life because Jesus really, we've lost a vision as it were of him and his lordship and his sovereign control and his love and goodness. And maybe you came home and there was a letter on your kitchen table that they said they don't want to be married to you anymore. Maybe all of a sudden, your dad that you loved for years, you get word that he's passed away.

Maybe all of a sudden, a sibling, something happens in their life and there was someone loses his job or whatever it is, but you feel like you've been cast into a pit of depression. David said, why art thou cast down, oh my soul? Why are you disquieted within me? Do you know why he used the word cast down? Because when that happens to a sheep, they call that when a sheep is cast. They're cast.

They're cast on their back. The bible talks about our faith being cast down. Our hope being cast down and shattered.

Recall the disciples on the road to Emmaus, talking of all that had just happened in Jerusalem. Jesus drew near. They didn't know it was Jesus.

And he says, what are you talking about? He said, well of Jesus of Nazareth, we had hoped that it had been he, our deliverer. Their faith was shaken. Have you ever had a strong faith in your walk with God and something happened to you that literally seemed to shake your faith to the core and you thought you were strong? Could it be sometimes our strength in the final analysis is not in the Lord.

It's in our own faith. We think we put faith in faith instead of faith in Jesus. And all of a sudden, when the mirage sometimes of the true faith, it's a mirage.

We put our faith in it and things happen and shattering circumstances come into our lives. Persecution or whatever it is. God has a loving way of purifying our faith, putting the fire to it.

And you get in that place where you're cast on your back on the ground and you cry, oh God, oh God, where are you? The shepherd has never taken his eyes off of the sheep. The shepherd, even at the side of a field, someplace may look up and see buzzards in the air. He knows he has a sheep that's been cast down somewhere.

Listen, if you're cast down right now, wherever you are, will you simply by the heart of faith, quickened by the spirit of God, by this very verse, will you confess, Lord Jesus, you restore my soul. Jesus come to my aid, deliver me from this place that I'm at. Listen, friend, nothing else can deliver you.

Everything else is a bandaid. But I tell you, many, many believers all over the world can testify a day in their life when they were so cast down and they fell on their knees and on their face at the side of their bed. They cried out to God.

And God so met them and God so changed their circumstances that they now say with David, oh Jesus, thank you. Jesus, you restore my soul. Do you have peace? Are you in places of pastures of wideness and openness and blessing of ministry? Recall the prayer of Jabez, God, that you would bless me indeed, that you would enlarge my more, that your hand would be upon me, that I bring no evil upon anybody.

And God granted him his request. That hand there, by the way, in Jabez is the open hand, not the closed fist. It's the open hand of God's direction, the open hand of God's provision, the open hand of God's power.

Beloved, all that there is available of God is available to the one who makes all that there is available of him available to the one who has made himself totally available to you. Did you get that? Did we get that? True Christianity is his deity clothed with our humanity. That's Christianity.

Jesus didn't come merely to get us out of earth into heaven. He came so that God would move out of heaven, as it were, and into men. That's why Jesus came.

Our body is simply the cloak, the clothes, the Christ, the covering of the indwelling Christ. Let us not be afraid of the indwelling Jesus. Paul said to me, to live is Christ, to die is again friend.

Friend, he's a leader. He'll lead you in those green pastures. He'll lead you beside the still waters.

Notice it says beside the still waters. He doesn't lead you there to trick you and drown you in the waters. He leads you there so you can drink and be refreshed the rivers of living water from Jesus.

He restores my soul. He leads us in paths of his power. But there's more.

Look quickly there. It says there in the verse three, he leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. That's how Jesus does.

He leads us in pastures. He leads us in the place of peace. He leads us by showing us his power, and he leads us in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

But quickly though, he's a deliverer. Verse four. Look at that.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. Let me stop right there. Let's back up.

He didn't just begin, David. He didn't just begin by saying, though I walk through. He said, yes, though I walk through.

You see, because he knows Jesus, Yahweh, Jehovah, God as his shepherd. He knows Yahweh, the one who supplies all of his need, most dynamically his spiritual need. He knows him as the one who makes him to lie down in green pastures.

He knows the shepherd who leads him beside the still waters. He knows him as the restore of his own soul. He knows him as the one who will lead him.

By the way, if you have the spirit of God, he'll lead you. Remember the Holy Spirit forbade Paul to go into Bithynia. Can I ask you, are you being led by the Holy Spirit? I don't mean theoretically.

I mean, the Holy Spirit's a person. Are you being led? Are we being led by the Holy Spirit? Amen, church. What a glorious thing when Jesus does that.

But look at the words there. Yea, though I walk. My sister's sitting right down here.

She's sitting down on the outside, but on the inside, she's walking. Pastors that can sit here. They may be sitting on the outside, but they're walking on the inside.

You prayer warriors. You may be sitting on the outside, but you're walking on the inside. Yea, though I walk.

God didn't lead you to sit still in some ways. Here you have him, makes me to lie down. Here you have him.

Yea, though I walk. Beloved, it's a walk with God. Walk in love.

Walk in faith. Walk in the spirit. Walk in holiness.

Walk in righteousness. And really what it is, it's Jesus in you and I. Walking through us by his indwelling presence. The life that he is.

Yea, though I walk through. Through. He didn't stop with just walking.

Beloved, Jesus doesn't lead you to that valley to leave you there. Yea, though I walk through. Are you in that valley right now? Is there persecution in your life right now somewhere? The word of God says, yea, though I walk through.

Oh, someone needs that. Somebody needs that right now. You feel like you have been in that situation and you have been for a long time.

And the devil's been telling you lies that you deserve to be happy. That's a lie of the devil. You deserve to be holy.

You need to be holy. But devil's been lying to you and telling you why you should get out of the situation you're in. Why you should run from the circumstance that you are in.

Let me tell you something. That God has you where he has you. He sovereignly is in control.

That's the law he's given you right now. And his grace is sufficient. Is it not? Paul, 2nd Corinthians in chapter 11 and telling about all the things in 12.

What he had gone through and the stripes many times and the nights and days and the deep and the beatings and the sleeplessness and all those things. Yet he besought the Lord three times to remove the thorn in the flesh. And yet the Lord came back to Paul.

Paul, Paul, my grace is sufficient for thee. But wait a minute. What is grace? Grace is God's unmerited favor.

But what is grace? Grace is the undeserved moment by moment activity of God in your life and our lives in the church. That's what grace is. The favor of almighty God, not just something on the shelf of theology, not something sitting in some sermon CD or recording somewhere.

It's the life giving influence of Jesus, the grace giver in your life and mine. Where you and I can walk moment by moment and day by day, casting ourselves every second upon dependence on Jesus and knowing and experiencing the tremendous, overwhelming, soul transforming grace of almighty God. My grace, Jesus said, is sufficient for you.

Whatever the task, my grace. Whatever the difficulty, my grace. That person hard to love, my grace.

The persecution, my grace. My grace, he said, is sufficient for the for my strength. Therefore, it's made perfect in weakness.

Paul said, most gladly, therefore, he didn't say, well, I'm going to fake it till I make it. He didn't say, I hope I make it through. Paul said, most gladly, therefore, therefore, most gladly.

Will I rather glory in my infirmities, in my weaknesses? You think your weaknesses is a curse? No, God has you where he is, that he might in his weakness put his power upon your life. Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities and reproaches and persecutions and distresses.

For Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then am I strong. Notice it said, though, for Christ's sake.

Could it be you're pastoring a church and you're so full of distress, you want to quit and give up, friend? Would you look to Jesus and see him? Will you say most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me? Let me tell you, church, is it not true? The New Testament church, they knew when the power of God was on them. They knew the spirit of God was upon their life. They knew it.

Even Jesus said, the spirit of the Lord is upon me. It wasn't a doubtful thing. He knew it.

And the church knew it. Separate me, men of wisdom and full of the Holy Spirit under the work that I call them to. How could you separate them if it wasn't obvious they lived in the fullness of the Holy Spirit? It's to be conscious.

You're conscious of that. It's to be continuous, be being filled. And it's to be conspicuous.

Remember they said in Acts about Peter? He said these men had been with Jesus. We sense the same aura, as it were, of the divine upon their lives as was upon Jesus. We sense the same manifest presence of God upon their lives as we did with Jesus.

Oh, I remember reading so many times of George Whitefield, how he would stand on September 29th, 1770, up in Exeter, New Hampshire. He died the next morning, 6 a.m. in Newburyport. But on that day before, he was traveling ahead to preach the next day in Newburyport.

And they asked him to preach. And he stopped and he would do it. And they put a barrel there, put a plank on top of the barrel.

And there's a stone marker right there in the exact place where he preached this message on that day. They helped him up on top of it. And by the way, his pulpit, his traveling carrying wooden pulpit, you can find it.

It's still available. Or you can see it. It's still in existence.

It's in Texas. But they took George Whitefield. And they held him up.

And they put him up to help him up on top of that board. And George Whitefield stood there. And didn't speak for a season.

His body was so wracked with pain. And he would cough up blood every time he preached. He felt that preaching rough the lather of his body.

And it helped him in his lungs because of his ill health. Finally, he began to speak. People all around watching and listening with bated breath.

The breeze blowing through. And the nice beautiful green trees in that part of the country on that September 29th. And George all of a sudden began to speak.

And it seemed they said he was a little, a little, a little rough in his voice at first. But then all of a sudden, it's like the hand of God. Infused his life.

He began to preach. And thundered the glorious message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. How often it was said of Whitefield.

It looked as if you were looking at an angel as he preached. The hand of God was so heavy on his life. The glory of God was so evident upon him as he preached.

I listened to a dear brother in Trinidad West Indies just two weeks ago down there. He said, I've been in the Chicago area in many churches. And Richard Owen Roberts, my longtime friend, has said the same thing of a man he knew from over in the England part of the world.

Both of them said the same thing. He very humbly said to me in his Trinidadian accent, David, David. He said, I've been all over the Chicago area.

I've heard a lot of preachers been to a lot of churches up there. He said, David, it seems to me in America, you have a lot of teachers, but almost no preachers. He said, you can find teachers a dime a dozen.

But beloved brothers, you men of God that preach the word of God. And God puts that burden in your soul to preach. We used to use the term you deliver a message.

Now we said you give a talk. That's why we're not seeing revival in America. We have too many talks and not enough messages from the throne of God.

We were a delivery. You deliver. Why is a woman giving birth? It was a delivery of a burden on your soul.

Be it the form of quiet or strong voice. Doesn't matter. It's the intensity of the delivery that transforms the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

But it was said of George Whitefield. It seemed he seemed like an angel watching that man. I recall the brother over in F.B. Meyer in England told the story that there was an intellectual in his church.

He had difficulties in the things of the word of God. So F.B. Meyer said I prepared a series of sermons to address all of his questions. He said finally one day after the series was over, the man came to me says he's Dr. Meyer.

He says yes, sir. He said I want to be baptized. I am thoroughly born again now.

I've been redeemed. I've been regenerated. I'm saved.

He said oh my brother. He says wonderful good news. He said he said tell me what was it in what part of what sermon was it that did it for you? He said oh it was nothing about your sermons.

He said well what was it? He said on one day I was helping an elderly lady out the back door of the church walking down the stairs. I held her to help her down the stairs. She looked and she said oh thank you she said.

She said do you know Jesus? Jesus is wonderful to me. He said that's when I knew it was real. And that's when Jesus saved me.

Why? The glory of God was upon that woman of God. Remember the story years ago in Wales of a man of God out to watch a beautiful sunrise. And someone asked him to pray.

And that dear brother preacher began to pray and the hand of God was so heavy upon his prayer life. The glory of God sat down in that gathering as he began to pray and his soul agonized in prayer. And he finished praying and it was obvious to everybody there.

All the tourists standing all around. It was obvious something mighty had happened in that place. He heard later on on that occasion that people that were around him hearing him pray.

Around 40 of them were saved right there when he finished praying. He said oh my last he said but here's the miracle. Not one of them knew a bit of your language.

It was the glory of God. Paul said most gladly therefore will I read the glory in my infirmities. That the power of Christ may rest upon me.

My father in the faith Stephen Offord I recall being with him before he would take a pulpit. He is a mighty man in the pulpit strong and powerful mightily used of God all over the world in his day. Here you go with him in the back room somewhere.

I seen him where his hands were a little bit shaky. He was so overcome with a sense of his own inadequacy and his own powerlessness. But he would walk out and take that pulpit and although he was about five foot six is all he was.

He stood in the hand of God's power was upon his life. I know Jesus indwells you. I know he does.

But it's the power of Christ resting on your life in ministry. I'm not asking you is your theology straight. I'm not asking you if your doctrine is pure although it need be and should be.

I'm asking you do you have any gunpowder in your gun? Glory in him. That the power of Christ may rest upon you. By the way they would ask Whitfield somebody once asked him Mr. Whitfield when you stand to preach.

And you just stand there and wait. I said what are you doing Mr. Whitfield? When you ascend the pulpit you don't speak sometimes for five minutes. What are you doing? His response was my brother.

I'm waiting for the assistance of almighty God to come upon me before I open up my mouth. I wonder what would happen if we would take more time when we come together. To wait upon the Lord.

To say behind this sacred desk Lord I'm not going to open my mouth until I know that I know that I know it's now. It's time. And then by faith thirsting for Jesus coming believing that out of our innermost being would flow rivers of living water.

And see people transformed and saved in mighty mighty ways. Let me tell you what God does when he does that. Last month in one month alone we saw 2,295 people come to faith in Christ.

I was rejoicing we were thankful but last year over was over 4,000 in one month. When God shows up on the scene hearts are melted. People began to start coming to the altars and you haven't even given your invitation.

Friends are we settling for less? Why do we settle for dead prayer meetings? Why do we settle for going week after week in our churches? And to not be a divine move of God? Why do we settle for not seeing souls saved every week in our churches? Why have we settled? Friends our coming to a king large petitions with thee bring for his grace and power are such that none can ever ask too much. May God by his hand grab us as it were with a collar and shake us up and give us a burden like we've never had. And may we begin to cry out to God in our church prayer meetings.

Oh God give us souls or we die. God make us a saving station or close the doors of this building. We become too much popularized and too politically correct when we need to be prophetically correct.

Yea do I walk through the valley. The valley. That's where the greatest crops come.

That's where the richest fruit comes. You know that don't you? And those valleys how often have you said Lord I thank you for all that you did in my life through that valley. I don't ever want to go through it again.

But I thank you Lord for what you. Yea do I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. You and I would have stand on a street curb somewhere anywhere in this world and you stood there holding the hand of your little daughter or granddaughter or grandson and a big old bus came flying by.

And the shadow of that bus came right across you and then it kept on going. You weren't in the road. You weren't killed.

But you were near the shadow of death. Let me ask you in the shadow of death in the valleys where sheep would sometimes be. Let me tell you he said I would lead you.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadows of death. He said I will fear no evil no calamity. Why? Two things.

The presence of God for you are with me. Listen David wasn't saying that because it was a nice little theological cliché to say. You travel the world and many of you do and you'll find people all over this world.

Many a time they've been through the shadow of death and yet there was a tremendous sense of the hand of God enveloping them and protecting them and guiding them and directing them. You lay with that washcloth on the brow of that little baby of yours crying out to God because you felt you were nearing death. Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil.

For thou art with me. The darkest places of the world. You're with me.

Richard Wurmbandt tells the story 10 years in prison in Romania. He said I didn't see color for 10 years. He said the guards didn't even wear rings.

There was all this gray look. He said I didn't feel the wind for 10 years. I never saw a tree for 10 years.

I never saw a woman he said for 10 years. He said they would come in and I would have to sit 17 hours a day and every day they would come in and beat me and beat me and beat me and beat me trying to get out of me. Trying to get out of me.

All the names of preachers in Romania. He said I came on a season where it seemed like I didn't know the voice of God for several days. He said oh God.

He said I see nothing. I see no color. I see no beauty.

I see nothing. Lord my life is just nothing. And that's when God spoke to Richard Wurmbandt in his spirit.

He said Richard I hung the world on nothing. You've been trying to make your ministry happen and God's been reducing you to nothing. You've been trying to be seen somewhere and God has been hiding you in a valley.

You've been trying to make it happen. And God in his loving mercy has been stripping every bit of self-sufficiency out of us so that in our nothingness God could take you brother and you sister and you young man and you young God could take you nothing. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 12 after the text on the grace of God about being an apostle though I be nothing.

And God when he gets you to the place of nothing it may well be that's when he hangs on your life a global ministry. And that ministry may be a prevailing ministry in prayer in the quietness of your home and nobody ever sees it but you'll know the power of God on your life in prayer. That you'll be watching the news to see God answer prayer.

You'll be looking to see how God in accordance with how he has led you to pray how he has entrusted. Listen how he has entrusted you by laying lovingly on your heart the burden on his heart. Beloved can he trust you and I with that? Can he trust us with what's on his heart or are we quick to go out and brag to somebody else of what God did with you? And that's why God often won't lay his things on our heart like he wants to because we'll touch the glory somehow some way we'll take the glory somehow some way.

Listen Bill McLeod who's now gone to be with Jesus said to me David during the days of revival in Canada God showed me as it were in a casket in front of a pulpit one day he led him a heart Bill if you'll stay dead I'll show you what I can do friend are we dead yet? And it's not death just to be dead it's dead so that in death and crucifixion and burial we can know the resurrection power of the spirit of almighty God upon our lives living through us the life that Jesus is. Are we dead yet? Many could stand here in my place I like what Adrian Rogers said there are as multiplied thousands upon thousands of men who can preach much better than I can. He said I know that but not one of them has a greater message than I have because it's the gospel many could stand up here more ably speak than I could ever do and they could tell you how there was a day that God brought them to a crisis experience of death in their life when they realized through a fresh revelation of Jesus and then they would say woe is me for I am undone for I am a man of unclean lips.

Let me tell you why we don't see revival because often our lips are critical and judgmental and God will never anoint the flesh. May we say with Isaiah I am undone for I am a man of unclean lips for my eyes have seen the king the Lord of hosts. But if we're dead except for granny we fall into the ground and died abides alone but if it dies it brings forth much fruit.

Friends can I ask you have you ever and I believe there's some here right now this way I believe there's some watching and listening somebody maybe a lot all over the world. I believe that's where you are right now. You'll say you know what now I understand why I've been going through what I'm going through in this sanctifying process.

Friend you're at the doorway of a mighty breakthrough of God in your life just stay dead but in debt you see there are see I say this because there are some all they want to talk about is how morbidly sinful the wrong they are. Listen we have gone over in some places into the realm of glorifying in the old nature. Why Jesus didn't come to cure my old nature he came to crucify it that in death you and I can experience his resurrection power and life in rivers of living water.

May we not glorify the old nature. He gave us the Holy Spirit the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts. Listen my brother sitting right here travels all over the world and his wife.

I'm sure he can attest that when you stand before audiences all over the world and all of a sudden you sense God break your heart with the love for those people. You're not trying to beat him up. Your heart breaks and you just you can't even explain it many of you listening you know what I'm talking about you can't explain it God just breaks and melts your heart for even the pharisees and how God gives you a love for them in the lost and dying world who need Jesus.

People in persecuted countries all over the world are coming to Christ in droves for an example in China. Why? Because they see the hope in the heart of a believer. I don't stand here as one who has been persecuted in a prison.

I never have. I might someday but I never have. All I stand here is to tell you what Jesus said.

All I am is a messenger boy declaring the Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside the still waters. He Jesus restores my soul. That's what he does.

Yea though I walk through the valley. He leads me in the paths of righteousness. Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death.

Thou art with me. His presence. Secondly, his power.

Thy rod and thy staff. They comfort me. The rod of protection.

The staff of direction. My brother knows when pastors invite him into their churches. They don't ask you as an itinerant who are here.

They don't ask you to come in with a rod and beat up their people. They're asking you to come in with the shepherd's crook. They're asking you to come in by the word of God and by the life of Christ and the transforming power of the gospel to reach over that ledge as it were with that crook and gently put it around that scared lamb that's down there on the side.

Well nigh to fall off of the side. He doesn't call you to go in and bring condemnation. He calls us to go in with the loving gospel of Jesus and wrap a hold of that little lamb and bring it back up to safety where it needs to be.

I'll never forget hearing that great preacher in California. E.V. Hill talked about a man and his church came to him. He said the pastor I need to talk to you.

He said all right. He said I raise rabbits in my backyard. He said okay.

He said once in a while for example that rabbit will get out of that cage in my backyard. He hears those two German shepherds next door barking and having a good old time. He thinks it's party time over there.

He begins digging under that block wall over there on the side of that yard and I look out there and I see what he's doing and I know what the consequences are. If he gets to the other side he'll be there supper tonight amen. He said I go out there and I grab that rabbit by the back of the hind legs and I pull them back underneath that block wall and I put the dirt back in place and I pack it and I secure it nicely.

I put the rabbit back in the cage again. He said pastor, pastor Hill sometimes temptation comes my way. I hear the voices and the calling of temptations in my life and preacher I need you to come after me sometimes and grab me by my hind legs and pull me back.

That's what a shepherd does. That's what your pastor does. That's what Jesus does.

Ye though I walk through the valley of the shadow I'll fear no evil thou art with me his presence thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. They they move me and wedge me along the right way. Beautiful picture of Jesus as a deliverer.

His presence and power but quickly he's the protector. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. He says there in the verse there look at there in verse verse 5, you know it my head with oil my cup runs over Three things on that verse write it down and I'll come to him He's a protector as It regards our foes as to regarding friction as to regarding fellowship He prepares a table land before me in the presence of my enemies That the Shepherd knows how to go out and prepare an area that's pretty even though enemies are lurking in the trees on both sides Up on the hillside the Eagles and other other looking down trying to get their food their next meal The good Shepherd prepares a table now before me in the presence of my enemies That's Goshen for you that place of his protection that hedge of thorns Around you and I it's amazing They can build little block out of rocks build walls as they have Historically and you could have all the sheep of three shepherds in that one big blocked area pin You know how they separate them in the morning one shepherd will walk over there He'll begin speaking to his sheep and all that are his sheep They come out through the way and they come out and they go to him The second one stands over here.

He begins to speak to his sheep and the other Another third they come out and they follow him and of course those that are left belong to the third the third shepherd Jesus said my sheep hear my voice Regarding your foes. He prepares a place for you. He knows they're out there But he has a rod in the staff He'll protect you He'll guide you And if you are a murder martyr and you and I are martyred for the glory of his name remembered Stephen Standing Standing Jesus was standing Peters and Stephen saw Jesus and he was standing why because he's high priest Receiving the sacrifice of Stephen's very life the high priest never Never sits quickly and will close as to foes as to friction he says there in the verse you anoint my head with oil what's that talking about a Shepherd would anoint the head of a sheep for two reasons number one they would anoint their head to protect the eyes because all kinds of bugs and insects would try to infect the eyes and bring Disease into their eyes.

How many know it takes the anointing of the Holy Spirit to have clear vision It takes the power of God and the anointing abides within you It takes the anointing of the Holy Spirit to walk in a turbulent turbulent world all around this temptation coming our way Adversities coming our way and how many have lost that vision of Jesus because they cease living moment by moment day by day Second by second claiming afresh the manifestation of the indwelling spirit of Almighty God Secondly, they would anoint the head of that sheep because well sheep butt heads. That's friction They butt heads I've been told anyone who's married you butt heads once in a while How many know it takes the presence of Almighty God That when you have those disagreements You slide off of each other instead of crush and kill each other and then he says my cup runs over in that day What they would do if you went to someone's house if I went to my brother's house sitting down here They come out and offer me a nice tall glass of juice and I drink that glass of juice and we're talking about the Lord Having great fellows of having a good old time and they come out and they refill it up again to the very top again Oh, let's see. It's been we're going on two hours now, you know, and then they come out and they only pour it halfway full What they're saying is this in that day.

This is what that meant. What they were saying was this it's been wonderful I've had a great time. We're so glad you came.

We love you so much. But after you finish that half-glass, it's time to go We got stuff we got to do But here it says my cup runs over David is saying the fellowship with Jesus is so tender and so sweet That my cup it continually overflows in the presence of God well That last verse is a beauty surely Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. He's owner But look at that again look at it again surely It didn't start off goodness and written.

Oh surely look at the God-given confidence He didn't say I hope it does He didn't say well, I think it does he didn't say well it really should but I don't know he said surely goodness and Mercy that can said the covenant blessings of the Lord in verse 1 all of the blessings of the God of covenant Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me not. I hope they will not I think they might But he says surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. Oh you say but David I'm 75 years old Sometimes you get worried don't you about whether you're gonna have enough money to for the ends to for the rest of your life Can I encourage you? He said surely goodness and mercy shall follow you Even to your old age he will carry you He's a supplier day after day after day after day of all of our lives surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will I will It's not I hope I make it to the end.

That's an affront to the grace of Almighty God He said I will dwell in the house of the Lord And with the man of God the prophet someone said they were walking one day As he walked with the Lord and the Lord said, you know what you're closer to my house than yours. Just come on home Elijah God took him home. See your shepherd your master your Lord your provider Our leader Our deliverer Our protector when it comes to foes and friction and fellowship my cup runs over He's owner I recall hearing dr.

Eric Alexander Telling of a man who was a believer the first general director of the BBC He said he went down one day to talk to some of the younger intellectuals who were working there and He sat down with him they were all around there and he said well tell me he said Tell me about the story you're working on for the BBC television He said well, he said We're putting I can't mimic the accent. They said we're putting together a program because you want to give We want to make sure we give a Respectful burial for Christianity in England and that man of God stood up to six feet six He stood up to his feet with those bushy brows He looked through those brows to that young man who was talking the most and he said young man. He said sir He said let me tell you this He said the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ will be

standing at the graveside of the BBC Jesus said my beloved I Will build my church and the gates of hell shall Not prevail Against it Greater is he that is in you Than he that is in the world The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory That shall be revealed Let's pray father.

We bless your name Lord. Thank you that we have a shepherd The Lord Jesus Christ a good Shepherd The great Shepherd and that you're our owner we are your sheep and the people of your pasture Father may we leave this place Knowing afresh Knowing afresh Even as Paul spoke Christ Was revealed in me In me and I closed by asking there's one here to the sound of my voice You see I've had Christ revealed to me yes, he died on the cross of Calvary he shed his blood I've had that revelation Jesus saved me the Lamb of God that takes away this sin of the world That could I ask you as a believer in Jesus? Maybe you're still struggling and failing and trying and failing and struggling and failing Can I ask you this question as Paul said in Galatians 1? Have you had Christ revealed in you? Are you aware of? the indwelling presence of The Son of the Living God in your soul Having quickened your spirit the spirit for communion the soul for contemplation and your body for communication and dwelt by Christ And I encourage you in closing to find a place somewhere Will you get shut up with God? And you stay there you stay there until Christ has been revealed In you you as believers born again Father we pray these things In Jesus name we pray In Jesus name we pray Amen

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