

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD
FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE
PSALM 23:3b

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD
FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE
PSALM 23:3b

Introduction

Let's think about **THE NAME OF OUR SHEPHERD—THE LORD JESUS CHRIST!** No name is so highly treasured as the name of our **LORD!**

The **PSALMIST** speaks of **HIS NAME** in *Psalm 72:17–19*:

“17 His name shall endure for ever: His name shall be continued as long as the sun: And men shall be blessed in him: All nations shall call him blessed. 18 Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, Who only doeth wondrous things. 19 And blessed be his glorious name for ever: And let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen.

Paul puts it this way in *Philippians 2:8–11*...

Philippians 2:8–11—8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Colossians 1:18— “And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.”

"Jesus, Name Above All Names"
Chorus by Naida Hearn

Jesus, name above all names
Beautiful Savior, glorious Lord.
Emmanuel, God is with us.
Blessed Redeemer, Living word.

We see in our text that because our **SHEPHERD** cares for **US** who are **HIS SHEEP**, **HE** not only “*restoreth*” our souls, but **HE** leads **US** “*in paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.*”

Isaiah 30:21— “And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, When ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.”

The **PSALMIST** again sees himself here, not as a **SHEPHERD**, but as a **LAMB** led by the **SHEPHERD**.

Most often we think of **SHEEP** as being helpless creatures, because they are! **DAVID was a valiant man of war**; he was a man’s man! He could hold his own in any fight.

There were at the same time **things that were tender and beautiful in the life of DAVID**— his singing, his writing, and his playing of the harp.

DAVID possessed a **beauty about his life** that was a wonderful thing to behold, but **there was nothing lacking in his manhood**. But we also saw in our studies in the **BOOKS OF FIRST AND SECOND SAMUEL** that **DAVID** had learned the great lesson in life that **WE LIVE BY FAITH, NOT FORCE!** **DAVID** was content to be a little **LAMB LED** by the **GREAT SHEPHERD!**

SHEEP have no sense of direction. When they are **LOST**, they cannot find their **WAY**; they need someone to **LEAD** them. When they **WANDER OFF** and/or get in a **CAST POSITION**, they need their **SHEPHERD** to **RESTORE THEM**. When they are **DIRTY**, they have no means to **CLEAN** themselves; their **SHEPHERD** must **CLEAN** them.

We have been both saying and showing that we all are like **SHEEP**.

Isaiah 53:6, “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”

Like **SHEEP**, we cannot **CLEAN** ourselves, and like **SHEEP**, we cannot find the right **PATH** when we have turned to our own **WAY**. We need someone to both **SHOW US** and **LEAD US** in “*the PATHS of RIGHTEOUSNESS.*”

**THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD
FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE
PSALM 23:3b**

If we don't like the idea of being referred to as a **SHEEP**, we need to remember that **OUR GREAT SHEPHERD** became a **LAMB**, a **SACRIFICIAL LAMB**. **HE** had things **SAID** of **HIM** that we have never had **SAID** of **US**. **HE** had things **DONE** to **HIM** that we have never had and never will have **DONE** to **US**.

OUR GREAT SHEPHERD is also the **LAMB OF GOD** that was slain from the foundation of the world. **HE BLED** and **DIED** for our **SINS!** **OUR GREAT SHEPHERD** became a **LAMB** yielding to angry men as they did with **HIM** as they pleased.

When we think of our **PRIDE** and our **UNWILLINGNESS** to be **YIELDED**, to our **SHEPHERD**, may **GOD** help us to think of what **CHRIST** did in **YIELDING HIMSELF** for **US!**

Philippians 2:8— "...he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

The **LORD JESUS, OUR GOOD AND GREAT SHEPHERD**, calls for **US** to **FOLLOW HIM** on **HIS PATH!** **HIS PATH** is that of **RIGHTEOUSNESS!**

You've probably heard the saying "*You lead sheep, but you drive cattle.*" That is why **DAVID'S** use of the relationship between the **SHEPHERD** and **HIS SHEEP** to describe **OUR RELATIONSHIP** with **JESUS** is so appropriate.

JESUS will **LEAD US** and **INVITES US** to **FOLLOW HIM** on **HIS PATH**, but **HE** will **NEVER DRIVE US** or **FORCE US** to do that.

The answer to **OUR WANDERING** is for **US** to **FOLLOW THE SHEPHERD, JESUS**, on **HIS PATH**. But we must **LISTEN TO HIM** and **FOLLOW HIM!**

We often describe this idea of **FOLLOWING JESUS** on **HIS PATH** as "*KNOWING and DOING GOD'S WILL.*" Which we just happen to be looking at in our Sunday Evening services right now.

**THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD
FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE
PSALM 23:3b**

Sadly, we've often made the idea of discovering **GOD'S WILL** for our lives much more difficult than it needs to be.

Too many act like **GOD** has hidden **HIS PATH** and made it difficult to discover, when in fact **HE** has marked that **COURSE** quite well and made it very easy for us to find.

So, how do we both FIND THE PATHS and STAY IN THE PATHS of RIGHTEOUSNESS?

I. WE MUST TRUST WHOLEHEARTEDLY IN THE LEADERSHIP OF OUR SHEPHERD WHO HAS A PATH PLANNED FOR US!

Now, what most of us would really like from the **LORD** is for **HIM** to give us a complete roadmap of the life that **HE** has **PLANNED** for **US**. And then we could look at that roadmap and see everything along the way and decide if that's a journey we're willing to make.

But that's not the way the **LORD** works. Instead, as we look to **HIM** today **HE LEADS US** in the **PATHS** that we **NEED** for today. And tomorrow, **HE LEADS** us in the **PATHS** we **NEED** for tomorrow!

And unlike the map apps on our smartphones, there is no way for us to look ahead and see the **NEXT STEPS** we are going to need to take down the road! **HE LEADS US DAY BY DAY AND STEP BY STEP!**

But if we really think about it, that makes sense. If we knew every **STEP** and **DETAIL** of our lives, there would be no need for **FAITH** in the **LORD**. Because we would be living by **SIGHT!**

So, the **LORD** doesn't remove all the **DIFFICULTIES** along the way. But as long as we **STAY CLOSE TO OUR SHEPHERD** and **FOLLOW HIS LEADING** and **TRUST IN HIS DIRECTION** for us we have no need to worry!

**THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD
FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE
PSALM 23:3b**

It is when we get **DISTRACTED** and **STRAY** from the **SHEPHERD** and **HIS LEADING US** that we get into **TROUBLE** and become **CAST** and need **RESTORING!**

Proverbs 3:5–6—“5 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; And lean not unto thine own understanding. 6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, And he shall direct thy paths.”

WE MUST stay on the **PATH** where the **SHEPHERD** is **LEADING!**

SHEEP cannot come up with their own migration path because **they have no sense of direction and they have no defenses**. So they **MUST WHOLLY FOLLOW** the **SHEPHERD** on the **PATH** that **HE HAS CHOSEN FOR THEM!**

The **SHEEP** never know ahead of time where the **SHEPHERD** might **LEAD** them. But they **MUST LEARN** to **TRUST** that their **SHEPHERD** knows what is best for them even when that might **not make sense to them**.

So we ought to pray for the **LORD** to help us just **TRUST** in **HIS GUIDANCE!**

And we must stay close to **HIM** through **HIS WORD!**

Romans 10:17— “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

Colossians 2:6–7—“6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: 7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

And let's remember that our **LORD** does not promise to **LEAD US** on **PATHS** of **EARTHLY PROSPERITY** or **POPULARITY** or **COMFORT**, or even **HAPPINESS**. **HE LEADS US** in **PATHS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**.

**THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD
FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE
PSALM 23:3b**

HE calls for **US** to **FOLLOW HIM** on **THE PATH HE HAS PLANNED FOR US!**

WE MUST TRUST WHOLEHEARTEDLY IN THE LEADERSHIP OF OUR SHEPHERD WHO HAS A PATH PLANNED FOR US!

II. WE MUST TRUST WHOLEHEARTEDLY IN THE LEADERSHIP OF OUR SHEPHERD WHOSE PURPOSE IS MADE PLAIN TO US!

The **SHEPHERD** has a **PLAN!** “*he leadeth me.*”

The **SHEPHERD** has a **PATH!** “*the paths of righteousness.*”

The **SHEPHERD** has a **PURPOSE!** The **PURPOSE** is “*for His name's sake.*”

OUR SHEPHERD LEADS US FOR HIS OWN GLORY!

The expression, “*for his name's sake,*” (or “*for thy name's sake*” when the Scripture is addressing the LORD), is used in a number of places in the **BIBLE**.

It was used by one of the **PSALMISTS** in speaking of the **LORD'S DELIVERANCE** of **ISRAEL** from **EGYPT!**

Psalms 106:8— “Nevertheless he saved them *for his name's sake,* That he might make his mighty power to be known.”

It was used by the **PSALMIST DAVID** in asking the **LORD** to **LEAD** and **GUIDE** him personally!

Psalms 31:3— “For thou art my rock and my fortress; Therefore *for thy name's sake* lead me, and guide me.

And again by **DAVID** as he asks the **LORD** for **DELIVERANCE!**

Psalms 109:21— “But do thou for me, O **GOD** the Lord, *for thy name's sake:* Because thy mercy is good, deliver thou me.”

Also see *Psalms 143:11*.

It is used by the **PSALMIST ASAPH** in asking for the **LORD's** help for the nation of **ISRAEL!**

**THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD
FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE
PSALM 23:3b**

Psalm 79:9—“Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name: And deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name’s sake.

It is used by the Apostle John to speak of our forgiveness:

1 John 2:12— “I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name’s sake.”

So, “FOR HIS NAMES SAKE” means that the **LORD, OUR SHEPHERD** is glorified as we walk in the **PATHS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS** that **HE LEADS US IN!**

Do you know how the **LORD** wants us to live? **HE** wants us to **LIVE in such a way** and **WALK in such a way** that **HIS NAME** is lifted up. Are we doing that?

Ezekiel 36:16-28 teaches that the **LORD** wants **HIS NAME** to be lifted up, not defiled by the way **HIS PEOPLE LIVE**.

As we go about with our lives, what do people think of the name of **JESUS CHRIST** because of the **WAY WE LIVE?** Is **HIS NAME** uplifted because we are **WALKING IN HIS PATHS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS?**

The **SHEPHERD’S NAME** is on the line by the **PATHS HIS SHEEP WALK!** That’s why we need to **WALK** according to **HIS LEADING!**

Our **SHEPHERD HAS A PURPOSE**— to be **GLORIFIED IN US!** But If **WE WALK** in **PATHS** of **OUR OWN CHOOSING**, then we will not be **GLORIFYING HIM**.

Conclusion

Our **GREAT SHEPHERD** leads us on a **PATH** of **RIGHTEOUSNESS!** If we **FOLLOW HIM**, we will find wonderful **BLESSINGS** along this **PATH**. But be careful! The enemy is waiting just off the **PATH!** We must keep our eyes on **OUR SHEPHERD** and **FOLLOW HIM** as a little lamb. Because, **OUR SHEPHERD LEADS** us for **OUR GOOD** and for **HIS GLORY!**