

*One of a series of devotions based on Psalm 23*

## **THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD, HE LEADS ME IN PATHS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Psalm 23:2 "The LORD is my shepherd. . . He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake."

Peter Jeffery wrote: "Our problem is not really one of guidance, it is one of closeness to God." As sheep are prone to stray from the flock, so Christians stray from their confession of faith and their trust in Jesus Christ. If you were confirmed, you might remember your confirmation vows:

- Do you intend to hear the Word of God and receive the Lord's Supper faithfully?
- Do you intend to live according to the Word of God, and in faith, word, and deed to remain true to God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, even to death?
- Do you intend to continue steadfast in this confession and Church and to suffer all, even death, rather than fall away from it?

How many times have you strayed from these vows?

You need a good Shepherd to lead you on, or back to the right path. There are so many cross-roads and "y's" along your life's path. Straying from the path of righteousness, though it leads to eternal death, can seem right and good. It sounds good, feels good, looks good! But your good Shepherd knows there is only one road to heaven. It is His goal to lead you along that path all the days of your earthly life.

Solomon wrote, "In the path of righteousness is life, and in its pathway there is no death." (Proverbs 12:28) This brings to mind Jesus' parable of the 100 sheep. One strayed from the flock. The good Shepherd left the 99 to find the one. The painting of Jesus, carrying a lamb in his arms, depicts this parable. Jesus' goal is to lead all 100 to their heavenly destination.

Jesus created this path for you. You confess this work of Jesus in the Apostle's Creed, "He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell, the third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. . ." Jesus, your good Shepherd, leads you on the path of righteousness. It is true only of Him as He says, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6)

Prayer: Jesus, lead me on the path of righteousness to my eternal home. In Your holy name I pray. Amen.

The King of love my shepherd is, Whose goodness faileth never;  
I nothing lack if I am His And He is mine forever.

Where streams of living water flow, My ransomed soul He leadeth  
And where the verdant pastures grow, with food celestial feedeth.

Perverse and foolish oft I strayed, But yet in love He sought me  
And on His shoulder gently laid And home rejoicing brought me.  
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