

# Proclaiming the Gospel

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness;  
But unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1.18).

Edifying the Body of Christ (Eph. 4.10-16)

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The Wise Still Seek Him

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## "The Lord Is My Shepherd..."



hen you say the words, "The Lord is my Shepherd" (Ps 23.1), you are saying that you are walking in obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is to acknowledge that you are His, you belong to Him, and you have no choices in life – for your life is not your own (1 Cor 6.19-20). It is to acknowledge that He purchased you with His Blood on Calvary, that you are following Him wherever He leads you. It is to acknowledge you made the choice to live for Him, to call Him your Shepherd, your Master.

Saying the words, "The Lord is my Shepherd," is to acknowledge that He knows best; it is to acknowledge that you trust His ways, that you no longer lean unto your own understanding; but in all your ways you acknowledge Him, and know that He is directing your path (Pro 3.5, 6).

To speak the words, "The Lord is my Shepherd," is saying that you have submitted to His will; you have committed your life to Him for whatever He desires of you. This is a decision you made without pressure, without any bias; no one forced you to make this decision. You made it out of love for the Shepherd Who laid down His life for you (1 Jn 3.16).

Saying the words, "The Lord is my Shepherd," is to acknowledge that He will make all provisions needed for His flock; and He will care for each one. Matthew 6.25-34 reminds us of His provision for His followers. The Shepherd cares for His own; He provides for His own. There are other verses showing the work and care and tenderness of the Shepherd (Mat 10.19; Mk 13.11; Lk 12.11, 22). The Lord my Shepherd is the only Shepherd Who calls us to walk with Him all the way – come what may, and the Shepherd's people are marked with His seal (Eze 9.4; Rev 7.2, 3; 9.4).

John Ten states it beautifully and aligns with Psalm 23. The Lord Who is my Shepherd gave His life for me, for you; and we have experienced His great love for us, a love that is beyond knowing, beyond comprehending (Jn 15.13, 14).

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.  
Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

to make it clear that I am not in charge of what happens! I am to pray, "one for another" (Jas 5.16).

Why am I not reaching heavenward with my hands – praising the Lord my Shepherd with all confidence? Why am I not shouting, "What if something wonderful, powerful, happens when I seek the Lord on behalf of someone!"

Why do I not "Go Forth in Great Confidence" knowing "**The Lord is my Shepherd**," knowing it is He Who performs miracles in my life, in your life? "The Lord is my Shepherd" means He is Lord of my life – if I really mean what I am saying: He is my Redeemer; He is my Healer; He is the Lover of my soul; He is my All in all.

Is He your Redeemer? Is He your Healer? Is He the Lover of your soul? Is He your All in all? **Is He your Shepherd?**

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**Co-laborers together for Jesus Christ**

Come apart and rest (Mark 6.31).

Take note that we are **not** writing of religion (see original usage of “religion” in Webster’s 1828 Dictionary)! We are **not** writing of a creed that can be received at the hand of the enemy by force. We are writing and speaking and preaching JESUS THE CHRIST, the only Begotten Son of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – JESUS THE CHRIST Who died on the Cross of Calvary, a cruel death, for your sins and my sins, that we might be forgiven and have life forevermore – through all eternity with Him in glory, in Heaven (Rev. 7.9-17). Yes, and life with Him now (Jn 15.1-11), lived for Him to bring honor and glory to His Holy Name.

We do not claim a religion, but the person of JESUS CHRIST, a personal relationship with Him. You cannot be forced to repent of your sins, surrender your life to JESUS CHRIST, and live for HIM. No, this would then be a religion/creed. We are writing about JESUS CHRIST Who rose from the dead and is alive, Who lives forevermore and Who loves you so very much that He wants your life hid in HIM (Col 3.1-3).

Life is difficult. No, not challenging! I am of the old school; I write what I mean and mean what I write (say). We do not desire to make things *seem* what they are not, but to speak forth the truth.

I have someone very dear to me, and has been for over fifty years, who is facing uncertainty. I am not writing of challenging; I am writing of difficulty, hard – call it what you may. I am writing, however, about the LORD JESUS CHRIST Who loves each one who goes through very hard times – calling them to turn to Him, to surrender to Him in these times – and, in the good times as well. Oh, how we need to be praising the Lord Jesus daily.

The Shepherd knows all about these situations in our lives and calls us to surrender our all to HIM in the midst of the most difficult times. We have a Shepherd, a Savior, Who cares and knows all about the hard times and the cruelty of some who do not know a loving Savior. We have to come to grips that our Lord and Savior, The Shepherd, is not a genie that bails us out of hard times. We have to come to the point that we are willing to serve the Lord in the midst of whatever is going on, trusting Him with our lives.

I am reminded of Job (Chapter One) where Satan approaches God about God’s servant, Job, who has everything going so “right” for him. Satan, in essence, says to God, why would Job **not** serve You “when You have blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land” (Job 1.9-10)?

God knows that his servant Job may be frail, but he will stand strong in the Lord God Almighty and will not turn away from Him (the Lord) – come what may. You talk about loving the Lord Jesus Christ! Job stood firm on that and spent his life living for the Lord – even in the midst of all the calamities that happened to him, that which Satan put in his life.

“The Lord is my Shepherd” comes alive in the Book of Job. The Shepherd is One Who loves and cares for His own; those who know their own weakness and their own poverty are aware of the need of the protection of The Shepherd. I am so aware that I need the protection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and I want always to

abide in Him, the Shepherd (Jn 15.1-11). I want to surrender my life completely to His will, His purpose for me.

I am reminded of the hymn “The Ninety and Nine.” “There were ninety and nine that safely lay in the shelter of His fold. But, one was out on the hills away, far off from the gates of gold ...” Each one is important to the Lord JESUS CHRIST (Lk 15.4-7). He died on the Cross of Calvary for you; and, He rose victoriously over sin, hell, and the grave – for you. He is alive forevermore.

When we know our weakness, our need for The Shepherd, JESUS CHRIST, and follow Him, we will know His peace that passes all understanding. We will know and experience His joy, a joy the world cannot know.

“The Lord is my Shepherd” is not just for “spiritual” life, but it is for our whole being. He is Shepherd of our lives as lived on this earth: mind, body, and soul. It is a gigantic step for many people who seem to have made it in this life (financially ...) to humble themselves before the Lord, The Shepherd.

But, look at King David and His prosperity, His power, His position – and, yet, he writes, “**The Lord is my Shepherd** ...” He acknowledges that He has laid His life, his all, on the altar to serve a living, loving, caring Lord and Savior, JESUS CHRIST. He acknowledges that he, King David, has nothing. The Lord is our provider and healer (Isa 53.5; Ps 107.20; I P 2.24) if we but “Have Faith in God.” James writes that we are not to doubt; we are not to waver (Ja 1.6-8).

But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.  
A double minded man *[is]* unstable in all his ways.

We are to walk in the strength of the Lord, believing His Word. We are to follow with all confidence the promises of the Lord. We have a tendency, a strong tendency, to walk in only that which we can see and *feel*. The writer of the Book of Hebrews makes it clear how we are to walk in our daily lives:

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen  
(Heb 11.1)

Let me say it clearly that I am **not** there. Oh, there are times I seem to be able to stand strong when things do not go “right” or I do not *feel* well. But, I am reminded that in my weakness, I listen to the enemy, Satan, all too often when those words come, “You are sick. You have symptoms ...” Or, I allow Satan to place in my mind thoughts that take me down, that discourage me and cause my health to go down because I am walking that way.

How many times has someone asked me to pray for their healing, and I *think*, “What if nothing happens – then what?” And, God responds in a powerful way