

PSALM 23 -- THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

THE SOURCE OF TRUE CONTENTMENT

I. Introduction

A. Contentment --Illustration of lack of contentment

B. What We Know About Sheep

C. How Are We Like Sheep? Isaiah 53:6: *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned -- everyone -- to his own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.* **Psalm 119:176:** *I have gone astray like a lost sheep...* **Ezek. 34:12:** *As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered...* **Matt. 9:36:** *When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.*

D. Shepherds in David's Time

E. Notable Quotes About Psalm 23

James Montgomery Boice: *"The twenty-third psalm is the most beloved of the 150 psalms in the Psalter and possibly the best-loved (and best known) chapter in the entire Bible."*

Charles H. Spurgeon: *"This is the pearl of psalms whose soft and radiance delights every eye...Of this delightful song it may*

be affirmed that its piety and its poetry are equal, its sweetness and its spirituality unsurpassed."

Henry Ward Beecher: *"The twenty-third Psalm is the nightingale of the Psalms. It is small, of a homely feather, singing shyly out of obscurity; but, oh! It has filled the air of the whole world with melodious joy, greater than the heart can conceive. Blessed be the day on which that Psalm was born!"*

II. Steps To Contentment

A. The First Step To Contentment Is To Make The Lord Your Shepherd -- Psalm 23:1: *"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want."*

1. *"The Lord is my shepherd..."*

2. *"I shall not want."*

B. The Second Step To Contentment Is To Know The Good Shepherd's Gracious Provisions -- Psalm 23:2-3: *"He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake."*

1. **The Good Shepherd Provides Spiritual Food -- "He makes me lie down in green pastures."**

2. **The Good Shepherd Provides Spiritual Drink -- "He leads me beside still waters."**

3. The Good Shepherd Provides Spiritual Restoration -- "He restores my soul."

4. The Good Shepherd Provides Spiritual Guidance -- "He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

C. The Third Step To Contentment Is To Walk With The Good Shepherd Through The Hard Times -- Psalm 23:4-5: "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows."

1. Times of Fear -- "...the valley of the shadow of death..."

2. Times of Conflict -- "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies..."

3. Times of Irritation -- "...you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows."

D. The Fourth Step To Contentment Is To See God's Goodness In Every Situation, Both Now And In The Future -- Psalm 23:6: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

III. Conclusion/Application