

PATHS | PSALM 23 | JUNE 18, 2017

PSALM 23:3b-4

*3 He guides me along right paths,
bringing honour to his name.*

*4 Even when I walk
through the darkest valley,
I will not be afraid,
for you are close beside me.
Your rod and your staff
protect and comfort me.*

GUIDES (vs. 3b)

- As a shepherd leads his sheep, the Lord leads us on paths of righteousness.
- These “right” paths lead to safety, well-being, prosperity, fruitfulness, blessing and LIFE.
- We have a choice whether or not we want to follow that path that the Lord lays out for us. Each path has it's own results.
- Every day and moment we have choices. When we choose to follow Jesus, our choices should reflect the way that God is guiding us.
- How does God guide us?
 - The Bible (2 Timothy 3:16)
 - The Holy Spirit (John 14:15-17)
 - Godly People/Mentors
- As we follow God's right paths, we not only see fruit in our lives that benefit us, but our lives also glorify God in how we live.
- Our right living, guided by God through his word and his Holy Spirit, should make Jesus attractive to those around us!

WALKS (vs. 4a)

- It's important to remember that these “right” paths are what God know is best for us, but not necessarily the easiest paths to walk down.
- Whether we like it or not, we are going to walk through dark valleys in our lives.
- As we walk in those dark valleys we can believe, trust and have faith that God is WITH us!
- This is why we do not need to be afraid.

PROTECTS (vs. 4b)

- In our darkest valley our Good Shepherd is not just with us, but He is going to protect us and comfort us.
- Staff
 - The staff was an instrument of support.
- Rod
 - An instrument of authority.
 - We serve the King of Kings – He is in control of everything, there is no need to worry!
 - Used for guiding, rescuing, protecting and counting.
 - He knows each and every one of us and wants to show us his love.
 - He knows all of our situations down to the finest detail.

John 10:3-5

3 The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep recognize his voice and come to him. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 After he has gathered his own flock, he walks ahead of them, and they follow him because they know his voice. 5 They won't follow a stranger; they will run from him because they don't know his voice.

John 10:14-15

14 I am the good shepherd; I know my own sheep, and they know me, 15 just as my Father knows me and I know the Father. So I sacrifice my life for the sheep.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How do you find God's guidance in your life? Do you find it difficult to know his voice?
2. How has the Bible had an impact on your life and helped with the different challenges you have faced?
3. What does it look like to live in a way that brings honour to God's name?
4. How can we help those in our lives who are walking through dark valleys?