

**Facing the Future Fearlessly, Pt. 1**  
**Series: God Is Good All the Time**  
**Psalm 23:6a; Next Steps Devotional Guide**  
**December 20, 2020**  
**Kelly Stanley**

1. Take a moment to read all of Psalm 23 from your Bible. Psalm 23 is not about your commitment to God. It is about God's commitment to you. How do you see this in Psalm 23?
2. There are three main reasons we do not need to fear the future. The reason reason is God's unlimited goodness is enveloping us in this life. Read Psalm 23:6a from your sermon notes under point #1 as well as the explanation of the Hebrew word translated as "follow" under the heading, *"Reasons Why We Never Need To Fear The Future."* This Hebrew word is typically refers to something hostile, such as a predator overtaking its prey. Why would you think David would choose this word rather than another word?
3. One of the ways God watches over us and protects us, is through angels. There is a lot mystery, misunderstanding, myths, and misconceptions about angels. What is your understanding of angels?
4. When you die and go to heaven, you're not going to have wings or be an angel. Read Hebrews 1:14 from your sermon notes under point #1 under the heading, *"Reasons Why We Never Need To Fear The Future."* Angels do not have physical bodies because they are spiritual beings. They can take on physical appearance for our sake, but they are spiritual beings. What have been your images of angels and how has that impacted and affected your view of them and God?
5. God uses angels to encourage you by impacting circumstances where you go. Read Psalm 91:11 from your sermon notes under point #1 as well the the explanation of the Hebrew word translated as "guard." Looking back over your life, can you name any circumstance where you think maybe God used an angel to encourage you by impacting your circumstances or someone else's?
6. A second way God's goodness protects you is that God will make sure that good will come out of everything that happens to you, even the bad and evil stuff. Read Romans 8:28 from your sermon notes under point #1 under the heading, *"Reasons Why We Never Need To Fear The Future."*
  - a. Where have you seen God's goodness do this in your own life?
  - b. When you are going through something bad or terrible in life, it is hard to see God's goodness in it? Why do you think this is so?
  - c. Romans 8:28 says that in order for God to bring good out the bad and evil that happens to us, two things are required from us: we have to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength; and second, be fulfilling His individual purpose for our lives. Why do you think God requires this?
7. A second reason we do not need to fear the future is because God's unlimited mercy is working in and through us. Read the explanation of the Hebrew word translated as "mercy" under point #2 under the heading, *"Reasons Why We Never Need To Fear The Future."*
  - a. Read Romans 5:8 from your sermon notes under point #2 under the heading, *"Reasons Why We Never Need To Fear The Future."* Based on the explanation of the Hebrew word translated as "mercy," where do you see this truth fulfilled in Romans 5:8 in your own life?
  - b. Read 2 Corinthians 5:21 from your sermon notes under point #2 under the heading, *"Reasons Why We Never Need To Fear The Future."* Based on the explanation of the Hebrew word translated as "mercy," where do you see this truth fulfilled in 2 Corinthians 5:21 in your own life?
  - c. Read Isaiah 60:10 from your sermon notes under point #2 under the heading, *"Reasons Why We Never Need To Fear The Future."* Based on the explanation of the Hebrew word translated as "mercy," where do you see this truth fulfilled in Isaiah 60:10 in your own life?
8. There is a difference between God's goodness and God's mercy.
  - a. God's goodness is when God gives me what I do not deserve. What and/or where in your life do you see God giving you what you do not deserve?
  - b. Mercy is the opposite. Mercy is when God doesn't give me what I do deserve. What and/or where in your life do you see God not giving you what you deserve? How would you feel if David had written instead, *"Your justice and punishment follow me all the days of my life?"*

9. Because God is all good and He is good all the time, we can expect both His provision (i.e., He gives us good things in life) and His pardon (i.e., He forgives all the sin and bad in our lives). Read Psalm 103:2-13 from your sermon notes under point #2 under the heading, *"Reasons Why We Never Need To Fear The Future."* From Psalm 103:2-13, list where you see God's provision and God's pardon in your own life?
  - a. From Psalm 103:2-13, list where you see God's provision and God's pardon in your own life?
  - b. God never gets tired of forgiving you, never, never, never, so don't hold back, because His mercy follows you every day of your life. It is God's nature to be merciful. Is your nature similar to His? If so, how and where? If not, why?
  - c. God is not mad at you; He is mad about you. Read Hebrews 4:16 from your sermon notes under point #2 under the heading, *"Reasons Why We Never Need To Fear The Future."* Have you ever viewed God in this way and how does this affect your life?
10. It is amazing how many messes a toddler can cause and create. God has picked up more messes in your life than you could possibly even imagine. Why? Because He's good, and He's merciful. He gives you what you need, and He doesn't give you what you deserve. Looking back in hindsight, what "messes" can you see God rescued you from in life?
11. It is amazing how easy it is for us to see God's goodness when things are great. It is more challenging to see God's goodness when things are not great. When you fully understand that God is never not good to you, and God is never not merciful to you, when you face your future, all of a sudden, your fear level goes down.
  - a. Have you reached this kind of understanding and relationship with God? If so, in what areas has your fear gone down?
  - b. If not, what are you worried about? What are you afraid of? Fear comes when you fear punishment, or fear comes when you fear you won't have what you need when you get there. You don't have all the resources you need. Where do you sense or feel this in your own life?
  - c. God is always good to you, whether you feel it or not. God is always merciful to you, whether you feel it or not. It's based on who He is, not how you feel. So, why do you think we let our feelings father than our faith in who God is convince and convict us of this?
12. A third reason we do not need to fear the future is because God's unlimited glory is waiting for us in heaven. Read Psalm 23:6b from your sermon notes under point #3 under the heading, *"Reasons Why We Never Need To Fear The Future."* Even if live 60, 70, 80, 90 or 100 years here on this earth – death is not the final curtain call.
  - a. That means I don't have to fear death because death is not a termination; it is a transfer. We're going to heaven. God saves the best for last. If you love and know Jesus, if the Lord is your Shepherd, it just gets better and better, because even if I have a tough life here on earth. I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever where there's no more sorrow, no more suffering, no more sin, no more sickness, no more sadness, no more problems, no more pain, and no more pressure. With Jesus, it keeps getting better and better. The best is yet to come. What does this mean for you personally?
  - b. Read Psalm 19:1 from your sermon notes under point #3 under the heading, *"Reasons Why We Never Need To Fear The Future."* Our God is both big and powerful. His glory is displayed all over the universe. Our God is both creative (i.e., sunsets, waterfalls, different species and even different kinds of animals with the same species — such as dogs, cats and etc. Go outside and look at the stars and the universe. What do you see? Is there awe? Explain.
13. Read Psalm 23:6 from your sermon notes under point #3 under the heading, *"Reasons Why We Never Need To Fear The Future."* That little word "and" in verse 6 connects today with tomorrow. How does this help you?
14. Several years ago Britain's former Prime Minister, Tony Blair, who served from 1997-2007, traveled to Scotland to visit a school where a gunman had killed 16 children and a teacher. When asked about God's goodness, Blair said: *"Just because man is bad, it does not mean that God is not good."*<sup>1</sup> In such a politically correct world, why and how do you think Blair was able to say that? Do you think his statement is comforting to you? To the parents who lost their children? And if you believe it is a true assessment about God, why?
15. Read 1 John 4:18 from your sermon notes under point #3 under the heading, *"Reasons Why We Never Need To Fear The Future."* Take a serious look at your life right now. Who or what is your "shepherd" right now? Who or what do you fear?

---

<sup>1</sup>Michael Elliott, "Tony Blair's Leap of Faith," *Time Magazine* (6-9-08), p. 34.