



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

February 1, 2015

P.O. Box 416
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Rockwood, TN 37854
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Elders:

Dana Carter
Kenneth Carter
Don Chandler

Deacons:

Kendall Bear
Larry Brackett
Roger Carter
Steve McCreary

Minister:

Kirby Hinds

Secretary:

Susan Chandler

Service Times:

Sunday

Bible Study 10 am
Worship Service 10:45 am
Worship Service 6 pm

Wednesday

Bible Study 7:30 pm

Monday

Ladies class 10:00 a.m.

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DEEP & FULL

The majestically simple twenty-third Psalm has two parts presenting two pictures of God's care and provision. Picture #1 is that of a shepherd who pastors his sheep. Picture #2 is a host who welcomes his guest to the banquet he has marvelously prepared.

By the way, when we sing the hymn "*The Lord's My Shepherd*" I would prefer to sing the whole thing, or verses 1-3, or verses 4-5 rather than sing 1-3 and 5, or 1-2 and 4-5. The latter way breaks up and then mix up the pictures. I recognize that is a nit-picky preference. Anyway...

Both the Good Shepherd portion of the psalm and the Banquet Host portion of the same psalm have water elements. "*He leads me beside still waters (v. 2); My cup overflows (v. 5).*"

He leads me beside still waters. The shepherd provides in many ways for his sheep, but nothing is so essential as water. The Good Shepherd knows where there is much water and leads his sheep there to drink. Still waters run deep. The fact that these are "*still*" waters means that there is an abundant supply.

My cup overflows. The attentiveness and generosity of a host can be measured by how often the drink glass is refilled. Likely, some readers base their tip to waiters on whether or not the drink glass is promptly refilled when eating out. In **Psalm 23**, the cup never approaches empty. It is refilled and refilled, each time to overflowing.

The Lord will provide is a theme that runs through Scripture. Abraham said those very words to Isaac when Isaac asked where a sacrifice would come from, not realizing that he was the called for sacrifice (**Genesis 22:8**).

Whether it was manna for the wandering Israelites, oil for the prophet Elisha's widow friend, or a coin to pay Peter's temple tax, Scripture keeps telling us that God provides.

In particular, for our salvation, God's provision is not just barely enough. He does not just nearly save us. He saves to the uttermost! (**Hebrews 7:25**). The gift of Jesus overwhelmingly saves!

In all things, but especially in the grace that saves, the Lord provides. He does not do so stingily, but in accordance to the riches of His grace. His provision is deep and full.

Cecil May III

ARE YOU ONE OF JESUS' SHEEP?

One would have thought Jesus' sayings would engender unity and love everywhere He went because that was His message, right? That was not the Jew's reaction. Their reaction was division.

In John 10:19, the apostle John wrote, "*There was a division therefore again among the Jews*" about Jesus' sayings. Some claimed He was possessed by a devil. Others rightly said Jesus could not be demon possessed and cure the blind.

Jesus' answer was, "*I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father's name, these testify of Me. But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep*" (**John 10:25-26**).

Then, Jesus made three statements that proved the Jews were not His sheep. They were not His sheep because they did not listen. "*The sheep hear My voice*" (**John 10:27**). To hear Jesus' voice means to do what Jesus said. "*If you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins,*" Jesus said, (**John 8:24**). The belief Jesus wants is that belief that obeys. Listening to Jesus is vital to one who would become a sheep in Jesus' fold. A sheep that does not do what the shepherd wants is soon dead.

The second statement was, "*I know them.*" There is no confusion or doubt here. He knows them because they know Him and do what He says. John wrote, "*By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. The one who says, 'I have come to know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him*" (**I John 2:3-4, NASB**).

There are many that claim to know Jesus, but He will say He does not know them on the Day of Judgment. Jesus said, "*Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in Heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name cast out demons, and in your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness'*" (**Matthew 7:21-23, NASB**). Does Jesus know you?

The third statement was "*they follow Me.*" This is the "Litmus Test" for all who would be called Christians. Those who belong to Jesus follow Him. Jesus' sheep do not follow men's creeds or books, the philosophies of men, or the doctrines of men. They follow Jesus.

Are you a lamb of Jesus? You can know for sure. The apostle Paul wrote, "*But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness*" (**Romans 6:17-18**).

Have you obeyed the form of doctrine Jesus commanded? Are you one of Jesus' sheep?

John Henson