

## Prayer Basics - The 23rd Psalm (07262014)

I think it's so important to start every morning with prayer, and the opening prayer can be a basic one that gets you warmed-up and sets a tone for the rest of the session. One of my most enduring is "The 23rd Psalm", because it has such a calming affect. I think it's important to say them slowly and ponder each segment.

So on my knees, in a solitary place, I pray [and here's what it all means to me]:

The Lord is my shepherd [my leader; my guide through "life"], I shall not want [every need is met; not always in my timing, but never late];

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures [I will always have peace of mind, body & Spirit as long as my focus is on Him];

He leadeth me beside the still waters [inner-peace amidst the most ferocious life-storms]; [and] He restoreth my soul [calms all my anxieties];

He leadeth me in the path[s] of righteousness [helps me to avoid sin, but in case I slip-up, I confess it, and He forgives me immediately and leads me back on-track] for His name's sake [because of how good He is, not because I deserve it];

[And this is my favorite verse]: Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for thou art with me [there's no need to panic no matter what we may be facing because almighty God is on OUR side]; thy rod [for reeling us back on-track whenever we stray] & thy staff [to protect us from predators] comfort[s] me;

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies [all the haters get to see the ultimate results of our commitment to follow the Lord; and hopefully this will lead them to also begin to follow Him];

Thou annointest my head with oil [blesses me to be a blessing to others];

My cup runneth over [I'm so blessed in every way it's ridiculous];

Surely goodness [undeserved favor] & mercy [unearned forbearance] shall follow me all the days of my life;

And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever [there's a place for me, and my loved ones, in Heaven, all the way into eternity]...

Amen.

I sooo love that prayer, and I love the King James version of it best because it's so poetic. Whenever I become fearful or anxious about something or some situation I simply fold my hands, wherever I am, and quietly, or silently, pray it (sometimes more than once in a day if I need to). And I pray it slowly, pondering the parts that are timely. By the time I finish, I've usually regained my perspective.

Learning to do this will make all the difference in weathering storms. I was blessed to learn to pray as a child, and I have never stopped. And as an adult, I learned to "slow it down", and to savor each timely segment.

It makes all the difference.

We'll look at a few more in the upcoming week. For now, I hope you have an amazing & wonderful Saturday!!

- Jack

---

### **Psalm 23:1-6 (AMP)**

THE Lord is my Shepherd [to feed, guide, and shield me], I shall not lack. He makes me lie down in [fresh, tender] green pastures; He leads me beside the still and restful waters. [Rev. 7:17.] He refreshes and restores my life (my self); He leads me in the paths of righteousness [uprightness and right standing with Him—not for my earning it, but] for His name's sake. Yes, though I walk through the [deep, sunless] valley of the shadow of death, I will fear or dread no evil, for You are with me; Your rod [to protect] and Your staff [to guide], they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my [brimming] cup runs over. Surely or only goodness, mercy, and unfailing love shall follow me all the days of my life, and through the length of my days the house of the Lord [and His presence] shall be my dwelling place.