

Psalm 23 (NIV84)

A psalm of David.

1 The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters,

3 he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

4 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 your staff, they comfort me.

5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

6 Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Have you ever heard a song playing, where just the hearing of that song transports your mind back to a time in your life when the song was popular, or when it had some significance in your life -- a time of joy or sorrow, romance or heartbreak? I have a dear friend who once confided in me that she hated the 23rd Psalm; she said that it reminded her of her mother's funeral. In her mind the 23rd Psalm transported her back to the painful memory of that grief-stricken event.

While it is true that the 23rd Psalm is often read at funerals, there is good reason for that. The words of the 23rd Psalm are all comfort and assurance ...not for the dead, but for the living! Even when we walk through the dark "Death Valleys" of this world, we have a Good Shepherd who never leaves us and will never forsake us.

Jesus guides us, His dearly loved sheep, so that need never be afraid. He is our strong Defender, our gracious Provider, our wise and faithful Teacher, our righteous Redeemer and our glorious and victorious Savior.

Let the 23rd Psalm ring in your heart, soul and memory as a sweet song of confidence and peace.

At peace with you in Christ,
Pastor Golm

May 26

Peace

The fruit of the Spirit is... peace. Galatians 5:22

Among the various "fruits of the Spirit" which Paul mentions, the third is peace. Let us mark well: he does not say that our peace is the fruit of our circumstances. We are all tempted to look at our circumstances and to find in them the reason for our peace of mind. Our children are well, our finances are sound, our friends are kind, and so we are "at peace".

But when things suddenly change, we discover to our dismay that our peace was drawn from our circumstances and not from the Lord of our circumstances. Such a peace is not the fruit of the Spirit. It is the fruit of our environment, and our environment changes like the weather.

The Bible tells us: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee" (Isaiah 26:3). Those who have experienced the love of God in Christ have learned to throw their entire weight on God, trusting that "underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deuteronomy 33:27).

Into his hands they commit all of their yesterdays, knowing that for Jesus' sake he will forgive them; into his hands they commit today, knowing that it is another day of grace; and into his hands they commit all of their tomorrows, knowing that all of his mercies, which have been "new unto us every morning", will be just as new, just as sure, and just as all-sufficing tomorrow as they are today. That is the peace and assurance which is "the fruit of the Spirit".

How about the peace that you and I enjoy today? Is it merely the result of our comfortable circumstances? Or is it the peace that has its roots in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, our Savior?

Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure, By the cross are sanctified;
PEACE is there that knows no measure, Joys that through all time abide.

(Devotion from: Daily Walk With God - Meditations for Every Day, by Herman W. Gockel)