

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD
THE CARE OF OUR SHEPHERD-PT 3a
HE RESTORETH MY SOUL
PSALM 23:3

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Introduction

Verse 1 – “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.” HE is not just a SHEPHERD, HE is not just *the* SHEPHERD, but HE is *my* SHEPHERD.

When that is the testimony of our lives, then we will also be able to say, “*I shall not want*” because we know that our SHEPHERD provides everything that we NEED!

Verse 2– “He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.”

Our SUPPLY and our SATISFACTION come from our SHEPHERD as we submit to HIM!

We now come to *Verse 3–“He restoreth my soul.”*

We must keep near our SHEPHERD. Every FEAR in life will vanish if we keep near our SHEPHERD! The REST that we NEED as SHEEP is not found in the absence of all danger, but in the PRESENCE OF THE SHEPHERD!

We learn this in life as the LORD JESUS comes to us in our great hour of NEED! We can DRAW NEAR to HIM (*James 4:8*) and REST in HIM (*Matthew 11:28*)!

The BIBLE says, “*He restoreth my soul.*” Again, the emphasis here is on the SHEPHERD for it is only THROUGH HIM that we can be RESTORED when we are CAST DOWN or have GONE ASTRAY!

When we have fallen down, we have a SHEPHERD who is ready, willing, and able to RESTORE us! What a great COMFORT that should be to us!

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SHEPHERDS would speak of a SHEEP that was “CAST” or “CAST DOWN”. Even DAVID used these words in some of his PSALMS. DAVID had been a SHEPHERD as a boy.

He knew the ways of SHEEP and he knew what a GOOD SHEPHERD must do to tend to his FLOCK.

SHEEP are top heavy! If a SHEEP FALLS OVER, they have a very difficult time GETTING BACK UP on their feet. When they fall over their legs will be flailing in the air; they may cry and bleat.

More than likely though, the SHEEP will flail, be frightened and quiet, attempting to return to an UPRIGHT POSITION with little success. This position is referred to as “CAST” or “CAST DOWN.”

Their bodies are built in such a way that after several hours in this position, gas collects in their four-compartment stomach, which then hardens. Then, the air passage becomes cut off, and the SHEEP will eventually suffocate if not RIGHTED or RESTORED to an UPRIGHT POSITION in time.

One of the ways a SHEEP can become “CAST” is by lying down in a soft, hollowed out spot to rest. Once down in there, a SHEEP sometimes will go to sleep and then accidentally roll over on its back as it relaxes or maybe even tip itself over as it tries to get back up.

Another way it may end up “CAST” is if its wool has become thick. If it lies down, even in a flat place, the thick wool may cause the SHEEP to roll over too far, becoming stuck in that “CAST” position.

If the SHEEP stays near the SHEPHERD, the SHEPHERD is able to quickly tend to his SHEEP that becomes “CAST.” But a SHEEP can STRAY from the SHEPHERD and get into a “CAST” position needing the help of the SHEPHERD to both find him and RESTORE him.

SHEEP also may get into blackberry brambles for munching or sidle up next to a barbed wire fence to rub. In either case, the wool may get caught and the SHEEP can lose its balance trying to get free and become “CAST.”

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A **SHEEP** can also lose its footing causing it to stumble and fall over in the **CAST** position.

As I said, the “**CAST**” position is dangerous for the **SHEEP** to be in. A **SHEEP** that is **CAST** needs help from the **SHEPHERD** to be **RESTORED** to an upright position in order to be protected from harm!

The **SHEPHERD** helps the **SHEEP** by turning him over placing him in an upright position. Sometimes we need the **LORD** to do that for us—don’t we?

Many of the **PSALMS** were written during times of duress for **DAVID**: **enemies after him, his people disobedient, his own disobedience, wars, and so much more.**

DAVID understood what it meant to be as a **SHEEP “CAST DOWN”!** When we cannot seem to **GET UP** from where we have managed to get ourselves stuck, we are “**CAST DOWN**” or at least we feel that way!

Look at *Psalm 42:1-5*. Note the words “**CAST DOWN**” in vs. 5

Also we note how DAVID PRAYED after his **SIN** with **BATHSHEBA**:
Psalm 51:12—“*Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation.*”

A fellow by the name of *W. Philip Keller* wrote a little book entitled, “*A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23*,” its supposedly a classic now. He wrote that book from the perspective of a **SHEPHERD**. In fact, he actually was a **SHEPHERD** for a number of years.

He reveals in that book that when a **SHEPHERD RESTORES** a “**CAST DOWN**” **SHEEP**, **he gives it REASSURANCE; he massages its legs to restore circulation; he turns the sheep over gently, all the while reassuring it with the shepherd’s gentle touch and familiar voice. He lifts the sheep up and holds it close while it gains its equilibrium back.**

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Mr. Keller paints a word-picture of a **SHEPHERD** and his **FLOCK**. He also draws another word-picture of what our **GOOD SHEPHERD** wants to do for us.

Being on our backs, flailing **because of sin, of guilt, of grief, of being unable to forgive or having someone unable to forgive us**, our loving **SHEPHERD** is there to **REASSURE** us with **HIS GENTLE TOUCH** and **HIS GRACE**. **HE** lifts us up, and holds us while we become spiritually balanced once again.

“He RESTORETH my soul.” Psalm 23:3

The **LORD** can and will **RESTORE** us. **HE** wants us to be free of anything holding us down and making us less than who and what **HE** created us to be.

Look at **JESUS’** Parable of the Lost Sheep in *Luke 15:4-6* .

This parable expresses **GOD’S** attitude towards people who are “*cast down*” or lost. **HE** will rejoice when they are found.

Let’s distinguish the difference between our **RELATIONSHIP** with **CHRIST** and our **FELLOWSHIP** with **CHRIST**.

RELATIONSHIP:

We establish a right **RELATIONSHIP** with **CHRIST** when we **TRUST HIM** as our **SAVIOUR!**

According to *John 10:27-29*, our **RELATIONSHIP** to **CHRIST** as one of **HIS SHEEP** can **NEVER CHANGE!**

Once we are **BORN AGAIN** into **GOD’S FAMILY** by **FAITH**, we cannot be **UNBORN!** We have “**ETERNAL LIFE**,” and this **LIFE** begins the moment we **TRUST CHRIST** as **OUR SAVIOUR!**

SATAN’S work can be undone, but **GOD’S WORK OF SALVATION** can never be undone!

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FELLOWSHIP:

Though our **RELATIONSHIP** can never change, we know that our **FELLOWSHIP** with **GOD** can change.

All of **GOD'S CHILDREN** should daily be in **COMMUNION** with **CHRIST**, be in **FELLOWSHIP** with **HIM**, because we can lose this sweet **FELLOWSHIP**.

It was not **DAVID'S SALVATION** that was gone, but rather his **JOY!**

When we get out of **FELLOWSHIP** with **CHRIST** because of our **SIN**, we need our **SHEPHERD** to **RESTORE** us.

DAVID also prayed there, “. . .*and uphold me with thy free spirit.*” In other words, “*LORD, keep me upright.*”

I. OUR OPPORTUNITIES CAN BE RESTORED.

The word “**RESTORE**” means “*to bring again*” or “*to bring home.*”

Each one of us **SIN**, and we know that **SIN** always has **CONSEQUENCES!**

But there are some people who **SIN** and the **CONSEQUENCES** of their **SIN OVERWHELM** them to such an extent that they think that their entire lives have been ruined and that nothing good will ever come their way again.

Some feel that they have made a wreck of their life and their family and that nothing good can ever be restored.

GOD'S WORD teaches that our **OPPORTUNITIES** can be **RESTORED**.

In **Joel 2:25**, **GOD** said to **HIS PEOPLE** , “*I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you.*”

GOD was in essence saying, “You **SINNED** and I have **JUDGED** you for your **SIN**, but I will **RESTORE** to you the years.”

This does not mean that they were going to relive the wasted years. It means that with the years they had left, **GOD** would **RESTORE** what they had lost.

Now understand that sometimes we place ourselves in such position that it is not possible for some things to be **RESTORED**.

Once a young person loses their virginity, they cannot get it back.

Once a person has disqualified themselves from being a **DEACON** or **PASTOR**, it is usually not possible for them to re-qualify.

Now **GOD** can **RESTORE** us to a place of **SERVICE** for **HIM**, but it may not be in as great a capacity as we have been accustomed to.

Are you **HAPPY** in your **FELLOWSHIP** with the **LORD** right now? Are you **JOYFUL** in **HIM**? If not, **GOD** can **RESTORE** you to a place of **JOYFUL FELLOWSHIP**. The **LORD** can work in your life to make so much of what you have left that it can far exceed your losses.

OPPORTUNITIES CAN BE RESTORED.

II. OTHERS CAN BE RESTORED.

CHRISTIANS give evidence of their **SPIRITUAL MATURITY** when they **SEEK** to **RESTORE** the **FALLEN**.

Galatians 6:1 teaches us about **RESTORING** others. It should be the natural work of the **BODY OF CHRIST** to **RESTORE** people. We prove that we are **NOT SPIRITUAL** when we do not **SEEK** to **RESTORE** others.

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When **GOD'S CHILDREN** stray in **SIN**, we are to be **INSTRUMENTS** of **RECONCILIATION** in **SEEKING** to bring them back to where they should be.

When there is **SIN**, there should be **CONFESSION, REPENTANCE,** and **FORSAKING OF SIN** on the part of the one who has **SINNED**.

On our part there is to be **FORGIVENESS**. But, it doesn't stop there. There must also be **RESTORATION**. We need to be willing to show **LOVE** and to **RESTORE** others.

Conclusion

That's our **BIBLE STUDY** for this evening. Next week, **LORD** willing, we'll look at an example of **CHRIST RESTORATION** of one of his servants.