

“The Path of Righteousness”
Psalm 23:3, page 548

Introduction:

1. Every road leads to a specific destination.
2. When we choose our destination, we must be careful to choose the correct road.
3. The destination mentioned in *Psalm 23* by our good shepherd is the “house of the Lord forever.”
 - A. *John 14:1-3*, page 1051.
 - B. The Lord is now preparing our eternal home for us.
4. It is not surprising that following the “restoration of my soul” comes the road we are encouraged to travel.
5. This is the only road that leads to heaven and our eternal home.

I. The Path of Righteousness

- A. Righteousness simply means living right.
- B. God, in His wisdom, did not leave the details of right living for us to define.
- C. The Bible is very clear that the path of righteousness includes *I Timothy 6:11*: “*But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.*”
- D. We will not find the following life style on the path of righteousness: *Galatians 5:19-21*: “*Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*”
 1. This is a very serious portion of scripture.
 2. Our eternal destiny is determined by how well we avoid this type of life style and carefully follow the path of righteousness. In *Revelation 21*, heaven is described, and the last verse again contains a warning: *Revelation 21:27*: “*But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.*”
- E. The path of righteousness will provide many positive benefits for us:
 1. Forgiveness of sins.
 2. Personal relationship with God.
 3. Biblical promises.
 4. Fellowship with other believers.
 5. Inner peace.
 6. Guidance of the Holy Spirit.
 7. Promise of eternal life.
 8. Heaven.
- F. We may, however, find some of the following negative things on the path of righteousness: *II Corinthians 11:23-28*, page 1134.
 1. Physical suffering.
 2. Limited finances.
 3. Loss of personal property.
 4. Stress.
 5. Persecution.

6. Accidents.
 7. Disappointments.
 8. Physical death.
- G. The path of righteousness is not totally for our benefit.

II. “For His Name’s Sake.”

- A. I find this very interesting.
1. Christianity is not free, *I Corinthians 6:20*: “For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”
 2. The blessings of *Psalms 23* are somewhat conditional.
- B. Christianity will always cost us something.
1. The life of Job is an excellent example.
 2. We have already looked at the life of the apostle Paul.
 3. Most of the New Testament disciples were murdered.
 4. Even today Christians in various parts of the world are suffering severe persecution.
- C. Jesus told His disciples that they would be persecuted.
- D. We are His witnesses!
- E. We are lead down the path of righteousness to point non-believers to Jesus.
1. Our witness is the only Bible some people will ever read.
 2. We are representing Jesus Christ to an unchristian world.
- F. As we follow the path of righteousness, we will either point people to Jesus or hinder people from coming to Jesus:
1. Our choice of words.
 2. Our conduct.
 3. The places we go.
 4. Our actions.
 5. Our attitude, positive or negative.
 6. Our life style.
 7. Our stewardship of possessions.
 8. Our faithfulness to the Word of God.
 9. Our relationships with others.
 10. Our obedience to God.
- G. Our goal should be to stay in the middle of the path of righteousness and avoid any detours.

Conclusion:

1. The good shepherd promises:
 - A. Leadership.
 - B. To supply our needs.
 - C. To restore our souls.
 - D. To protect and comfort.
 - E. A banquet table.
 - F. The anointing of the Holy Spirit.
 - G. Blessings that overflow.
 - H. Goodness and kindness.
 - I. Eternity in heaven.
2. All He asks is that we walk the path of right living: “*For His name’s sake.*”
 - A. Be faithful sons and daughters.
 - B. Make Him proud as our Heavenly Father.
3. Our good shepherd leads us in paths of righteousness; follow closely.