

A Shepherd for the Dark Places

Scripture Reading — Psalm 23

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil ... Psalm 23:4 —

Recently I visited an aged member of my congregation who was receiving hospice care. She was nearing the end of her life's journey. Gathering with the family, we read Psalm 23, and while we read that psalm, the good Shepherd ushered that dying Christian into the presence of the Father. It was an awesome moment. Psalm 23 is such a familiar psalm that we sometimes forget its richness. It's a psalm that defines the shape of the Christian life. The good Shepherd leads us throughout life. He strengthens and nourishes us in places where we can grow strong on his grace. He disciplines us when we need correction. And when shadows grow darker and lead into the territory of death, he leads the way beyond and into the presence of the Father. Some of us are in the valley of shadow right now. Maybe we struggle with a serious illness that threatens to take our life. Maybe we feel the advance of years and find that just making it through the day is a chore. Maybe we experience an emptiness caused by the death of someone who was a big part of our lives. Whatever it is that may be troubling you today, trust that the Shepherd who leads in sunshine also leads in shadow. His presence will sustain you. His care will never fail.

Prayer

Lord, some of us are walking in sunshine today; others of us are in shadow. Care for us, provide for us, and teach us lessons to enrich our journey with you, we pray. Amen.

Devotion topics: [Christianity](#), [Discipleship](#)

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Printed on August 14, 2020