

Valley and Darkness

Scripture Reading — Psalm 23

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me...
—Psalm 23:4—

I am deeply troubled by people who say you can have health and wealth if only you have more faith and hope. The message sounds so enticing: who would not want to be free of sickness and have more money?

It's true that there are benefits in living the Christian life. Scientific studies have shown that people who are faithful at church and regular in prayer generally find more balance and meaning than others do in our fast-paced world.

But in my experience, some of the most faithful and deeply hopeful people I know have also been those with chronic illness and limited amounts of money. And the Bible shows that while some faithful believers were wealthy, there were many more who remained faithful without growing rich or receiving great honors. "Faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see" (Hebrews 11:1). Many faithful people do not see health and wealth in this life!

We need to keep the whole message of Scripture in view. Psalm 23 does not promise that there will be no dark valleys, but, rather, that when we are walking in dark valleys we need not fear evil, for God is with us. In this way God gives us real comfort to face the challenges of life.

Prayer

Dear God, I have known dark valleys in my life. Thank you for being present with me in joy and pain. Please continue to show me your presence as I travel onward. Amen.

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

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