



## Soul Restoration Anyone?

Recently I was reading a book about the beautiful metaphor of shepherding that is presented in scripture. As God shepherded His people through the wilderness and in captivity there were many lessons for them. Memorable ones. Unforgettable even. And some downright scary. Is our time so different? I think not. Quite often, like the sheep of Moses' day we learn the most valuable things in times of discouragement, wandering and lack of direction. Like trusting our Shepherd more.

For over ten weeks now, rarely a day passes when I don't feel the loss of not being able to gather with the saints in worship on the Lord's Day. Even after worshipping with some of you for the past two Sundays there is so much one-anothering left undone. So many things that we'd all love to do with and for others but we cannot. But the absence of these things can be a great blessing. And while there is a very right and biblical design in the gathering of the saints, those sheep are not the Shepherd.

*Psalm 23:1 The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not 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 the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. 4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I 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 have anointed my head with oil; My cup overflows. 6 Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*

My prayer for us all is that we embrace the difficulty of not having been able to fellowship as we are accustomed to with one another for a really long time. In each and every moment of this change there will be cause to stop, be tempted to complain, or to be frustrated. Instead of those things, choose to remember the grace of The Lord that has come through the challenges of life. Look for the green pastures and the quiet waters. And maybe that thought will block the voice of complaint and weaken the tendons behind your knees to the point of kneeling, in praise to the Shepherd.

The circumstances that bring this kind of grace are unwelcome, at least initially. But like a cold stream on a hot summer day the refreshingly calm water provided by the Shepherd quenches my thirst. So, we all need to intentionally remember the Lord as our Shepherd especially now and trust Him to restore our soul and lead us in righteousness. Surely we can do this together! Even while apart.

Until the Shepherd Gathers Us All Again,  
Pastor Keith

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