

The Lord My Shepherd

Part 4

Ps 23:4b

Intro:

- 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.

I. The Rod (Correction)

- A shepherd makes his tools, size & strength
 - About 18-22 inches, with a rounded head, hardened
 - Ex 4:20; 17:9 – rod of God given to Moses...
- Why would this comfort sheep?
 - Used to warn a wandering sheep – back to the flock!
 - Word of God does this in us... conviction!
 - Coming “under the rod” (Le 27:32; Ez 10:37)
 - Used to count, examine, steady sheep, part the wool
 - Exposes our needs (Ps 139:23,24) SEARCH!
 - Keeps from poison weeds, hurting & being hurt

II. The Staff (Guidance)

- No other item identified a shepherd like the staff
 - Symbol of concern and compassion – longsuffering
 - Consolation and correction of the Holy Spirit
- Shepherd's used it in 3 roles:
 - **Intimacy** – lamb to mother; no scent of man or rejected!
 - Also used for shy, straying sheep, for examination
 - **Guiding** – just the tip used to pressure the sheep
 - Sometimes we need to be “kept in touch, arms reach”
 - **Jams/Impasses** – falling into crags, water, brambles –
 - stubborn, self-willed – one more mouthful of grass!

III. The Comfort

- Of all the things we have, these still work!
 - The Rod of the Word comforts us and corrects
 - The Staff of the Spirit guides and untangles us
- Being a Christian is more than doctrines/creeds
 - It is being in HIS care
 - It is feeling HIS touch
 - It is knowing HIS comfort
- Sheep of HIS Hand... carried (Ps 95:7)
 - Why? Stubborn & wandering will kill a sheep
 - The ultimate attention getter... (Ps 51:8)

