

Psalm 23

*He restores my soul; He
guides me in paths of*

Righteousness for His name's

Outline Week 3

We can lead a life worth living because, when we have strayed from the flock, God pardons our sin, restores our soul, and leads us home because His name is love.

I. What God does with His lost sheep: “He restores my soul.”

- A. Jews like David believe that God restores the soul of a person when he/she wakes from sleep.
- B. The Catholic Church teaches that:
 - 1. The soul is created by God, not produced by the parents.
 - 2. Is immortal.
 - 3. God’s breath (nephesh) infuses us with a soul. See Gen. 2:7
- C. The soul is “dirtied” by our sin.
 - 1. We ignore our soul.
 - 2. We reject our soul.

II. How God restores His lost sheep: “He leads me in paths of righteousness...”

- A. “All we, like sheep, have gone astray.” Isa. 53:6; Ro. 3:10
- B. Lost sheep need:
 - 1. a person to come to them in the dark...
 - 2. with a light who has your best interest at heart
 - 3. who knows the way out and is willing to lead you
 - 4. you must follow!
 - 5. Jesus did that for us, so we must follow Him!
- C. According to Rabbi Harold Kushner, “straight paths” in Hebrew means “a round about way that ends up in the right direction”.
- D. Original sin makes it difficult for us to stay in paths of righteousness, but the Holy Spirit makes it possible, as Jesus explained to Nicodemus and His apostles. See John 3:3; John 16:3

III. Why does God restore and lead us, even when we fail over and over again? “...for His name’s sake.”

- A. In the ancient world, names signified character.
 - 1. God told Moses His name was “I AM.” Gen. 3:14 God is with us.
 - 2. Jesus called God, “Abba” which means “Dad” and signifies that God is not only *with* us, He is also *for* us.
 - 3. The apostle John wrote, “God is love.”

(continued)

B. God loves us because He is love; He guides us because He is wisdom, and He leads us because He knows the way home; He leads us *“for His name’s sake.”*

1. It takes a burden off of the lost sheep to know that the Shepherd leads them, not because of their goodness, but because of His grace.
2. Knowing that God leads us helps us see the world differently.
3. God leads us for His name’s sake which is to our benefit, not His.

“EVEN AS A FAITHFUL SHEPHERD GIVES HIS FLOCK THE FOOD AND WATER THEY NEED TO BE SHEEP, SO GOD , OUR FAITHFUL SHEPHERD, GIVES US THE STRENGTH OF SOUL WE NEED TO BE HUMAN.”

RABBI HAROLD KUSHNER



Original sin “is a deprivation of original holiness and justice, but human nature has not been totally corrupted: it is wounded..., subject to ignorance, suffering and ...inclined to sin....Baptism, by imparting the life of Christ’s grace, erases original sin and turns man back toward God, but the consequences for nature, weakened and inclined to evil, persist in man and summon him to spiritual battle.:

Catechism of the Catholic Church, paragraph 405

Scriptures for the Week:

“You must choose the way you will go. As for me and my house, we will follow the Lord.”
Joshua 24:15

“There is no one righteous; not even one!”
Ro. 3: 10

“When He, the Spirit of Truth has come, He will lead you into all truth.”
John 16:3

Prayer for the Week:

The soul you have given me O God is pure. You fashioned it. You breathed life into me; you keep my body and soul together. One day you will take it from me, only to restore it to me in time to come. So long as I have it, I must acknowledge you as the God of all souls. Praised are you, O Lord, who restores my soul.”

Ancient Jewish morning prayer