



"And this is the commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also." 1 John 4: 21

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**Sunday – May 1, 2022**

## Heart to Heart...

Are we a people of faith or a people of circumstances (faithless)? Too many times we allow our circumstances to determine our attitudes. When things go well, we are having this wonderful day, and nothing seems to distract us. But the moment something is said or done that disturbs us or makes things more hectic we seem to go into a downspin leading to the statement, *"I don't know how much worse this day could get!"*

As our human frailties get exposed, we need to make a proper faith response despite our difficulties. We need to be people of genuine faith, not a talking faith or this false sense of *"praise the Lord."* We need to see our opportunity for advancement in the face of the difficulty. The Lord is working on our faith and with that comes difficulties in helping us lean and move toward Him. We should find this in all trials that come our way. It should make us rejoice (exult). (Romans 5:1-4)

David faced more stresses and strains in life, yet he was known as a man after God's own heart. How did David, despite all his failures and weaknesses become a man after God's own heart? How do we become such? Just look at what he wrote in the most popular Psalm known as the 23rd Psalm. Sometimes familiarity blinds us to what is being said.

***"The Lord is my shepherd"***. David saw the Lord leading, not himself and his dependence on the Lord was where his heart was set. Circumstances were never the issue. It led him to settle down and stop allowing his desires to lead... ***"I shall not want."***

Notice that David knows where the Lord will take him no matter what comes in his life: *"lie down in green pastures...quiet waters...paths of righteousness."* This is what a trusting faith, a committed faith looks like. This is the path he acknowledges the Lord leads. The result? *"He restores my soul...for His name's sake."* David knew he would find comfort and restoration within his soul because God was his Shepherd, and the Shepherd would watch out for his well-being both now and eternally.

But wait, what about those dark days that pop up? *"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death...in the presence of my enemies."* Life can get tough, and David knows it! How did he handle things? *"I fear no evil, for You are with me! Your rod and staff, they comfort me."* David found himself walking under the protection of the Lord. He didn't feel as if he was left to the wolves and standing in difficulties all alone. God was real to him! He trusted the Lord, his Shepherd, with all his heart! When David was prone to turn to the right or left, the Lord used his staff to correct, and David found that a comfort. Circumstances and his enemies were not the determining factor. God was what determined everything about his life.

What did David expect? *"My cup overflows...goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."* His life was set today to eternity!

What do we do when faced with difficult circumstances? Burdened? Stressed? Do we see the Lord as *"the Shepherd and Guardian of our souls?"* (I Peter 2:25) Our attitudes and statements reveal where we have placed our faith. Think about it!!!

*Brent*