



**03.04.18 | I Am the Good Shepherd
Psalm 23:3**

Psalm 23

1 The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.
2 He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,
3 he refreshes my soul.
He guides me along the right paths
for his name's sake.
4 Even though I walk
through the darkest valley,
I will 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 anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

6 Surely your goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord
forever.

“What is a soul? It would be interesting to record impressions of what comes to mind spontaneously when one hears the word soul. For many of us, I suspect, the word, to the extent that it conjures up anything at all, produces an image, a very vague one, of some white, semi-invisible, spiritual tissue paper that floats deep inside of us and which takes on stains when we sin and that will separate from the body at the moment of death... What is wrong with that conception, though, is that it separates the soul too much from the core of our persons, from our conscious identity. Our soul is not something that we have, it is more something we are. It is the very life-pulse within us, that which names us alive.”

- Ronald Rolheiser, *Holy Longing: The Search for a Christian Spirituality*

Psalm 42:5

Why, my soul, are you downcast?
Why so disturbed within me?

“The experience of a life without lack depends first and foremost upon the presence of God in our lives, because the source of this life is God himself.”

- Dallas Willard

John 10:1-15

1 “Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. 2 The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. **He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.** 4 When he has brought out all his own, **he goes on ahead of them,** and his sheep follow him because **they know his voice.** 5 But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger’s voice.”

6 Jesus used this figure of speech, but the Pharisees did not understand what he was telling them. 7 Therefore Jesus said again, “Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. 8 All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. 9 I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; **I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.** 11 I am the good shepherd. **The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.** 12 The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he

abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it.¹³ The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. **14 I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— 15 just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep.**

“I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul.”
- William Hanley

“God’s name is an expression of his nature.”
- Dallas Willard

“Many of us have allowed ourselves to get caught up in a way of life that does not set us up to pay attention to the presence of God in our lives. We long for a word from the Lord but somehow we have been suckered into believing that the kind of pace we keep is what leadership requires. We slide inexorably into a way of life that offers little or no opportunity for paying attention and then we wonder why we are not hearing a word from the Lord when we need it.”
- Ruth Haley Barton