

Opening observations ..

- We commonly wear the ‘wrong glasses’ as we think about this life
- We still dream about upgrading this earth to Utopia though God clearly says something totally different: Gen. 3; Isaiah 65:17ff; Romans 8:22

THE SHEPHERD’S MINISTRY OF WATERING HIS SHEEP

I. THE SHEEP’S NEED FOR WATER II. THE SHEPHERD’S SUPPLY OF WATER

I. THE SHEEP’S WATER PROBLEM

A. The setting of Ps. 23 is a semi-arid and rugged mountainous land

B. Each sheep faces three critical needs in such environment

1. They have an absolute need for *daily water*

a. without water, no sheep with thrive or survive for long

b. how much true this is spiritually and to end the Lord *cried:*

If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink! (John 7:38)

2. They have a need for *clean water*

a. though thirsty sheep will drink *any* water, only clean water will profit

b. why are so many true/genuine Christians spiritually weak?

- *For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. (Jeremiah 2:13)*

3. They have need for *still waters*

a. what are the ‘still waters’ in David’s setting?

b. God knows as none other how much we need the *still waters*

- *what profit it a man if he gain the whole world? (Matt 16:26)*
- *Blessed ...who in his law meditates day and night. (Ps. 1:2)*

II. THE SHEPHERD'S LEADING BESIDE THE STILL WATERS

A. The "still waters" is the Shepherd's rich and abundant Gospel water

1. "Still waters" is the message of *His one-sided grace – unconditional love*
 - *When we were yet without strength ... while we yet sinners ... when we were enemies ... Christ died for the ungodly! (Rom. 5:6, 8, 10)*
 - *Is there a greater encouragement to draw near to God than 'him that cometh unto Me, I will in **no wise** cast out?' (John 6:37b)*
2. "Still waters" is *His all atoning blood – covering righteousness*
 - *The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from all sin (1 John 1:7b)*
 - *Behold the Lam of God which taketh away the sin of the world (John 1)*
3. "Still waters" is His triumphant shout: ***It is Finished!***
 - *Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy burdened, and I will give you rest! (Matt. 11:28)*
 - *And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the LORD! (Jer 31:14)*
4. "Still waters" is *His promise: **I will never leave thee nor forsake thee***
 - *Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved (Song 5:1b)*

B. The Shepherd didn't only provide 'still waters', He will lead His sheep to them.

TWO CLOSING QUESTIONS THAT NEED ANSWERING ...

A. Are you heeding the Shepherd's calling and imploring voice?

B. Are you feeding in the right pasture and drinking from the right waters?