



Abounding Grace for my...

“WAYWARDNESS” (Psalm 23:4b)

If there is nothing more life liberating and soul satisfying than knowing Christ, then why would we ever look anywhere else? And yet we do more often than we would like to admit! Evidence of this would be our bitterness, complaining and worry.

Ps23:4b ...your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

The rod (protection) and the staff (guidance) dispelled the fear in the sheep on their long dangerous and difficult treks from the valleys to the high mountain pastures during the summer months.

How Are We Prone to Waywardness?

- Deceived by the good days (prosperity) of Life. Heb13:5-6; James 1:16-17
- Disillusioned by the bad days (adversity) of Life. Isa41:10; Rom8:1; Heb12:7-11
- He is better than our best days and bigger than our worst days! 2Cor8:9, 9:8

What is God's Abounding Grace for my Waywardness?

V4b your rod (protection) and your staff (guidance)...

Contentment is the inward, gracious quiet spirit that joyfully rests in God's presence and providence.

- “God's Providence is His constant care for and His absolute rule over all His creation for His glory and the good of His people.” — Jerry Bridges (Trusting God)
- Three essential truths about God we must believe if we are going to trust Him in both good days and bad days. God is ...
 - ✓ Perfect in love. Ps103:11; Rom8:38-39
 - ✓ Infinite in wisdom. Rom11:33; Isa55:8-9
 - ✓ Completely sovereign. Job42:2; 1Tim6:15; Eccle7:14
- If there is a single event in all the universe that can occur outside of God's loving wise control, then we cannot trust Him. Ps9:9-10

Can you TRUST God? Absolutely, He is trustworthy! Just look at His track record in the Bible.

Can YOU trust God? Do you have such a relationship with Him that you believe He is who He said He is and will do what He has promised to do?

What Difference Will This Make in My Life?

V4b they comfort me... Comfort = (Heb. Nacham) To be sorry, console oneself, repent, regret, be comforted.

- I will repent of my times of bitterness (past), complaining (present) and worry (future). Heb12:15; Phil2:14; Matt6:25; Phil4:6-8
- And believe that historical events are determined by God (Divine Sovereignty) through our choices (Human responsibility). Acts 27:24-32
- Therefore, I'll neither be passive nor paranoid but diligently peaceful and helpful to others. Pro21:31; Pro14:21

Growing Notes

- 1) Read the intro to this sermon. What are your thoughts and feelings? When are you more prone to wander from the God you love? Good times or Bad times? Explain.
- 2) Read Psalm 23 with your focus on v4. Why would the rod (protection) and the staff (guidance) dispel the fear in the sheep on their long dangerous and difficult treks from the valleys to the high mountain pastures?
- 3) How are we prone to waywardness? How does knowing that our Good Shepherd is better than our best days and bigger than our worst days help keep us from wandering (2Cor8:9, 9:8)?
- 4) What is God's abounding grace for my waywardness? Define the providence of God? What are three essential truths that we must believe about God if we are going to trust Him? If there is a single event in all the universe that can occur outside of God's loving wise control, then we cannot trust Him (Ps9:9-10). Explain.
- 5) What difference will trusting God's providence (rod and staff) make in my life? How is bitterness, complaining and worry symptomatic of my unbelief? What must I believe about historical events (God's Sovereignty) and my choices (Human responsibility) (Act27:24-32)? Why would this lead to neither passivity nor paranoia but diligent peace that is helpful for others? What is God speaking to your through this study? Pray.