

The more I look at Psalm 23 the more I see its profound words. I think this is what makes the Word of God living. As the Spirit of God takes the Word of God, He can apply it to exactly where we need it in our lives.

Last month we looked at the first half of verse 3 of this psalm. This month I want us to look at the second half.

Sometimes I meet people who are in a quandary as to why God is not using them in some form of ministry. Invariably as they pursue God, the reason is that their spiritual condition was not quite what they had assumed. They were in need of restoration.

v.3 He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness.

Notice what happens when a Christian is restored to a right relationship. The next line says, *“He leads me in the paths of righteousness.”* Did you see that progression? First we need to be right with God then He is pleased to lead us in the path He wants to take us down.

Probably the most common thing I get asked about is how one can know the will of God for his/her life? D.L. Moody the great American evangelist of the 19th Century gave five basic pointers to knowing the will of God :

1. We need to be right with God. Psalm 66v18 states; “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.” If we are not right with God it does not matter how long we try to seek God’s will He will not respond until we get right with Him. Psalm 4v3 says this; “But know that the Lord has set apart the godly for Himself; the Lord will hear when I call to Him.”
2. We need to come to God with the right motives. Basically we need to recognise that the number one reason that we are seeking God’s will is that God will be glorified in it.

PRAISE the Lord for:

Our prayer warriors who are a great blessing to the work we are doing in Australia and overseas.

An order of 10,000 papers going to a ministry organisation north of Harare in Zimbabwe; in addition to the 50,000 we already print for Hope Ministries every two months

An encouraging trip to South Australia for Carl. Around 30 contacts made with orders being placed for the paper

3. We need to look to the Word of God. I was talking to the head of one of the state Bible Societies about the struggle to get Christians to read their Bibles. He confirmed to me that regular reading of the Word of God had declined to 15% of the Christian church. The Bible Society in Australia became so concerned about this that they launched the Faith comes by Hearing, and Hearing by the Word of God project. This was designed to encourage Christians to listen to the Bible on tape. Obviously it becomes very difficult to discern the will of God if you are not reading your Bible.



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4. We need to be sensitive to the work of the Holy Spirit. This can be through other Christians, circumstances in our lives, and through prayer.
5. We need to be sensitive to the providential working of God. What is meant here is that God has so sovereignly ordered events that it is inescapable that God is speaking to us. Back in 1982 just before my wife and I were married we were invited to join the Challenge ministry. Being a faith based mission, income was not guaranteed so we had to be sure God was calling us, so we prayed that God would provide a rental home. The very next day a friend asked if we needed a home to rent. We knew without a doubt that God was calling us into the work.

There are a few other things we can be blessed by as we seek to honour God, because that is the reason you want to know and do His will.

The biblical shepherd led his flock from the front. He had built such a close relationship with his flock that they gladly followed him because they realised he had their best interests at heart.

PRAYER needed for:

Challenge directors and their families – Cobus & Christa Britz (South Africa), Andrew & Karen Trezona (USA), Andrew & Mandy Halloway (UK) as they continue to connect with churches, prison ministries and individuals

Ongoing funding for the running of the Perth office, for personal support, for the supply of Challenge papers globally and for project funding in these countries

Our Board who have a very responsible position in overseeing what is an expanding work. They need wisdom and insight in directing this work

Orders coming in from the recent trip to South Australia. Pray as churches take on the distribution into their communities that God will bring in a harvest

... it is vital that we are first worshippers ... then workers

We need to recognise that when we seek to know God's path for us He has our best in mind. Sometimes we are fearful that God is going to ask us to do something we won't like or even want to do. We can have confidence that as God leads us out front He goes before us preparing the way.

We need to also see that in doing God's will He is with us and that He enables us by the power of His Holy Spirit. However, we need to also understand that God can only lead Christians that are submissive to Him and His will. These attitudes spawn out of the reality that we are first worshippers then workers. First we recognise the vital importance of relationship, and out of that we have a desire to be willing to serve God.

Why do we want to do all this? Simply because we want to see God honoured and glorified.

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