

Psalm 23 – The Old Minister

A very wealthy family once invited all their friends to come to their home for a relaxed and informal reunion. The guest list was made up of people from all walks of life. Among the company that evening was a noted actor who was especially known for the power and beauty of his voice. After the meal had been served some of the guests insisted that the actor recite something for them. The man asked what they wanted him to recite but no one could think of something that was appropriate. After a long silence an old minister of the Gospel spoke up and said “What about the twenty third Psalm?” The actor at first hesitated but then consented to recite this well known portion of Scripture on the condition that the minister would recite it after him.

The actor spoke well as he repeated the portion of Scripture, his voice was clear and powerful and the words just flowed from his lips. He used all his training and experience so that every word was spoken with perfect diction. When he finished the audience burst into spontaneous applause.

Then the old minister stepped slowly to the front of the gathering and when he began to speak there was absolute silence. This man’s voice was well past its best. At times his speech was frail and broken. But rather than just perform the minister spoke with great feeling and from the very depth of his heart. So much so that when he was finished no one clapped but rather everyone wept.

Then the actor spoke and made this very pertinent comment, “The difference between this minister and myself is, I knew the Psalm but he knew the Shepherd”.

There are many in our land just like that actor and maybe you are one of them. The twenty third Psalm is one of the best known portions of the Bible and I’m sure you know it very well; you could even recite it from memory. Because like multitudes of others you learnt it as a child in Sunday school and you have often sang it at Church services. There is little doubt that you know the Psalm but perhaps you would have to acknowledge that you don’t the Shepherd of the Psalm because you are not saved. The Shepherd of course is none other than the Lord Jesus (John 10:11) and the way you get to know Him personally is by asking Him into your heart to be your Saviour and I plead with you to do that today.

Knowing the Psalm is good and important but knowing the Shepherd of the Psalm is the most important thing in life.

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