

# He Restores My Soul

## Study Pages

**Psalm 23:1-6** [NKJV] The LORD *is* my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You *are* with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.

We want start with an understanding of just what *is* the soul of man. Over the last several months, you may have heard me mention that there are three distinct aspects of human existence. We are spirit beings; We live in bodies; We have souls. The spirit of man is the eternal part of our being; The physical, flesh and bone body, is the house we live in; The soul is like the bridge between the two... Between the things of the spirit and the natural world in which we live. The eternal part of our being, the spirit of a man, which cannot be seen, is connected with the physical world around us by or through the soul of a man or woman.

The soul is comprised of our minds, our wills, our intellect and our emotions. It's where the memory is found and mental keepsakes are stored. According to Hebrews 4:12 the soul and spirit are so closely intertwined that they can only be separated by the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God.

**Hebrews 4:12** [NKJV] For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit... and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

And because the soul and spirit are so closely intertwined, when the physical body dies and the spirit moves into eternity, the soul does not cease to exist; It lives on in perpetuity with the human spirit. How do I know these things? Well, we don't have time to explain it today but I will say, there is significant evidence in scripture to support the eternal existence of the soul as it is intertwined with the human spirit. It has to do with our memories and our ability to recognize others in that realm. Luke chapter 16 is a good place to start But for today, for the sake of time, you're just going to have to take my word for it

From the original language of Hebrew, when the writer, King David, indicated in Psalm 23:3 that God restored his *soul*, he was speaking of the part of his being that could have been translated as his mind. And the word *restored*, among other things, points toward refreshing, recovery, relief, rescue or, even, reward.

### **The soul is like a bridge.**

Think about bridges in various regions. I remember several years ago ministering in a certain island country that labeled itself as *the land of many bridges*. Honestly, I don't think I've ever seen so many bridges in all my life. In the capital city alone, there was a main thoroughfare that had a bridge nearly every block, One right after the other. For the most part, those

bridges weren't very big - short little crossings of a small canal but it made for quick passage in and out of the city.

Yet, there are some places in the world where the spans are long and the bridges are few and far between. Think about the Mississippi River. The farther south we go, the wider the river and fewer the crossings. I can think of a couple of very large international cities that are located on islands. The only ways to get there would be by boat, by tunnel or, in most cases, on a bridge. In those cities the bridges are always bottlenecks. They get heavy, heavy traffic that gets congested at the smallest little thing. I know of one city in particular where the people there need to plan far ahead for long lines of traffic. Delays are literally a way of life for them. Very seldom do they make it to their destinations in a reasonable amount of time.

And as far as maintenance goes on those bridges in those highly populated areas, the longer the span, the heavier the traffic, and thus, greater is the need for regular maintenance. Just when the department of transportation finishes one restoration, it seems as though they turn right around the start again. Some bridges seem to be in a constant state of repair or refurbishing.

And so, it goes with our soul. The farther we live from God, the more restoration of our soul is required. If the soul is bridging a large gap between God and His Kingdom compared to the natural world in which we live, greater will be the need for continual recovery and restoration. The closer we live to God and His word, access to God and His kingdom will ease the load placed upon the soul and the answers we need from God will be so much easier to access.

Concerning the soul, why the need for restoration? Well, simply put, life happens. Like a bridge with heavy traffic the soul needs DAILY upkeep. There are many things we should embrace in our daily lives that pave the way for that process. There really is no substitute for Bible reading and prayer.

**Joshua 1:8-9** [NKJV] This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God *is* with you wherever you go.

Regular encounters with the Word of God help us avoid moments of fear or dismay, keeping our souls in tune with God and His ways.

**Romans 12:1-2** [NKJV] I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

The fastest and easiest way to renew our minds is with the Word of God.

Now, what about the importance of living life in the Spirit?

**Ephesians 5:17-21** [CSB] So don't be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. And don't get drunk with wine, which leads to reckless living, but be filled by the Spirit: speaking to

one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making music with your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of Christ.

In the original Greek, the word translated as *filled* carries with a connotation of continual filling. A more wordy translation of that phrase might read like this: ...be being filled with the Spirit. It's not a one-time thing, but a continual communion with Him, and in that, we will find restoration and renewal.

**1 Corinthians 14:2, 4** [NKJV] For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands *him*; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries. ... He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself...

That means we are strengthened and built up in the Spirit when we pray with other tongues.

In addition to reading the Bible and prayer, it's also important to put ourselves in remembrance and subsequently worship Him.

**Psalms 30:4** [NKJV] Sing praise to the LORD, you saints of His, and give thanks at the remembrance of His holy name.

**Revelation 12:11** [NKJV] And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony...

**Revelation 19:10** [NKJV] ...I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

When we testify as to the things God has done for us, when we put ourselves and others in remembrance, the same spirit that showed up to do those things for us before, will return to do it again and again--especially for those with whom we share the testimony. If He did it for me, He will do it for you! Come on, let's put ourselves in remembrance. When we do, it brings great encouragement, not just to our spirits, but to our souls, causing us to be more than happy to celebrate every little victory.

There is also the importance of retreating or regrouping. Psalm 23 is all about retreat, finding a place to be restored and renewed.

- "I shall not want" points toward a place of provision. Who wants to live life in need?
- "He makes me lie down in green pastures" points toward a place of peace and quiet rest
- "He leads me beside the still waters" - Turmoil was never God's intention for any of us.
- "Paths of Righteousness" points toward living a life with a clear conscience. There are so many who have no idea what that even feels like. There is forgiveness; There is restoration for those who need to turn from their wicked ways.
- "For His name's sake" - Those who believe in Him belong to Him bearing His name. He needs for us to live in a place of righteousness so as not to destroy our testimony. And with the Holy Spirit's help we can do that.
- In consider the reference to "the Valley of the Shadow of Death" - To be noted: There is one; And we can walk right through it. We have a dear friend in the ministry who recently went through a horrible medical diagnosis and the subsequent horrific treatments. Every

time I would pray for this man, I would hear myself calling him out of that valley. There used to be an old gospel song with lyrics that said:

*I'm gonna walk right out of this valley,  
Lift my hands and praise the Lord  
Ain't gonna let ole' Satan get me down  
I'm gonna walk out of this valley with my Lord.*

- "I will fear no evil" - Fear is a paralyzing force that can render us completely ineffective if we let it. But we don't have to go there; We don't have to *dwell* in a place of fear. Why? Because He is with us to guide us with his "rod," to rescue us with his "staff," to "comfort" us in every situation. His rod and his staff, they comfort us.
- "A table prepared in the presence of my enemies" points towards every spiritual and physical need being met, regardless of what the devil is trying to do.
- "He anoints our heads with oil" points directly toward Christ which actually means "the Anointed One and His anointing." There is supernatural protection and ability only found in Him and His anointing. It's good to have an anointed head.
- "A cup running over" points directly toward the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, in all His fullness. He is not only in us or with us, He is over us, behind us, in front of us, and walking right beside us, every step of the journey.
- "Goodness and mercy" are the elements of God's character that ensure the success of our walk in Him.
- "Dwelling in His House" is the ultimate place of safety and security. There's no place like home.

Which leads us to our next point in the process of restoration. There really is nothing like going home, the place where we find center. Sometimes there is value in returning to the things we know to be true, even visiting the place where we last heard from Him. Such steps can help keep us grounded and centered on God and His will. As long as we keep Jesus at the center of it all, there is a dwelling place in Him in which we find restoration and peace, every day, all day.

Let's break this all down into something ever more digestible; Let's talk about the restoration of the different aspects of the soul and we'll start with...

- Restoring the Mind.
  - **Isaiah 26:3** [NKJV] You will keep *him* in perfect peace, *whose* mind *is* stayed *on* *You*, because he trusts in You.
  - **2 Corinthians 10:3-5** [NKJV] For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,
  - Sometimes we have to make a willful choice not to think about certain things, especially sinful thoughts or unfruitful works of darkness like offense, envy or revenge.

- The phrase from Isaiah 26:3 that speaks of a mind stayed on Him is super important.
- Many years ago, I learned a little song that reflected that concept in the lyrics

*"I'm keeping my mind stayed upon the Lord  
 "my mind stayed upon the Lord  
 "I'm keeping my mind stayed upon the Lord  
 "He's my mediation - night and day"*

- Singing a song like that forces the mind to focus on Him. It is possible to quiet our minds, especially if we keep it focused on the Lord.
- The best way to control our thinking is with our mouths
- That all being said, let's think about King David for a moment
  - He was a warrior. Don't you know he saw some things. Not only that, his King sought to kill him for YEARS, he was forced to run for his life while his wife was given to another man.
  - Don't you know, David had to learn how to take captive every thought, how to keep His mind stayed on the Lord.
  - When it comes to the restoration of our minds the book of Psalms is a good place to start. That's where David started. Come on, he's the writer of our text for today.

- Restoring the Will

- **Joshua 24:15** [NKJV] ...choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve ... as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."
- The fact of the matter is: God has given us a choice. He will not make us choose Him. He will not force us to do His will. We have to make the choice and really, restoring our will is more like exchanging our will for His.
- **John 4:34** [NKJV] Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.
- Restoring the will is really about surrendering our own will to God's and it is truly a willful choice we make in our soul, laying aside our own ambitions to do whatever He may be asking us to do laying aside our own agendas to do whatever He needs us to do at the time, inconvenient though it may be...finding within ourselves a willingness to be inconvenienced for the sake of others,for the sake of God's kingdom.
- There is restoration in surrendering our will for His. Now right along with that, we should talk a little bit about what it means to have a strong-will.
- We're talking about the soul and its different aspects. We all have a will and some wills are stronger than others: some are agreeable, some are not; some are more inclined to follow their own way.
- There is no doubt, I was born with a strong will. I have always had my own opinion and certain ways I thought things should be done. I was never too keen on being told what to do, especially as a child. I think I was born with a spirit of bossy and have never been afraid to use it. Yet, now, none of those things really matter. I have my mind set on doing the will of God, not my own

- Raising a strong-willed child is a bit tricky. It requires consistent discipline and unwavering commitment to established boundaries. And in many respects, for lack of a better phrase, that child's will must be broken - at least in the realm of their soul.
- It's important to learn to yield to authority, especially the authority of a parent. If we do not teach our children to obey, they'll have disciplinary issues all their lives, starting in school and then, perhaps, with employers or if not held in check, even with the law. If we do not learn to yield our will to authority, how will we ever learn to obey God and His word?
- A child's will in the realm of the soul, and it's a fine line like we walk guiding them onto a yielded path of obedience. We do not want to break their spirits or abuse them. If God created a child to be playful and fun-loving, we must be watchful that we don't break their spirits. Thank God for His help in teaching us all how to be better parents. We won't always get it right. Thank God for restoration.
- He doesn't give us children when we are older and wiser. It is a learning process for all, including both parent and child. If and when we're too hard on our kids, thank God for His restorative power at work. He can fix the things we break and mend the bridges that need to be repaired. Most assuredly, in the process it will involve massive amount of love and patience. He restores our soul and even the souls of our children if we make room for Him in our homes
- Restoring the Intellect?
  - Is that even necessary?
  - **1 Thessalonians 4:10-12** [NKJV] ...But we urge you, brethren, ...that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and *that* you may lack nothing.
  - We're talking about the restoration of the soul... even the intellect, the part of the brain that does the heavy lifting.
  - We have a good friend who is extremely intelligent. He and his wife have known and served the Lord most of their lives. He has a good job working in IT which requires a deep level of concentration and brain-power, every day, all day long. And I, personally, don't know anyone better at knowing how to participate in the restoration of his own soul especially his intellect
    - His evenings and weekends are filled with the kinds of stuff that I mostly dread doing like yard work or hard physical labor. He has his own "To Do" list...Projects he wants to accomplish around the house as well as a fairly rigid schedule that he adheres to in order to get it all done
    - I have never heard his wife ever say anything about asking him to do anything around the house. He requires it all of himself
    - In his down time, off the clock, he thrives on doing things that require little or no intellect "Let's hoe the garden" ..."Let's go play tennis..." He has even been known to just simply lay in the sun and look at the clouds all afternoon. He has a little blow-up pool he sets up in his back yard every summer. The summer sun is a most welcome companion and sweat is never sweat if he doesn't have to think about it. He intentionally makes plans to work hard and enjoy every minute, to relax and do nothing.

- Even though he is a hard worker and has a strong work-ethic, just like 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 instructs: He aspires to lead a quiet life; He minds his own business; He works with his hands; He walks properly toward those who do not know the Lord; And in many respects, he and his wife lack nothing. He is the epitome of what could be termed: a 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 kind of guy
- Restoring Emotions
  - If the soul is the bridge between the spirit and the natural-world we live in the emotions are the gateway to that bridge. Emotions play a vital role in the regulation of the pressures we face in life.
  - Think of a pressure cooker. In order to maintain the proper pressure inside the pot there is a weighty valve that sits on top carefully regulating the amount of steam being released. So, it is with emotions.
  - God never intended for believers to be led by how we feel. We are to be led by the Spirit of God deep within our own spirit
    - **Romans 8:14** [NKJV] For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.
    - **Proverbs 20:27** [NASB95] The spirit of man is the lamp of the LORD, searching all the innermost parts of his being.
    - God never intended for us to be guided by our emotions but rather as a means of expression, a vehicle with which to manage the intensities often generated in the big moments of our lives
  - However, emotions are God's gift to us. They enable us to express the things that move us
  - Here's a quick list and then we'll break it down: Anger, disgust, fear, happiness, sadness and surprise
    - Anger - regulates our response to threats, injustice or boundary violations and prepares us for confrontation or positioning ourselves for protection. This sort of anger is not to be confused with an angry disposition. Some people are simply angry all the time, which is a symptom of a deeper spiritual problem. People who are given to anger on a regular basis very often step across a line that leads to violence.
      - **Ephesians 4:26** [NKJV] Be angry, and do not sin: do not let the sun go down on your wrath,
    - The emotion of disgust - is our reaction to something harmful, contaminated or morally offensive. It helps us avoid toxins or bad situations. This sort of disgust is a natural, human response that manifests physically to protect us from things that could be harmful.
      - I remember when I was carrying my babies, there were certain smells that were disgusting to me and there were certain foods that repulsed me. Nothing could convince me to eat those things when I was pregnant. They were disgusting
    - This emotion called "disgust" is not to be confused with contempt, which is a misguided feeling of moral superiority or disdain. Just because someone may do something that physically disgusts us. We do not have a right to pass judgment on them even if we view their behavior as repulsive

- The emotion of fear - alerts us to danger and triggers survival instinct to either fight, flight or freeze. It should not to be confused with a spirit of fear, which puts us over into a place of living in a state of anxiety and worry, and can easily develop into destructive patterns of behavior
  - **2 Timothy 1:7** [NKJV] For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.
  - Fear can make you crazy
- Happiness (or even excitement) comes when we feel safe, know success, enjoy connection with others. It promotes bonding and well-being. This is not be confused with joy. Happiness is an emotion we feel and enjoy; Joy is a spiritual force the overlooks our circumstances and rises up from within regardless of what we may be facing to carry us through to the other side in victory
  - **Psalm 126:1-3** [NKJV] When the LORD brought back the captivity of Zion, we were like those who dream. Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing. Then they said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them." The LORD has done great things for us, and we are glad.
- Sadness is our response to loss or helplessness. It often leads us to reach out to God or others for help
  - **Hebrews 4:16** [NKJV] Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
  - Sadness is not to be confused with grief. Unresolved, inconsolable loss can lead to what could be termed a spirit of grief.
  - Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit, among other things, as a "Comforter" in
    - **John 14:16** [AMP] And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper (Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor-- Counselor, Strengtheners, Standby), to be with you forever—
  - There is no sadness so great, no sorrow so deep that God is not able to penetrate it with His great love and boundless comfort.
  - **Psalm 30:5** [NKJV] For His anger *is but for* a moment, His favor *is for* life; Weeping may endure for a night, but joy *comes* in the morning.
- Surprise" is a brief reaction to sudden, unexpected events which helps us redirect our attention and assess quickly what needs to be done. Some individuals handle surprise with grace, while others tend to run amok. During this brief reaction, some people can handle surprise with a level head, while others can't seem to put one thought in front of another.
  - The important thing to remember is to not base long-term decisions in the brief moment of surprise. We must give ourselves time to process, adjust and pray it through. There is something to be said about "sleeping on it." A fresh perspective always follows a good night's sleep.
  - **Psalm 5:3** [NKJV] My voice You shall hear in the morning, O LORD; In the morning I will direct *it* to You, and I will look up.

- All the emotions we listed have one thing in common. They were never intended to be something we live day in and day out. They are temporary, momentary responses that help us navigate the pressures of life.
- Far too often, depending upon many factors, we sometimes get sucked into the vacuum of emotionalism. There are those among us that simply don't know how to live unless they are experiencing some sort of emotional upheaval. It's almost like a drug. There are folks that thrive on chaos and do not know how to process a calm, peaceful or quiet moment.
- I was raised in an era where children grew up with mothers who watched soap operas every day all day long. This sort of entertainment (soap operas and certain sad songs) feeds emotional drama, which, in turn, can affect how we process life.
- I know, first hand, what it is to approach every relationship filtered through a "somebody done somebody wrong" song. We are not supposed to put up a tent and dwell in those places
  - **Ephesians 4:31** [NKJV] Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.
  - [NET] You must put away every kind of bitterness, anger, wrath, quarreling, and evil, slanderous talk.
  - **1 Corinthians 13:11** [NKJV] When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.
- Think about it: Children are emotional creatures. They have temper-tantrums with fits of anger & frustration. They can be quite passionate about things they don't like. No one has a problem understanding when a child is afraid. They communicate their fear quite clearly. It's easy to know when they are happy or excited and it fun to celebrate with them. When a child is sad, it's not hard to figure out - reasonable or not, we raise our level of compassion to match their level of distress. And when it comes to surprises, a child will be very clear as to their reaction
- But, also to be note, very few children hang-on, long-term to those emotions. They forget them as quickly as they express them. And, in that respect, we can learn a lot from a child. Yet, even the, and as child's level of maturity increases, so does our expectation as to how they will handle moments that inspire emotional outbursts.
- What was socially acceptable behavior or tolerated when we were children does not hold true into adulthood. We grow; We mature; We learn how to regulate our regulator. We learn how to manage the powerful emotions that sometimes over take us and with God's help, our souls are restored
- **2 Corinthians 4:16** [NKJV] Therefore we do not lose heart... the inward *man* is being renewed day by day.

Concerning the restoration of our souls, we want to put out a reminder about DAILY time with the Lord, both in Bible reading and prayer. Our emotional responses are directly impacted by the amount of time we spend meditating upon things that stir our emotions; compared to the amount of time we spend, waiting in His presence and meditating upon His word. Garbage in / garbage out; Glory in / glory out

God never intended for our lives to be one big soap opera, filled with drama and upheaval. Yet, if all we ever feed upon is drama, drama is what we will get. We manifest what we consume; we are what we eat.

Emotions were never intended to *govern* our lives, long-term. They are a gift from God to help us *regulate* our responses, especially concerning things that are outside of our realm of control. The only people we can control in this life would be ourselves; People are people and they will do what they will do. But, we are God's people and all He asks is that we yield to Him and His ways. Things always have a way of turning out better when we put Jesus at the center of it all.

The condition of our soul matters to God. Yes, He wants us to be born again; to know what it is to be a new creature in Christ to have our spirits eternally aligned with God. Yet, He also wants us to enjoy all the good things that He has prepared for us

**Jeremiah 29:11** [NKJV] For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Verses 12 and 13 are a good description of what we should be practicing daily: **Jeremiah 29:12-13** [NKJV] Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find *Me*, when you search for Me with all your heart.

**3 John 2** [NASB95] Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers.