



The Pleasure of the Relationship Is Revealed in Comfort

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. (V. 3) He restoreth my soul: Psalm 23:2-3

Introduction:

I'll Give You the Consequences, You Guess the Cause

- ◆ It afflicts 70 million Americans and is faulted for 38,000 deaths each year.
- ◆ The condition annually costs the U.S. \$70 billion worth of productivity.
- ◆ Teenagers suffer from it. Studies show that 64 percent of teens blame it for poor school performance.
- ◆ Middle agers face it. Researchers says that most severe cases occur between ages thirty and forty.
- ◆ Senior citizens are afflicted by it. One study suggests that the condition impacts 50 percent of the over sixty-five population.
- ◆ Treatment involves everything from mouth guards to herbal teas to medication.

I. He comforts us in His ministry as a shepherd.

- A. He makes sure the conditions are right to bring about rest.

He maketh me . . . Psalm 23:2

“The Shepherd alone knows the importance of the sheep lying down. If they don’t lie down, they will not chew their cud, they will grow unhealthy, and they will produce no wool. Unhappy, unhealthy, and unproductive; no wonder He makes us lie down!”

- B. He makes sure the conditions are right to bring about resolution.

. . . to lie down . . . Psalm 23:2

“Sheep lie down only when they feel secure, content, and at peace. When our Shepherd is near us, our minds can relax. Anxious thoughts retreat in the presence of the Lord and His Word.”
- **Robert Morgan**

Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. James 4:8

II. He comforts us in His motivation as a shepherd.

A. He is motivated as a shepherd to reserve serenity.

... he leadeth me ... Psalm 23:2

“The way is dark, unfamiliar, and difficult. The trees periodically blot out the sunlight, and there are serpents coiled to strike as well as hungry wolves lurking in the shadows. But the sheep walking beside his shepherd is secure because the shepherd is near, leading the way, fully aware of the valley’s path.”

- Max Lucado

B. He is motivated as a shepherd to restore satisfaction.

“Even though tired and hot from a blistering day, thirsty sheep will only stand and stare at the fast-flowing stream but never drink.”

... beside the still waters ... Psalm 23:2

“The world may be coming apart at the seams, but I’m holding together because of Jesus. Though sometimes confused and occasionally confounded, I have a basis for blessed contentment in His compassion and power.”

- Robert Morgan

III. He comforts us in His majesty as a shepherd.

A. In His majesty He convicts us to restore us.

He restoreth ... Psalms 23:3

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53:6

“A cast sheep is a sad being, legs futilely flailing the air, gasses building up in the rumen, blood circulation draining away from the extremities. It’s vulnerable to attack, unable to take food or water, sometimes mired in mud and briar. Cast sheep can perish in a matter of hours unless the shepherd finds them and restores them.”

- Robert Morgan

B. In His majesty He cleanses us to restore us.

... my soul: Psalms 23:3

He Restoreth My Soul

“The term is loosely based on the idea of repentance—a ‘turning back’—only it’s not accomplished by the sheep, but the Shepherd. Realizing he has a wanderer missing, the shepherd sets out to ‘restore’ or ‘return’ that wandering member of his flock, calling its name and awaiting an answering bleat out in the wilderness.”

- Chuck Swindoll