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**Psalm 23:1-3 – “The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures...He refreshes my soul.”**

- Literally, “He refreshes my soul” means God ‘brings my soul back’ like a bird that returns to its nest
- He brings our soul back from where it wanders
- Our soul is being drained; our soul is broken; our soul “loses” parts of what makes it up – either as a result of previous choices or as part of going thru life
- We often find our soul, our inner being has not been restored as it could have been.
- You can’t do what you are made to do if your soul is “crushed”, “wounded”, “diminished”
- Our souls need to be brought back fully: “Above all guard your heart for everything you do flows from it.”
- As we live in this life, we sustain blows, we have experiences that drain, bruise, and affect our souls. We need to make the efforts that God intends to restore our souls.

- We cannot do anything unless we are restored as our souls are intended to be; to be whole as God intends us to be.
- “When the axe is sharp, it takes fewer blows to cut the wood.”
- We too often “hack away” at life without our soul being in the condition it needs to be in to live life as we should.
- When your soul is “half capacity” we are vulnerable to temptation, addictions, etc.

**Genesis 15 – Abraham makes an offering: he prepared the sacrifice by bringing the offering, stand and wait, and maintain the sacrifice**

1. We live in a time when there are forces to push us out beyond our boundaries.
  - a. PS 16 – God has defined the boundaries of our lives; we are trying to do more than God has assigned us to do
  - b. We are meant only to play our role and fulfill what is assigned us to do. We are not meant to live according to the needs we are confronted with, but to address what God intends us to do.
  - c. People fail and come into moral crisis from coming into seasons or resentment & weariness.
  - d. God intends to show us what our boundaries are. We need to be refreshed to accomplish what God intends us to do.
2. There is nothing as heavy as sin. ACTS 3:19, “Repent so that times of refreshing can come into your life.”
  - a. This is more than momentary renewal here. This speaks of restoration of something that has become depleted.
  - b. Living outside our boundaries is when the affliction, the demonic, the temptations come.
  - c. Tiredness, resentment sets us up. We respond by repenting of those things that make us vulnerable. As our soul is being built up, we are able to live as we should be.
3. We are meant to live on the “fuel” of God’s Word. We know the Bible is supernatural, yet sometimes we can’t see the connection between our life and where we work.
  - a. When the power goes out, EVERYTHING is affected.
  - b. There is a place to slow down and not necessarily keep to the “schedule” or the “list”. We may need to stay in a passage beyond “moving forward”.
  - c. We need more than information; we need inspiration.
  - d. Don’t “conquer” the Word, but let it deposit something in us. “Let it dwell richly...”
4. Nothing destroys your soul like strife and bitterness.
  - a. We must guard our souls so as not to give place to & absorb strife or bitterness. It makes us weary.
  - b. Strife deforms us & weights us down
5. As we live in this world, we may not see what God intends beyond what we currently are.

- a. Sometimes we make peace with the way we are, but God did not make us this way.
- b. God didn't make us with certain weaknesses and we come to embrace them because we use them
- c. We can become satisfied with how we are. We are created to be more than we are, much more than "basically redeemed".
- d. We must not "settle" for how we are now and miss what God has for us in an "ultimate" sense; living far less of what we're to be.
- e. God is coming to bring about his work in the earth. We must be ready to be used by Him in that moment.