

Safe and Secure for ever
Psalm 23

If I was to ask you to think of a word or a couple of words that would be at the forefront of peoples minds considering the world we live in today.

I think some of them would have to be safety, security.

Since 9/11 a 8years ago today, we in the western world have been hit in the face with what the rest of the world have been facing for centuries.

And now with all the financial turmoil we have been hit with another uncertainty and that of money, financial stability

How can we be safe and secure?

We desire to feel safe and secure.

And I believe that this feeling of wanting to be safe and secure is not just a national issue but a very personal issue.

We like to buy cars that have air bags all over the place.

We like to fly in plans that have the best safety record.

We like to have our money in institutions that are solid. (maybe under the bed at the moment.)

We like to feel safe and secure at home with our families.

We have locks on our doors, or a security system

But will this the type of safety and security really work.

Will this put our minds at ease completely?

Or is there a safety and security that we can experience that will give us a peace now and for eternity.

I believe Ps 23 points us to how we can be safe and secure for eternity.

Ps 23 is a testimony of a guy called David, if you can remember the story of David and Goliath then this is that David, but now he is older and a King.

And here in Psalm 23 he writes a beautiful poem about how he experiences God's protection, safety and security in life and into eternity.

Let me read the first 4 verses again.

PS 23:1 The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.

PS 23:2 He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,

PS 23:3 he restores my soul.
He guides me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.

PS 23:4 Even 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.

What a beautiful picture.

David is saying that in life he feels the loving protecting presence of God.

One of the most beautiful sights in this world is when you see a baby cradled in the arms of its parents.

There is nothing more secure than that.

Content relaxed not a worry.

There is no safer place for a baby than in the arms of their father.

There is no safer place for you and me than in the arms of our heavenly father.

David also talks of how God not only protects but also guides and directs.

Through even the most dangerous terrain.

God is leading him, protecting him and taking him to safety.

As I was talking with the family the other day they told me that Herb used to love to take his children and then his grand children to the surf, That he would pack up the old (yellow) car and head to the beach with body boards etc and take his most precious possessions, his chn or grand chn and teach them how to surf and how to do that safely. You probably remember the picture in the presentation with Herb and one of the grand chn on a body board. Herb would lead, protect and keep his loved ones safe in the surf.

Psalm 23 states that when it comes to life in general there is no better than God to guide and direct you through it and in fact he will take your hand and lead you through life and death.

This is a picture of having our hand in the hand of God being led through all aspects of life, through the good, the bad, the beautiful, the ugly, the joyous and the tragic.

Herb as you have heard from the Eulogies and from the grand children coming up, loved his grand children and great grand children, and he would have had a huge impact on them. Leading and guiding them into many good traits, showing that relationships are important, a good sense of humour is vital (g=fingers behind Noela's head), always treat people with respect, desiring what is best for them.

God too desires the best for us.

This is the picture here in Psalm 23 of God guiding and directing like a shepherd to his children.

No matter what comes our way we can know God is with us.

What a wonderful hope.

This is not a wishy washy hope, but a certain hope of knowing God is leading and God is taking us to a place prepared for us.

And in Psalm 23 he gives us two great pictures of what He has prepared for us

Look at v5

PS 23:5 You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

Of all the pictures of heaven in the bible the main one is of a banquet.

Actually a wedding banquet.

A place where there is great food, fun (good humour) and great relationships.

It is clear that family and families eating together was important to Herb. He loved having his family round him.

This is the picture here in the bible. God and his family.

A huge celebration.

And this is what is being prepared by God for us.

And he has invited us all to come along.

The second great picture of what God has prepared for us is in v6

PS 23:6 Surely goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

He has prepared for us a home, a family home.

A place where we are a safe and secure forever.

Family is a great part of life, it is not always easy but when our families are working well there is nothing much better.

And notice that God says this is a home not a castle.

Castles are built to keep people out, a home welcomes people in.

God hasn't built a castle for you and me but he has prepared a home.

A warm inviting, safe, secure home where we will be in the arms of God for ever. And he wants us in.

I suppose the one question we need to ask is how do we get to this home.

Is it an automatic entrance, do we just role up.

No, when we come to the new testament a very similar passage in

John 14:1-6 that we will read at the Graveside tells us of the home prepared for us in Heaven.

And the one that is getting it ready, is Jesus.

Jesus has the key to the door of our family home in Heaven.

(Illust of Key and remote?)

It is not about rules and regulations it is about relationship.

It is about having a living loving relationship with Jesus.

It is about giving our lives to Jesus who gave up his life for us.

Jesus went to the cross and died to take all our wrongs, our sins on himself and then rose again to show he defeated death.

Jesus is the shepherd of Psalm 23.

If we put our hand in his, he will lead us through this life, through death and into eternity.

What a wonderful truth.

I pray that you may know and experience God's love and protection today and forever.

And that you may say with David "The Lord is my Shepherd"

Lets pray