

The Lord is my Shepherd.... Steve Long reflections on the 23rd Psalm

<p>Using the same type of “parceling out” of the 23rd Psalm as Charles Allen provided in his book “God’s Psychiatry” - plus some of his text - here is the Steve Long experience and interpretation (as of 3/27/08)</p>	
The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want	Instinctively I know the shepherd has made plans for me.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures	The sheep must sometimes be forced to sit down and relax. Sometimes this comes in the form of sickness, sometimes in the “good tired” after a project, periodically in the melancholy moments. In each case, it is important to listen to the Maker.
He leadeth me beside the still waters	While there have been many swift running rivers in my life (especially with work at IRI and FMI), God continues to lead me to fulfill my purposes in the world by pushing me more towards contemplative moments.
He restoreth my soul	God hears, forgives and restores. God lets us become new, better people!
He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake	There are occasions when I think the path is clear for what needs to occur next. Prayerful consideration and sounding it out with others frequently leads to a very different, better direction of travel.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me	The loss of life for those close to me, and for me, is frightful in a mortal sense. Yet, knowing that God is with me is a comfort despite the known end of life that will befall us all. I will miss being of this world, and also already miss important people like Dad Long who walked the valley of the shadow of death for 7 years. Yet it is our job to rejoice in all things, looking for the “Thank You” moments in the darkest of times.
Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me	There are plenty of “bad guys” out there, and even I can be one of them in my heart and actions. I am thankful that God is there for counsel, guidance and forgiveness, as are my human friends and mentors.
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies	Even though it sometimes seems like the enemy is winning, I must remember to hold strong to my convictions. We should measure not in material things but in filling of the heart and soul and mind.
Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over	When I require something physical or emotional, it is so frequent that just the right person or situation comes into my life. God and God’s workers are so regularly around me helping me along!
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life	We have HOPE! As our minds are filled with the pictures of the loving Shepherd leading His sheep, we feel confident He will lead us through the dark valleys
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever	Knowing that completion of life also results in heavenly dwelling is a sweet, sweet comfort!