

Riches, Rest and Restoration

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Preacher: Rev Donald M Macleod

[0 : 0 0] Good evening, before we begin, just the same intimations as the morning, but just to remind ourselves often, first of all, just a note of personal thanks and congregational thanks to everyone involved in planning and carrying out the fun day, the congregational outing yesterday.

Again, it was a good day, a really good day, and across the board, it was very much enjoyed. So thank you to everyone who worked mostly behind the scenes to organise and plan out a day.

We give praise to God for the children that we have, and we are so blessed to have a Sunday school. We really are blessed with children who are actually interested in learning things of the Lord and who enjoy coming along and who are growing and are asking questions and who are engaging fully with materials.

We will praise the Lord for that. It's, of course, a Kirk session, a short Kirk session this Thursday, all being well, after the prayer meeting. And finally, of course, next Lord's Day, the afternoon service and morning service at 12 noon service.

It will be a family service. It will be a shorter service. It will be done in such a way that hopefully that the youngest to the oldest will be able to get something out of the service and followed by the prize giving.

[1 : 1 9] So as well as please come along yourselves as always. Please, if there's anyone in a district, in an atoll, you know, with children, it's a great chance to have them along, to show them a wee bit what it is that we do and to show them that they are very much welcome.

It's a family service focused on the family, an all-age service, hopefully something for all of us as we come to God's word and followed by the Sunday School prize giving.

Again, good to support the boys and the girls for all of our hard work this year. We're here to praise the Lord. Let's once more sing to his holy name. First of all, from Sing Psalms, Psalm 27, on page 31.

I can sing verses 1 down to verse 5. You'll note that all the Psalms this evening have a theme of finding our safety and our comfort and our rest in God. Sing Psalms, Psalm 27.

The Lord's my Saviour and my Light, who will make me dismayed. The Lord's a stronghold of my life. Why should I be afraid? Psalm 27, verses 1 to 5.

[2 : 3 4] To God's praise. The Lord's my Saviour and my Light, who will make me dismayed.

The Lord's a stronghold of my life. Why should I be afraid?

When He will do our strength in me to take my life away.

My God's mercy on my course. My God's mercy on my course will someday in the day.

Although I am in the day. Although I am in the day. My heart will feel no pain.

[3 : 4 8] Though more I can see with God's eyes, I will lift up my hand.

One thing I'll lift before the Lord, and this I'll see the rest.

That I will lift up my hand. That I will lift up my hand. And this I will lift up my hand. That I will lift up my hand. Lord's house, and dwell there all my years.

That on the beauty of the Lord, I constantly may hear.

And from an... I will lift after your hand. In a state of power, He will use the mercy on me. And as I will tear down my voice.

[4 : 57] Com'eritism now? Your arms are revered themselves. All in this wedding he will leave me safe in troubled days.

Within his hand he'll check the me and on the home he raised.

Let's join together in a word of prayer. Lord our God as we come before you once more this afternoon we come before you with these words of praise in our lips.

As we sing that you are the God who keeps your people safe. We come which now we ask that that would be the case for us this evening. We would fully understand and fully know and comprehend in a real sense that you are a God who keeps your people.

You are a God who looks after your people. You are a God who cares intimately and individually for your people. Your people as we find ourselves here this evening.

[6 : 16] Your people as we find ourselves so different and so mixed. Even our own lives we confess that we find ourselves so changeable from day to day at times.

From hour to hour. We come just now confessing that we perhaps are here this evening as your people and we are strong in our faith. We come here this evening and we find ourselves emboldened and happy with where we stand before you.

For others here this evening we come before you and we admit that we are not as we should be. Our faith is not as great as it once was.

Our trust and our strength is not what it once was but we carry on regardless. For others this evening we come just now and we come knowing that if you are not holding on to us then we'd have no hope at all.

We come confessing and pleading the fact we have no strength. We have nothing left in us. We come here this evening knowing that we only carry on because you keep us.

[7 : 18] Because you hold on to us. Because you promise to never let us go. We come this evening as your people with strong faith and with weak faith. Lord with full confidence and with little confidence.

With full assurance and with less than full assurance. We come this evening as your people. Singing the same words to the same God. Who loves your people and keeps your people just the same.

You are the God who is the rock of confidence and the rock of assurance. When the waves of this world batter up against that rock. The tides turn of popular thought.

When the questions of this secular age seem to take away and take away and take away at all times. We give you praise. We find ourselves founded and placed on the rock that is our Lord and Saviour.

We know that we will not be moved. When all around us is being shifted and changed. When the ground itself feels as if it's giving way beneath our feet. We find ourselves secure on Jesus.

[8 : 24] Yes we feel the wind and the waves. Yes we can hear them. Yes at times we fear it. But ultimately we give you praise that you keep your people safe. We pray just now Lord for those here.

When outwardly we are doing well. Outwardly Lord they present as being okay. But in their hearts and their minds they have drifted from you. Those who know you and those who love you. But who have drifted.

Their love has grown cold for you. They have wandered away from Jesus. As it were their first love. Lord we pray just now for those here this evening who are feeling emboldened in their faith.

Those who feel strong in their faith. Lord encourage them. Help them to serve you well in this day and in this time and in this place. We pray once more for our friends here this evening who as of yet don't know you.

As we prayed this morning we pray once more. Even this evening they have come to understand and come to know for themselves. That in you we find all their hope.

[9 : 27] In you we find full assurance. In you we can find for a pained heart and a grieving heart. Direction and peace and help and hope.

We do pray once more Lord for those who mourn amongst us. Or those who mourn recent loss. We ask you be with them and comfort them. Come alongside them just now.

We pray once more for those mourning loss of weeks and months and years. And at times perhaps decades ago. Again Lord we know that we mourn and we lose ones we love.

And we mourn them for years. We mourn them until the end. We mourn them and we know Lord that we mourn them because death is so unnatural to this world. We can sense it.

We know it is not right. We know it is not how it is supposed to be. We are a very created being although tainted by sin. It tells us we are not made. Not truly made to die.

[10 : 24] But with the entrance of sin into the world we know that death soon followed. We see that and we know that in the world around us. We pray Lord for our world.

Our wider world. We know that we prayed for every problem, every worry Lord. We are praying for mourning to night. That would be no bad task and no small thing.

But we pray just now especially focusing Lord on the various issues. We find just now in that great continent of Africa. Lord the places where we find and we hear of ongoing internal warfare.

Lord be there we ask. Lord as people group fight people group. Lord we ask you would be there. Be with your people in these situations. Lord Lord for the parts of that great continent which at this current moment are suffering so greatly from drought.

Lord as we see the ongoing ravage that causes to these poor suffering people. Lord we ask you be with them in that situation too. Lord we ask for those who seek to help.

[11 : 29] Lord we ask for those who seek to be a blessing to their nation. Lord you'd be with them. Remember our African brothers and sisters across that great continent.

Lord of various cultures and various communities. Lord various stories and various backgrounds. And so many various languages. And we think back to the history of our own church.

We know that almost all the church that we now know Lord. That it came from believers from that continent. As they spread out and as they shared the gospel news westward.

And then further north as time and on. Lord we give you praise. That in these days gone by your people. That they shared the gospel from that great continent. Lord we ask we again see days of gospel renewal.

And gospel revival for them. We pray the same once more for ourselves. Lord we ask we'd say days of renewal. Days of revival in this place. In this village.

[12 : 26] In this community. Lord we know we ask it knowing that we can do nothing. Lord we do wait. And we pray. Help us to be a people of prayer. With that singular mind.

That singular desire. We would see your name glorified in this place. See your name glorified in this community. Help us to have a spirit and have a heart.

For where you have placed us as salt and light. For you have placed us here as your ambassadors. Help us not to lay back and as a word do nothing. But help us to be zealous in your work.

Zealous in seeking to serve you in this place. Help that zeal to be gospel founded. And gospel based zeal. Help us to ask the question at all times. Lord how may I serve you here?

What can I do for your kingdom in this place, in this situation? We pray that for our families. For our loved ones. For those who are so close to us. And those who we love so dearly.

[13 : 24] Who as of yet show no gospel interest. Lord we ask you to work in their lives. Bring them to a saving knowledge of yourself we ask. Lord help us to do so at times with tears.

Help us not to neglect praying for them. We give you praise to your God who hears and who answers the prayers of your beloved people. We pray once more Lord for those who are not here this evening.

Those who we know long to be here more often than they can be. Those who miss times of worship with their brothers and sisters. Lord we ask you to be with them and comfort them.

Those who are ill. Those also who must work Lord from occasion to occasion Lord. Those who are doing important works of necessity. Of keeping Lord people safe.

And of keeping systems, important systems running. Lord we ask you to bless them. And they would know your blessing in the middle of their work. Help us be a congregation that seeks to grow together.

[14 : 23] A congregation that seeks to see your name praised. We thank you once more for the joy we had yesterday. Of joining with the children. And spending that time, these few hours together of fellowship.

A few hours together of enjoying your creation. You're a God who gives all good things. Including the gift Lord of joy and of fun. Thank you Lord for the children we have as a congregation.

Happy children. Happy to learn the gospel. Happy to sit under its teaching. Happy to engage in class work. Happy to ask the questions. Happy to grow in their understanding of who Jesus is.

We ask Lord even in their young days. They come to know and come to love him. Lord help us we ask this evening. We confess we come to this place. At times so burdened by sin.

We come to this place of worship. So reminded us to our own waywardness. So aware us to our own backsliding. But knowing that you're a God who keeps your people. And you promise never to let us go.

[15 : 24] Help us to lay hold on that promise. A God who forgives the sins. Of all your people. All your precious ones. Because of the work.

The finished work of our saviour. On that cross. It's to him Lord we ask these things. It's to his name only we cling. It's to his finished work. That we come to this evening. It's his name we praise.

All for his sake. Amen. Well let's read. Two short readings. In God's word. First of all the gospel of John. And chapter 10.

Gospel of John. And chapter 10. This well known section.

We can read verses 1. Down to verse 21. Of the chapter. John 10 verses 1 to 21.

[16 : 21] Let's again hear the word of God. Truly, truly, I say to you. He who does not enter the sheepfold by the door.

But climbs in by another way. That man is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door. Is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the gatekeeper opens.

The sheep hear his voice. And he calls his own sheep by name. And leads them out. When he has brought out all his own. He goes before them. And the sheep follow him.

For they know his voice. A stranger they will not follow. But they will flee from him. For they do not know the voice of strangers. This figure of speech Jesus used with them.

But they did not understand what he was saying to them. So Jesus again said to them. Truly, truly, I say to you. I am the door of the sheep.

[17 : 21] All who came before me are thieves and robbers. But the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door. If anyone enters by me. He will be saved and will go in and out.

And find pasture. The thief comes only to steal. And kill. And destroy. I came that they may have life. And have it abundantly.

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd. Who does not own the sheep. Sees the wolf coming.

And leaves the sheep. And flees. And the wolf snatches them. And scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand. And cares nothing for the sheep.

I am the good shepherd. I know my own. And my own know me. Just as the father knows me. And I know the father. And I lay down my life for the sheep.

[18 : 20] And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also. And they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock. One shepherd.

For this reason the father loves me. Because I lay down my life. That I may take it up again. No one takes it from me. But I lay it down of my own accord.

I have authority to lay it down. And I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my father. There was again a division among the Jews.

Because of these words. Many of them said he has a demon. And is insane. Why listen to him. Others said. These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon.

Can a demon open the eyes of the blind. Good praise to God for his holy. And his perfect word. Let's more sing to God's praise this time.

[19 : 15] From Psalm 138. Sing Psalms. And Psalm 138. And Psalm 138. Sing Psalms.

Psalm 138. Psalm 138. Psalm 138. Psalm 138. Psalm 138. It's on page 179 of the Blue Psalm book.

Sing Psalms. Psalm 138. We can sing verses 1 down to verse 6 of the Psalm. Psalm 138.

I praise you Lord of all my heart. Before the gods I'll sing your praise. I'll bow towards your holy place. And bless your holy name always. Psalm 138.

Verses 1 to 6. To God's praise. I'll bless you Lord of all my heart.

[20 : 15] Before the gods I'll sing your praise. I'll bow to God to holy place.

And bless you Lord of all my heart.

I'll bless you for good faithfulness. And bless you Lord of all my heart.

God's praise. I'll bless you Lord of all my heart. God's praise. I'll bless you Lord of all my heart.

And bless you Lord of all my heart. God's praise. The very day I'll bless you Lord of all my heart.

[21 : 21] God's praise. I'll bless you Lord of all my heart. Thank you Lord of all my heart. God's praise. I'll bless you Lord of all my heart. Amen.

Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh

Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Let's turn to God's word this time turning the book of psalms and psalm 23 Again that well-known chapter but Nonetheless a chapter full of the living word of God psalm 23 Let's read this one on psalm Once more let's again hear the word of God The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want He makes me lie down in green pastures He leads me beside still waters He restores my soul He leads me in the paths of righteousness For his name's sake

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 You prepare a table before me In the presence of my enemies In the presence of my enemies You anoint my head with oil My cup overflows Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life And I shall dwell In the house of the Lord Forever I shall say to this in last week I shall announce it last week But we'll take a four week Time away from first John To cover All being well Looking at this psalm Just very simply Very simply Now of course we come to this psalm Look at the Lord's prayer together Way back Before I was here with you officially And saying these are verses we know so well

And in one sense of course that's good The verses we bring back to mind But also the verses we know so well Are also often a danger for us too Because we do know them so well We can recite them so well We actually forget what's actually being said And we spend no time whatsoever actually pondering And listening to what God is saying to us through these verses The plan is for the family service Next Lord's Day in the morning We'll be looking at Jesus as Good Shepherd So hope is if we start this week We tie that in next week And carry on for a week or two We'll carry on then Come to an end of our first John short series That's the plan going forward So a few weeks Three or four weeks In this glorious psalm Now the truth is And we all know We could spend months Indeed years Going through this psalm The four weeks are only brief Not because there's a lack of content

[25 : 38] But quite the opposite Every phrase of a verse Gives us more and more To actually talk about it And look at We're only skimming as it were The vast ocean of Of what God is saying In this psalm And of course we know ourselves As we look at this psalm We are talking About none other than the Lord Jesus Christ Now we know that We understand that But perhaps we forget When this psalm was first penned When this psalm was first written By David Of course the Holy Spirit inspired him We know that But it's still David writing it He's not a robot He's not being controlled word for word The Holy Spirit uses men And he works through men And he works through David To write this psalm And David of course Writes this psalm as a shepherd A shepherd He writes this psalm as someone Who knows what it is He's talking about We know ourselves The history The life of David

He knew what it was To be a shepherd To be a good shepherd In fact we know that As far as he was concerned His whole life was to be A humble life Serving simply As a shepherd Until he was called And that's a story of course For a different day But until he was called To be king He had no word Of anything other Than serving With the father's flock Looking after his father's sheep He was a shepherd Through and through So he writes this psalm As one who knew Exactly what it was He was talking about And of course When we come to this psalm We see the voice Of a shepherd in David But also we know that This psalm As David penned this psalm He was writing down truths But he wouldn't have known The half of it Not the half of it And through the words of David We see the Holy Spirit Inspiring to write down truths That were so beyond

His shepherding abilities He of course talks about The shepherd of Israel Then we know of course That throughout the Old Testament God often describes himself As the shepherd of Israel He often used those kind of terms To describe just how he treated Israel As he led them As he guided them Often through great times Of distress for them Often through great times Of rebellion He is the shepherd Who leads his people His wayward people His disruptive people His at times Backsliding people But nonetheless He is the shepherd Who leads his people But of course We know this psalm Isn't just looking back It is of course A prophetic psalm Again David penned this Thinking of God A shepherd But as David wrote these words He is of course

Describing word for word So many years Before his arrival But he is describing Word for word The person And indeed the work Of one who would come From his lineage One who would be The final David The perfected David The ultimate final king Of his people Of course David is writing Here about the Lord Jesus Christ And that is one of the reasons We can only hope To skim the surface So we come to this psalm We are dealing with The person And the work of Jesus We are dealing with The full reality Of who Our eternal saviour is But it is a pastoral psalm It is not just wild Complicated Nonsensical theology No it is theology That should make our hearts Jump for joy For joy For a short time this evening He is looking at verses 1 Down to verse 3 Where we see the riches

We get from our shepherd We see the rest He gives us And we see that He truly gives us restoration We touched on parts of these verses before I know we are eating our short time together But just a fresh look this evening for us First of all we find Great riches In the shepherd Just taking it verse by verse And phrase by phrase The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want The Lord is my shepherd I won't make you answer out loud Don't worry but we have asked And answered this question before When we see Lord in capitals What is it?

[30 : 28] Capital L-O-R-D Yahweh isn't it? That is Yahweh Yahweh is my shepherd Yahweh Eternal God Covenant keeping Covenant making And covenant keeping God Eternal Unchanging God Indescribable Truly indescribable In all his ways And thoughts And plans He is God Before time For all time Time Time of an end No end No beginning Who needs nothing Who needs no one God Who formed the whole of creation By the word of his mouth God who sustains Every atom In his creation At this very second Every atom and molecule That makes up Everything we see and touch Every star Every star In every far flung galaxy Kept At this moment

In motion Sustained at this moment By Yahweh The God Who is truly God Who only true living God I am that I am I am I am who I am I am that I am He cannot be described By anything else Other than He is who he is He is a lone God And this Incomparable True living God Is the one that David says here Yahweh is my shepherd Shepherd Yahweh is my shepherd Yes He is exalted Yes He deserves Endless Angelic Glory And praise Yes He remains alone In all that he is

And all that he does Yes We should all be bound in Before him And not dare to lift our eyes For he is holy Holy Holy But also He is the one Who is the shepherd Of his people He did not remain Far away And distant He did not remain Untouchable In his holiness But rather of course In his holiness In his perfection He saw fit To come down He saw fit To call Himself One of us To take on The human flesh As the son Became incarnate Became like us Became like us In all ways Apart from sin The Lord is My shepherd Yahweh God Who is close To his people We see that more here He is my shepherd He is a personal shepherd

The good shepherd Is not just A good shepherd by name He is a good shepherd And how he shepherds Now congregation We all know that my knowledge And indeed my tolerance For sheep Is limited to zero But the truth is Even I know That a good crofter A good shepherd Needs to look after his sheep Needs to love his sheep Needs to care for his sheep He can be a crofter I am sure A shepherd And not care for them They can be a Well not really But in theory They could be a money making scheme For you if you wanted I am sure Somehow But a good crofter A good shepherd Actually cares for these creatures He actually at times Even perhaps loves these creatures He spends time And certainly We all know Spends a lot of money Looking after these creatures Why?

Because these sheep These sheep Which are so prone to illness And wandering These sheep Which will probably earn him If anything at all Then probably nothing but a loss For him In terms of monetary gain These sheep Are his sheep The crofter And crofters here You know it And you can say it honestly I can't You love your sheep You care for your sheep Yahweh The good shepherd The Lord Jesus Christ The good shepherd He is a personal shepherd Who cares personally For his beloved sheep A good shepherd A good shepherd A good shepherd Has to be close To his sheep A good shepherd Also knows his sheep As it were One By one Again we know this ourselves I said before In a different sermon But the same illustration When I see a sheep In a croft And I see We're talking to my uncle

[35 : 24] And I talk to his sheep And he says Oh that one there Has this problem And that one there Is prone to doing this That one there last year And that one over there Was bought two years ago And thinking They all look the exact same They all look the exact same As they just walk around In circles Chewing on the grass Thinking how does he see The difference to these animals But he knows every single one of them He bought them all And he knows them all And he can tell me all about Every single one of them Why?

Because he loves his sheep If that's true From that crofter From gravel And how much more true is that Of the true good shepherd Who as we said In the previous weeks Next door In the prayer meetings Who knew And who knows his sheep From before time itself Who set his eternal love On his sheep In eternity Who set himself To save his sheep In time and in space If that is true Then of course The good shepherd He knows And he loves his sheep And dear brother Dear sister This evening And I can say With David here Yahweh is my shepherd And because we can say that Because we can say Yahweh is my shepherd The eternal unchanging I am Is my shepherd We can also then say And affirm And believe The second half of the phrase here Because that is true

Then I shall not want I shall not want We want for many things Day by day Week by week Year by year We want many things We are in need of many things We would like to have many things We have many plans For ourselves as individuals As families As communities As congregations We have all these ideas And plans And wants And desires Some good Some bad perhaps But the truth is If we have him As our shepherd We shall never truly want The want There is not a superficial want We look before Again Way back now At the Lord's my shepherd The Lord's prayer And we saw that prayer For daily bread But there is no sin In praying

For the daily provision There is no sin As I were in praying For small things Day by day God is a God Who listens to small prayers As well as bigger prayers But here The want That he doesn't let his sheep have It is not a superficial want But it is a deep down want Because Yahweh is our shepherd Dear brother Dear sister We can say truly We shall never want We will never be lacking Not material things They come and they go We know that But in truth In the reality Of what we truly need to exist In salvation In his love In his mercy In his grace towards us We will never want Yahweh is my shepherd Because that is true As one who knows him And who loves him Who seeks to serve him And brothers and sisters This is us We can say Because that is true Even though life at times

Feels so empty Even though at times Life feels so complicated And so on and so on and so on And so on I Shall not want Why?

[39 : 07] Because he is my God Because my God is a good shepherd Who cares And who keeps My soul God is a God who gives riches to his people Not the riches this world looks at But through riches Which supply us Which keep us The Lord is my shepherd Yahweh is my shepherd And because of that I shall not want And how does this good shepherd treat His beloved sheep?

He makes me lie down in green pastures He leads me beside still waters He restores my soul He makes me lie down in green pastures He leads me beside still waters He gives us rest At times relocation But he gives us rest He makes me lie down in green pastures This feels almost silly saying this We all know this to be true We live in a world where there is no rest We live in a time and an age and a day We always have lived in a time and age and a day The Lord's people have always lived in a time and age and a day Where there is no rest There is no peace There is always stress There is always worry There is always anxiety There is always the next thing coming up There is always the next problem There is always the next problem

There is always the next worry At times these are genuine things We have our own health worries Perhaps we have family worries And money worries Our various worries about loved ones and close ones to us They are genuine worries At times we feel as if our mind can get no rest whatsoever And for the Christians It is no different It is no different Christians and non-Christians alike We both all deal and struggle through often the exact same worries The exact same symptoms The exact same stresses of life And all that entails What is the difference?

What is the difference? We find the difference here In verse 2 Dear brother, dear sister The truth is I truly don't know what you have gone through this past week And none of us know what we will face this week What is heavy on your heart last week What caused you so much pain last week Indeed what lies ahead of you and I this week What will come up in front of us And cause us to be miserable To cry To cry out To plead Whatever We don't know Whatever we have faced Whatever we will face We come to verse 2 The first phrase of verse 2 We see the promise of the good shepherd towards his people He makes me lie down in green pastures Now the make there It is in one sense just how it sounds But also it's not as aggressive

We hear make and we imagine Something perhaps forceful taking place But no Think yourself of a croft or a shepherd How they have to handle their sheep sometimes The sheep will just keep on and move around And the shepherd knows The crofter knows He is taking his sheep to somewhere Restful of it There is a croft up there There is a wee stream beside it There is nice green grass And the sheep have had a hard time of it The sheep have been stuck in a hard time There has been drought There has been no rain for weeks And the grass is drying up where they are And there is nothing but thorns And dry grass And there is no food left And the sheep are tired And they are a bit tetchy And the shepherd has to at times Forcibly move them From that croft To this nice green Fresh place The shepherd must often do so With force With the force of one who loves The sheep that he handles We are at times Quite happy to be stressed out

[43 : 30] We are quite happy to be ashamed To be doing things our way And going it alone And Christians This is us And we think That is not me What is isn't it?

Think back to the last year As far back as you can And think of all the times You have found yourself Deep in stress And deep in worry And how many times Have you gone to the Lord first Rather than going To yourself first Perhaps some of you are good at that And praise the Lord if you are We praise the Lord if you are But for many if not most of us We find ourselves Relying on our own strength first Even the older Christians here You have been journeying for many years But yet you find yourself Not even on purpose But relying on your own strength I can get through this thing I can do this thing I can work it out And you are tired And exhausted And the Lord Eventually doesn't he He takes you And he lovingly grabs you And he reminds you That in him And in him alone Do you find Green pastures

And the image is clear The image is clear The image is beautiful God takes us From the dry place To a place of Greenness Of freshness Of peace We can spend time And just sit And relax Spiritually just relax Dear brother, dear sisters If you are finding yourselves This evening If we are finding ourselves In a place of dryness A place of spiritual dryness Perhaps physical pain Spiritual pain Mental pain Have you genuinely Called out yet If the Lord Would take you from that place And bring you to a place Of green pastures If you haven't This evening is your reminder This evening is your chance Call the good shepherd Call out to him That he would take you To this place of green pastures This place where we find Still water He didn't just give us

As it were green pastures No, he then gives us rest The image here is a place of rest A place of A great fertility Where there is Unending green pastures A flowing river But there is peace here At least for a while He has given us He has given us Brothers and sisters He has given us As it were All the tools we need To find this rest He has given us His word Whereby we can hear His word talking to us He has given us A gift of prayer Whereby we can lift up our voices Publicly, privately, quietly In words In sounds In times In tears Sobs if need be In no words at all In just groanings of our heart We can cry out To the Lord Who hears his people We can read his word We can hear him Speak to us We can then speak back to him

In our prayers He has given us a gift of fellowship Of brothers and sisters To worship alongside To come alongside In times of trouble In times of strain In times of stress He has given us These great gifts To bless his people It's when we don't make use of them That we find ourselves In times of dryness In times of great struggle In times of great suffering We live in a world Where there is so much tumult Where the waves of secularism Of secularism And the waves of Of just pure unbelief And pure It seems at times Gospel hatred Just batter us Again And again And again And we find In contrast to the The gusts and gales Of the evil of this world We find the still waters That he promises us

[47 : 49] As we heard a few weeks ago Water that flows As it were From the throne of God Water that reassures us That he will keep looking after us Day after day Time without end Dear brother dear sister This is the good shepherd He saw you Wandering out in the moors He called you his own He took you into the fold If you find yourself this evening The thirsting for more If you find yourself this evening Wondering why your Spiritual life perhaps Feels so dry He has given the gifts He has given you the gift Of green pastures And flowing waters You have to take it up The gift is there His word And prayer And community together His word Prayer And his people But ever And sisters He has given it to us To make full use of

To make sure We are not neglecting Any of them In verse 3 we see Finally he gives Restoration He gives restoration He restores my soul He leads me in paths Of righteousness For his name's sake He is a God Who restores his people His people We saw that We saw that When we start off At our time At this new ministry Looking at the account Of Jonah Didn't we We saw that God is a God Who restores Even the wandering prophet Even the most Useless examples Of prophet God restores Jonah He gives him as a word That second chance God is a God Who restores his people He restores my soul He leads me in paths Of righteousness For his name's sake There's two Very briefly two Understandings of course

Of the word restore There He restores my soul We have in one sense Of course what Us Christians Will know ourselves In our journey He gives us that Renewing Again and again When we say Lord I can't do it anymore Lord I can't do it I'm so weak I can't understand This situation This providence I feel myself Just going away I can't do it He restores the soul Of his people There's also The other sense Of restoration And here Just a brief word As we come to a conclusion A brief word To friends here Friends He is the good shepherd Who restores souls Who brings Wandering sheep Back to himself And again My knowledge And my time

And my care for sheep Might be limited But I have spent Plenty of years And plenty of weeks And plenty of weekends And evenings Looking after the creatures And I have seen Plenty of sheep Get lost out in the moor And I have seen sheep Get ridiculously far out Into the moor And I have seen them Again situations Out in the moor We manage to find The one thorn bush Left in the moor Stuck in the one bog In that area The one bit of rusty fence And there they are In a complete mess In the bog In the fence In the moor Full of ticks Full of everything Their last breath And I have seen And I have seen The crofter Go out And spend Hours If not days Trying to find This one Wandering sheep Why?

To restore that sheep To cut off The thorn of the wire To drag it out The bog To drag it back To the fold To drag it back To the croft To give it some TLC To give it some time And some space To give it some care And some love To focus all their attention On it Why?

[52 : 01] Because the good shepherd Loves his sheep Dear friends You are here this evening And you think Well I have come here every evening For the last 10, 20, 30, 40 years Of my life That's why I am here No, you are here once more To hear the word of God Not my words I will come and I will go Every minister will come And they will go The word of God The word of God Will not go The Lord restores The souls of those Who come to him You have not wandered too far You are not a bog That's too deep You are not too trapped up In barbed wire Or thorns To somehow Be beyond saving The good shepherd Who restores his people Will restore you too The Christians here this evening That we are living examples Of restored wandering sheep We were all as aware Once out in the moor We were all as aware

Once out somewhere Doing something we shouldn't be doing Living life we shouldn't be leading And now we find ourselves here And yes you think Well yes but you Christians You Christians often still find yourselves Wondering and doing things you shouldn't be doing Yes we do And to our shame as Christians We often do Say things And do things And think things Which are not becoming Of his sheep The glorious truth is When the shepherd has his sheep Even when you try and find A way through the fence And go off wandering again He will bring you home again And again He is the good shepherd Dear friends this evening Come to the good shepherd Who restores your soul Who promises to lead you In the path of righteousness Not your own self-righteousness Not your historical self-righteousness That bases itself in Your Christian lineage And heritage Which for all the glorious things about it

Mean nothing When it comes to the final day You can't quote your great grandfathers And your fathers You can't quote your godliness It means nothing To get you into heaven Nothing Your church attendance of many years And we love you here And we praise the Lord And we do genuinely praise the Lord You're here But your many years of church attendance Does not buy you away into this fold You only come into the fold of God As we read in John 10 By knowing And believing in And following the good shepherd Only one way in Only one door You either enter it by Jesus Or you never enter it at all If you enter it by Him He loves you He promises to keep you To lead you by still waters And to restore your soul Why?

All for His name's sake Because He's a God Who is worthy of glory Who will not have His name sullied by anything And He will keep His name glorious By saving a people Who deserve nothing else Who don't deserve to be saved Yet He saves them He shows His love towards them That is the truth That is the truth of a good shepherd Who gives rest and restoration To His beloved people Let's bow our heads now A word of prayer Lord God we thank you for the great truth from your word We have heard for a short time this evening We come to you The good shepherd Who shepherds your people Who cares for them Who brings the wandering sheep home Who restores the souls of your lost people And bring them back to health Lord we ask that be the case That be the story That be the testimony of some even here this evening

This evening they would hear the call of a shepherd Telling them to come home They would hear the shepherd following after them In the moorland they find themselves in They would hear him shout to Troodachi And they would follow that call home And follow him back to the field They would find restoration Find peace for their souls Find joy and find eternal hope We pray Lord once more For the flock here in North Tolstead Pray for ourselves Lord As a gathering of your sheep We thank you You're the good shepherd Who cares for us Who keeps us, looks after us Help us we ask As we come to sing our final item of praise We do so of hearts and minds Full of understanding And truly full of praise As God always sings in and through and for Jesus' precious name's sake Amen We sing from Scottish Psalter Scottish Psalter And Psalm 18

[57 : 07] Scottish Psalter And Psalm 18 Scottish Psalter And Psalm 18 We sing from verse 23 We sing from verse 23 of the Psalms That's on page 220 Scottish Psalter Psalm 18 On page 220 We sing verses 23 down to verse 28 Sincere before him was my heart With him upright was I And watchfully I kept myself from mine iniquity After my righteousness the Lord Have recompensed me After the cleanness of my hands Appearing in his eye Psalm 18 verses 23 to verse 28 To God's praise To God's praise Sincere before him was my heart

Within the pride was I And watchfully I kept myself from my iniquity After my righteousness the Lord Have recompensed me After the cleanness of my hands Appearing in his eye Thou gracious to the gracious heart

To the upright men of right Pure to the good Thou ■■■ Thou custer Thou custer Thou c ■est And till Thou Reporting Why O'er thou Seated Thou c toca What do Thou cus Ard Won't be The defrapt That who No To Light Thou walt That will bring down the countenance of them which will survive.

The Lord will light my candle so that it shall shine for light.

The Lord my God will also give my darkness to be light.

[60 : 44] In the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, both you now and forevermore. Amen.