

GRACE—God's invitation to a sparkling way of life!

"(v.1) The Lord is my shepherd; I have all I need.
(v.2) He lets me rest in green meadows; he leads
me beside peaceful streams. (v.3a) He
renews my strength."

I lack ***nothing!***
This means-→ I am ***settled!***

"(v.3b) He guides me along right paths,
bringing honor to his name."

The Lord guides by ***rescuing*** his
people from sin, bringing them back
to himself. Confession is about our
being healed and ***changed!***

"(v.4) Even when I walk through the darkest
valley, I will not be afraid, for you are
close beside me. Your rod and your staff
protect and comfort me."

Paul calls this "the peace. . .which
transcends all understanding". The
peace comes, at least in part, from
realizing that I am not a ***victim***
any more. I am not trapped. God
will strongly support me through
anything. This peace lasts!

"(v.5) You prepare a feast for me in the
presence of my enemies. You honor
me by anointing my head with oil. My
cup overflows with blessings."

A feast demonstrates the Lord's care
and mercy toward his people.
Although ***enemies*** can watch,
they cannot trouble the guests.
Anointing the head with oil showed
guests honor, hospitality, and
refreshment.

Reflections . . . on verse 5

- What keeps me from joy is often a preoccupation with myself and my own little agenda.
- The problem with people, according to Jesus, is not that we are too happy for God's taste; it is that we are not happy enough.
- Joy in this world is most always joy in spite of something.

"(v.6a) *Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life,*"

(**Answer**) as the Holy Spirit leads you)

How many of us are truly convinced that no matter what occurs in our lives we are being followed by goodness and mercy?

Do I leave goodness and mercy behind me as a legacy to others, wherever I go?

Do I see other sinners with the compassion of Christ or with the critical eye of judgment?

The man or woman who knows firsthand about the goodness and mercy of God in his or her own life will be warm and affectionate with goodness and mercy to others.

"(v.6b) *and I will live in the house of the Lord forever.*"

My Question for God

How does God feel about me when I'm a jerk?

Can anything separate us from the love Christ has for us?

"So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus!"—Romans 8:1

Christ followers do not need to fear that they will be condemned for their sins.

"And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate me from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love.

No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 8:38-39

AMEN!