

Psalm 23:1

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

Oh how we love Psalm 23. It's only 6 verses long and most can pretty much quote it word for word. But have we realized that in order for "*The LORD (to be) is my Shepherd.*" He first has to be the Lord of our life.

The next two verses in this Psalm say that:

† **Psalm 23:2-3** *He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.*

"He makes me"

"He leads me"

In order for God to do this in our lives, we need to allow Him to "makes us" and "Lead us" if we don't, then He is not truly Lord or the Shepherd of our lives.

But think of this, how many non-Christians, can actually quote Psalm 23 word for word, or know it so much so that when you say that first line "*The Lord is my Shepherd*". Since they know it so well, they will immediately add "*I shall not want*" because they know that this is a Psalm from the bible and may even know that it is **Psalm 23**.

But memorizing this Psalm does not save them, just as memorizing or saying what they call "The Lord's prayer" does not save them. We watch movies or TV shows, and when a plane is going down, ready to crash, or a gun is at someone's head and they are ready to die, they start saying the Lord's prayer. It's like the world (and Hollywood) has this idea that by quoting this prayer that you are, or that you will be saved. But I do not read anywhere in the scripture that Jesus told us; Okay guys, if you can memorize or quote this example of how to pray word for word, you will be saved, or if you have heard and know Psalm 23 you can make your way into heaven.

Just thinking of these things, it goes to show us that anyone can memorize and even quote scripture, but that does not mean that they are saved. Just like memorizing a cookbook does not make you a chef, or reading the Newspaper does not make you a journalist.

But we also tend to "assume" that someone is saved because they can quote scripture or say those Christian words that we use. The religious leader quoted and memorized scripture, but they were not saved. Read that again and meditate on that fact. So you may ask, who then can be saved?

† **Matthew 19:25-26** *When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?" But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "**With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.**"*

But once again, memorizing and/or quoting scripture does not mean a person is saved. I love to make people laugh and I am the king of dad jokes. But that does not make me a comedian. Almost all people love music. And they play their music on their phones, on the car radio, etc.... but that does not make them musicians. Some think they are great singers when they are singing out loud in their cars by themselves or in the shower. But they know they will never be a great singer; with a voice everyone loves and that one day they will be a rock star.

Just as not only memorizing scripture will not make you a Christian, for if you memorize John 3:16 that will not save you. You must live, John 3:16 as well as John 3:15.

† **John 3:15-16** *that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

God gave His only begotten Son, Jesus, to save us. But you must also “**believe in Him**” doing what the word says. Once again, reading something does not mean you are a believer (**whoever believes in Him**) or a follower of what you read. Living shows that you believe it and it has changed your life.

† **James 2:14-20** *What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe--and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?*