

Good morning! Over the course of my life I have met many Christians who live in the fear that if they are not careful, they will miss God's guidance and in doing so, ruin their lives. They may even fear that they have already missed God's guidance and are now too far down the road to make up for their mistake. It is as though God were some kind of capricious, opportunistic deity who was just watching for the chance to wreck their lives. Are you one of those Christians---or are you confident that God will take care of you? All of us are flawed and broken; but can we trust God to get us through the minefield of this life? This morning, let's take a few moments together to consider a very familiar passage that can help us to trust God on our journey:

The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, [and] he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. **Psa. 23:1-3**

Do you recognize this passage? I'm sure you do. It is one of the most cherished passages in the Bible. The first part of the psalm tells us that "He leads me...He guides me." Do you believe that God leads and guides you through this life? Isaac Watts, the great 18th Century writer of more than 750 hymns, penned this line in the final verse of a hymn entitled "Join All the Glorious Names": "*I shall be safe, for Christ displays superior power, and guardian grace.*" Guardian grace---I like it! What Watts called guardian grace, theologian JI Packer calls *God's covenant care*. And what a wonderful gift this is! The psalmist then tells us that our great Shepherd leads us and guides us along our life's path "*for His name's sake*". He shows us His faithfulness and we honor Him for it by giving Him our thanks and our praise. As we come to the various forks in the road we should always thank and praise Him in advance, always seeking to stay close to Him and to please Him, not just to find some kind of personal success. When we approach God in this way we often discover that we have come to a clear understanding of where He wants to lead us. Why? Because we are following Him and not following our own way. Are you having to make some difficult decisions? Let me encourage you this morning to follow God closely and to give Him your thanks and praise now, before you have made your decision. God loves you and He will always take care of you. Live confidently today and every day... in God's guardian grace!