

For His Name's Sake

PSLAM 23:3b (3) "He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake." NIV

My brothers and sisters, have you ever prayed and asked God to let you know answers to certain questions that might be troubling you in your life?

Questions like these, Dear Lord please show me your will for my life, or, Dear Lord let me know what direction I should go in my life and or Dear Lord ,I only want what you want. I just wish I knew what it is that you want for my life.

My brothers and sisters, I ask you again, have you ever prayed a prayer that sounded something like this? If you're anything like me the answer is yes. Am I right about it?

Because church today's scripture verses offer a powerful truth that I missed in spite of reading it many times. How often I had prayed for God's guidance and direction and yet still wanted my own way. The Lord forgives and has mercy upon me.

So, I have broken the verse down into three parts to better grasp the wisdom it contains. Are you with me on this? The three parts go like this; He guides me, in the paths of righteousness, and For His name's sake.

First, He guides us; as followers of Jesus Christ God, we want him to guide us. We only have to do it on our own for a little while to realize that we want him to guide us, because we are inept in finding the right way. That many of us have come to God after making our lives a real mess. What about you have you made your live a real mess? I sure have done it.

I think that we all have fallen down before God and ask for his forgiving love and mercy. WE have all ask him to show us a way out of the musk and mire that leads to hell.

If you are like me you have been grateful that someone else is lighting your pathway. That he is a lamp unto our feet and a light in our pathway.

I'm glad that Jesus is our Shepherd who guides us lovingly as his sheep. Yes! He leads and guides us to the ways of righteousness.

Second, in paths of righteousness; if God is leading us, we can truly trust the leader, that he will only direct our steps and direct us in paths that are righteous in his eyes.

My brothers and sisters, if we are tempted to walk down a path that we don't have peace about or that is contrary to his character and Word, then that is a red flag that the path is not the right one.

My brothers and sisters, we can be reassured and trust that he will not lead us down the wrong path or the wrong alley where danger lies. We just have to keep seeking His direction through prayer, godly counsel and His word. Yes! He leads us in the ways of righteousness.

Third, for His name's sake; to me the crux of this verse is contained in this phrase. Why does God guide us in paths of righteousness? Well, it is for His name's sake.

He wants the way we take to directly reflect on him, to bring him glory, not to bring us glory, to make his name famous, not our name famous. It's all about Him, not us, and sometimes we seem to forget that one great notion.

God through Jesus Christ wants to make our lives a living witness of his goodness, so that others are brought to him. For that reason, He will always direct us to make holy choices and not necessarily the easy choices or the fast lane choices.

If we will submit to him, we will find that He will guide us to make the right choices. Not because we are the best, but because He is the best, the righteous, and the Holiest.

But my brothers and sisters, living in this fallen world can challenge our faith in God's goodness. The pain and suffering that can result may cloud our vision and understanding of the Lord and tempt us to blame Him every time we have a problem.

We may also wonder why He doesn't relieve our hardships or fix the problem for us, by giving us what we want. But church

God always guides us in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. It Not our will, but His will be done.

Hear me church, I'm reminded of when Eve listened to the serpent's lies' and she began to doubt that the Lord had made the right choice in forbidding her to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. She wondered.

Why would He deprive her of wisdom and the enjoyment of food that looked so good and desirable, because He guides us in the path of righteousness?

I need to ask you, are not our thoughts sometimes like Eve's when we don't agree with our Father about what is best for us. Because my brothers and sisters from a human perspective, "good" refers to that which is enjoyable, comfortable, or profitable. But He guides us in paths of righteousness.

So, my brothers and sisters God has a much higher standard for us and is always working to achieve His purpose by developing a Christ-like character and attitude in us, his children, because He guides us in the path of righteousness always, for His name's sake.

My brothers and sisters behind every restriction or commandment from the Lord is his loving care for his children. He knows the tormenting consequences of sin having taken them upon himself on the Cross, and wants to deter the rebellious choices that will wreck our lives in refusing His will.

Because church we choose pain and trouble when we don't listen to his voice. He leads us in the path of righteousness for His name's sake.

My brothers and sisters, Eve learned through disobedience that God knows what is best for us. What a lesson, everyday we have an opportunity to discover God's goodness by listening to His voice, obeying his commandments and trusting his wisdom.

"For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future".

Jesus also, "promised to be with us even to the end of the world".

He will direct our paths even when we don't expect it.

The Bible tells us, "to walk by faith and not by sight". God doesn't always give us what we want. But He does give us himself.

Believing is certainty that He's laid out a path for us and that He goes before us on that path.