

Looking to the Future with Anticipation

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Your view of the past is quite crucial, because it affects your life in the present, and inevitably, your view of the future.

If your past has been chronically bad, you may have a tendency to believe things will always be bad, and you will look to your future with uneasiness and fear.

God assures us, however, that it does not have to be this way. He wants you to know that your past does not have to determine your future; your present leadership does. The beautiful Psalm 23 comes to a climax with a very powerful affirmation: "...I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

These are the confident words of a sheep satisfied with its lot in life. You would be happy too, if you were cared for as this sheep was.

The fact is that you are a well-led sheep, whether or not you know it, if you belong to God. How glad are you to belong to Jesus Christ? Do you feel so secure that you would never entertain thoughts of leaving? God wants your contentment and serenity to be so great that your life will show the clear advantage of being a member of His household.

Satan, a heartless sheep owner, cares not one bit about your welfare or your very soul. He rules over millions of discouraged, discontented hearts that long to be set free from his enslavement. One of his chief tactics is to instill fear of what the future may hold.

We fear the future because the enemy has convinced us that what awaits us is only frustration, harassment and poverty, ending in a terrible death. But as the Scripture says in Hebrews 2:14-15, "Because God's children are human beings - made of flesh and blood - Jesus also became flesh and blood by being born in human form. For only as a human being could He die, and only by dying could He break the power of the devil, who had the power of death. Only in this way could He deliver those who have lived all their lives as slaves to the fear of dying." (NLT)

Jesus, by His intervention with us, made it very clear that any sheep who follows Him will have abundant provision and protection. Listen closely to his heartening declaration in John 10:7-9, "...I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture." (NIV)

Is there anyone in your life who envies your walk with God? Do they see the benefits of being under God's leadership and control because you are a living example?

Sheep want to be in full view of their shepherd at all times. It is his consistent presence that gives them a sense of security and serenity. His presence guarantees several blessed benefits:

- No permanent lack
- Abundant provision
- No need for anxiety
- New paths to wonderful opportunities
- Safe surroundings
- Freedom from fear
- Deliverance from harassment
- Quietness and contentment

Always live with an awareness that God's presence with you guarantees the brightest of futures. All He asks of you is to be sensitive to Him and respond to the loving nudges He gives to your heart. In return He will make your life worthwhile. You will be glad to say with great anticipation, "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever!"