

## **Family Devotion Hour #1**

Family Devotion written by C.M. Gullerud

The Lord my pasture shall prepare  
And feed me with a shepherd's care  
His presence shall my wants supply  
And guard me with a watchful eye;  
My noon-day walks he shall attend  
And all my midnight hours defend. L.H. 368, Verse 1

### **Psalm 23**

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall lack nothing.

He makes me lie down in green pastures,  
he leads me beside quiet waters,  
he restores my soul.

He guides me in paths of righteousness  
for his name's sake.

Even though I walk  
through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I will fear no evil,  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff,  
they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies.

You anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and love will follow me  
all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord  
forever.

Dr. Martin Luther recommended that Christians ought to rehearse the message of the twenty-third Psalm every time they enter the doors of the church. This Psalm can also be said when members of the household sit down to join in the family devotion hour. They should remember to come as sheep to lie down in green pastures and to be led beside the still waters. Indeed, we all need to remember that we are weak and helpless and completely dependent for our safety upon Jesus, the Shepherd of our souls.

As we see how easily we fall into sin, we ought to realize and consider our great need to walk with Jesus all the way. We need the green grass, the still waters, the rod, the staff, the table, the oil, and the cup running over. In short, we need the Word of God himself found in the Bible through which all these things are renewed daily.

We need the sacraments through which all these things are given and confirmed to us. We need to live in a place where these blessings are administered to us and we need to be in a school where the Word of

**God reigns. Finally, we need to be in a family where the Word of God is held in honor.**

**Let us think on these things when we go to church, when we go in and out of the kitchen door, and when we go to bed at night. The Lord is my Shepherd . . . I shall lack nothing . . . he makes me to lie down. . . he leads me . . . he restores me . . . he walks with me . . . he prepares a table before me . . . he anoints my head . . . he protects me when I die . . . and he causes goodness and mercy to follow me to the end of the road.**

**I do not know the voice of a stranger and will not follow the coaxing of anyone but Jesus. But I know the voice of the Shepherd and will follow it. I follow it because I know that it brings me to the green pastures of forgiveness and to the still waters where my soul will be restored and where all my needs will be provided for.**

**Jesus is that Good Shepherd who brought me into his fold when I, like a sheep, had gone astray. Without him I was but a child of wrath and an enemy of God.**

The Shepherd reconciled me unto God with his blood. Daily he forgives my sins and watches over me so that no harm will come near. When I lay me down to sleep, he spreads his wings over me and shields me from alarm.

Though Satan would devour me, I know that this child of God will meet no harm. When the wolves howl and the lions roar, he drives them away. When I am sick, weak, and crippled, when I stumble and stagger and bruise my feet upon the stones, he picks me up and carries me on the shoulders of his grace and compassion.

He does not slumber or sleep but is a shade upon my right hand. The sun will not smite me by day or the moon by night. When I cry to him in the day of trouble, he hears me and delivers me.

When I plead to him for forgiveness, he pardons me abundantly and casts my sins behind his back and does not remember them.

When the time comes for this body to hasten to rest and to cast off the earthly garments of mortality,

then I will say: *“These I put off, and ponder how Christ will give me yonder, a robe of glorious majesty.”* This is the voice of the child of God. May we all say together: **“The LORD is my Shepherd; I shall lack nothing.”**  
**Amen**

**PRAYER:** Lord God, heavenly Father, who from your fatherly goodness has been mindful of us poor, miserable sinners and gave your beloved Son to be our Shepherd. This Shepherd not only nourishes us by his Word of forgiveness, but also defends us from sin, death, and the devil. We pray you to grant us the Holy Spirit, that even as our Shepherd knows us and helps us in every affliction, we also may know him. We also trust in him and seek his help and from the heart. We listen to and obey his voice alone. We ask this in Jesus' saving name. Amen