

## **Family Devotion Hour #2**

Family Devotion written by C.M. Gullerud

Green pastures before me,  
Which yet I have not seen;  
Bright skies will soon be o'er me,  
Where darkest clouds have been,  
My hope I cannot measure,  
My path to life is free,  
My Savior has my treasure,  
And he will walk with me.      L.H. 343, Verse 3

What was it that David, king and sovereign ruler, considered to be of the highest advantage to him? It was not his wealth, the strength of his troops, or the productiveness of the land. It was not the hope of an U.N. alliance with powerful neighbors or the prospect of putting all people on the same level of wealth and standing. It was not the vain thought that he might become a sort of world deliverer or Messiah. Had he followed the example of so many who profess the Christian religion today, he might have centered his thinking along those lines and devoted his best effort to the accomplishment of those goals.

But that which David considered to be his highest good was a privilege which he shared with the lowliest

and the poorest peasant in his realm – the privilege of living in a place where God’s Word was proclaimed and where the divine worship in the tabernacle was carried out in accordance with God’s will and command. It is of this grace and favor that David speaks of in the twenty-third Psalm.

In setting forth the wondrous privilege of worship, which was more important to him than the kingdom and the crown, David illustrates the benefits enjoyed by every child of God. This he does, not by drawing upon pictures from the royal household, but by seeking his illustrations from a simple shepherd’s life. He was well acquainted as a boy in Bethlehem with a shepherd’s life. As a boy he watched over the sheep in pastures. In these same pastures the angels would sing to the keepers of the flock on the day when Jesus was born: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.” Luke 2:14

Often afflicted, tried, broken, and troubled, David knew what it meant when a man is able to say “The LORD is my shepherd, I shall lack nothing.” There was no comfort, help, or consolation that could match that which is given by the Good Shepherd who leads his sheep and causes them to lie down in green pastures.

He does not lead them to the brown and dried up fields, where the spears of tender grass are nowhere to be seen. Instead, he leads them to the place where the sheep and lambs were safe to graze. Here the flock would lie down on the soft velvet carpet which God himself provides. Satisfied and fully content, they may rest under the protection of the kindly Shepherd's staff. They may close their eyes in sleep without fear of dangerous assault or violent intrusion upon their solitude.

All of us enjoy the wondrous blessings of the gospel preaching of forgiveness through Christ and the sacraments' rightful administration. We are walking safely and under a providence that never fails, even in life's most trying experiences. As we live and move and have our being in the midst of the proclamation of the Word which brings pardon, payment for every sin that has beset us and overtaken us, our every thought should be thankful for the favor which we enjoy through Christ this very day and hour.

Let us show by our life and by our attendance upon the Word and by our support of the work of the kingdom, that we devoutly and sincerely appreciate these benefits which we now enjoy. Let us learn to say with the Apostle

**Paul: “What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ – the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.” Philippians 3: 8-9 Amen.**

**PRAYER: Heavenly Father, God of grace, we thank you for the blessings of your Word, through which we are assured of forgiveness, life, and salvation through your Son, Jesus Christ. Grant that we may daily walk in the green pastures which bring us the many great gifts which you have provided for us. We ask you to lead our loved ones to these pastures and to keep them all in your gracious protection to the end. For Jesus' sake. Amen**