

*"He lets me rest in green meadows;
He leads me beside peaceful streams.
He renews my strength."*

PSALM 23:2-3





Psalm 23

HE PROVIDES REST

For some police wives bedtime is difficult. Whether it's worrying about your officer's safety, going to bed alone, Netflix enticing you to watch one more episode or the hormonal changes of the female body, getting into bed can be a challenge. A police wife might find herself wishing for more hours of the day, that her body would require less sleep or that her LEO didn't work graveyard shift. But sleep is good and making oneself lie down to rest is necessary. Sleep is critically important to rejuvenating and strengthening every part of a woman's body. The body needs downtime so you make yourself lie down to sleep.

Just like the physical body needs rest so does your soul because your soul is impacted by the challenges of the police wife life. Certainly, as a police wife, you are well aware that life isn't all butterflies and cupcakes. Most likely you've experienced several difficult situations by now. Maybe painful marriage strife, your LEO's job has left you raising kids alone or your family has endured loss, financial hardship or sickness and disease. Let's be honest. Hard times happen, and during difficulties your soul can become weary, tired, defeated or discouraged.

Thankfully, we are not on our own to fix our weary souls. If so, we'd look to worldly devices, material items or human wisdom for solutions only to find out they don't work. In Psalm 23, David paints a picture of the perfect answer to a weary soul. Like a shepherd provides green pastures and still waters for his sheep to rest, so God provides a place for you. After all, who is better equipped to take care of you than the Shepherd? The One who loves you beyond measure and knows your inner needs more than you do furnishes the green pastures and still waters that will satisfy your soul.

**SOUL NEED # 2: REST**

Traits: Lie down. Relax. Refresh.

Struggle: Don't lie down easily. Insist on staying active.

Truth: The Shepherd provides the place where rest is possible.

STRUGGLING TO LIE DOWN

REST is the first provision the Shepherd provides for His sheep. In our culture today it's easy to discount the importance of resting but rest refreshes the body and soul. However, sheep, like humans, do not lie down easily. Sheep have needs that must be met before lying down is possible. They require green pastures where there is safety, tranquility, nutrition and most importantly the presence of their shepherd. A good shepherd knows his flock must rest, so he lovingly makes them lie down by supplying all they need to relax. However, the "making" is not forceful. He brings the sheep to the green pasture but the sheep have to decide to partake. There are many reasons Christians do not enjoy the rest God gives...worry, fear, distractions, annoyances, unconfessed sin or a distant relationship with God. Any one of these can keep your soul from the rest it desperately desires.

1. Sheep need to be free of hunger and thirst before they can lie down and rest. What do you need to be free of so you can lie down at night to rest?

2. There are many reasons a person's soul becomes weary and restless. What is something that keeps your soul from resting?

EXAMINE CLOSELY

At the beginning of Psalm 23, David confidently declares, "*The LORD is my shepherd; I have everything I need*" (Psalm 23:1). The remainder of the Psalm supports why David lacks nothing. As you dig into the next section of Psalm 23 ask God to help you understand how He meets your needs so you can be as sure as David when you say, "*The LORD is my shepherd.*"

Look at the Scripture and answer the questions below.

"He lets me rest in green meadows; He leads me beside peaceful streams. He renews my strength..." Psalm 23:2-3 NLT

1. Underline any words that create a mental image. What pictures come to mind when you read this verse? Make notes below.
2. What human needs are represented in this verse?
3. Circle all the personal pronouns. Who are the personal pronouns referring to?
4. Put a box around the verbs. How do these verbs inform you about what is happening?
5. Summarize what you learned about the Shepherd.

GREEN PASTURES & PEACEFUL STREAMS

Psalm 23:2 is a beautiful depiction of sheep resting in green pastures near peaceful streams. It's the ideal place for sheep to be refreshed. Early in the morning when the grass is still wet with dew the shepherd leads his flock to eat and drink. They eat until their hunger is satisfied. Then, with a full tummy, the sheep are able to lie down and rest. A shepherd with a flock resting is a shepherd whose sheep are content because he has supplied their needs.

As you complete the remainder of the Explore section consider this: Are you satisfied in God's green pastures near His peaceful streams? Is your soul resting in the Shepherd's care or is your police wife soul restless, wandering and hungry?

3 WAYS THE SHEPHERD LEADS YOU TO REST: FAITH, FEED & TRUST

FAITH AND REST: God made the perfect place for your soul to find eternal rest and His name is Jesus. Through faith in Him your soul enters into God's green pastures. You can't earn, work for or buy peace with God. It simply must be accepted by faith. The soul can rest from working for salvation when it rests in the finished work of Christ on the cross. The world will say, "*Do more, get more, strive harder,*" but the Bible tells us Jesus is all we need.

6. What does a person need to do to find soul rest? Look up the verses below. Try to write your answer in one or two words.

- John 3:16

- John 5:24

- Romans 10:13

FEED & REST: Sometimes a lack of rest comes from a hungry soul. Just like the body needs food so does the deep inner part of you. Many police wives try to fill their empty souls with fleshly things like material items, accomplishments or over consuming social media, Netflix or ice cream. The result is a restless, uneasy and very unsatisfied soul. To satiate soul hunger the soul needs to feed on the Word of God.

7. What do you learn about food for your soul (God's Word) from the verses below? Draw a line to the correct answer.

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. Job 23:12 | With God's Word I'll never be hungry or thirsty |
| 2. Jeremiah 15:16 | again. |
| 3. Matthew 4:4 | More than daily bread, I treasure your words. |
| 4. John 6:35 | God's Words are my joy and my heart's delight. |
| | More than bread, I need the Word of God. |

TRUST & REST: A soul at rest doesn't mean a life without trials and hardship. Jesus said, "*Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world*" (John 16:33). During life's storms inner rest is possible by trusting in God's promises. When the soul is struggling with feeling alone, scared, lost or worried lying down to sleep can be a challenge. Comfort comes through relying on, and trusting in, God to follow through. God is faithful to keep His promises (Hebrews 10:23).

8. From these Scriptures what promises can you count on? Why does each promise give your soul rest?

- Deuteronomy 31:8

- Isaiah 40:31

- James 1:5

- I John 1:9

A soul resting in God's green pastures near His peaceful streams is one whose faith is in Jesus, who reads & feeds on the Word of God and who trusts in God's promises. The Shepherd has given you everything you need, but you must live in His provision.



A Soul at Rest

- Has faith in Jesus
- Reads & feeds on the Word of God
- Trusts in God's Promises

ACTS PRAYER

As you write your prayer consider what you have learned about Psalm 23.

Dear Lord,

Adoration

Give praise, honor, and glory to God for He is Lord over all.

I praise you because...

Confession

Repent, come clean and admit your sins, ask for forgiveness.

Forgive me for...

Thanksgiving

Recount your blessings & thank God for all He has done.

Thank you for...

Supplication

Make your requests, both for yourself and others. Ask God for what you need.

My requests are...

In Jesus' Name, Amen