

## **Soul Ownership! Part 1**

**"We know we were made for *so much more* than ordinary lives... It's time for us to *more than just survive*... We were made to *thrive!*"**

**Can there be a greater experience of the life God has given us than when we are wholly owned by Him?**

***"Into your word we're digging deep... to know our Father's heart!"***

**Last week...** No matter how we are affected by changing times we will NOT BE REDIRECTED! Going to move forward because of our attachment to Jesus/Overcomer! In fact, we will walk more worthy of our calling... **Eph 4.1 Col 1.10 1Thess 2.12, 2Thess 1.5, 11** *To leave a legacy of life changers... Because we have been set free to do it!*

**Last week... From a Bible study on freedom... Slid right into the topic of being wholly owned by God...** His "doulos," slave! *Having been slaves* to sin and unrighteousness we are now *slaves* to God and righteousness! "no longer to live the balance of our lives in the flesh to fulfill the lusts of men, but now to do the will of God." **1Pet 4.2**

The early disciples; Paul, John, James, Peter, (Epaphras) knew this to be true... And reveled in being known as the "wholly owned, bought off the block, *Slaves of God!*" **Hard topic for us!** Slavery! Don't want to think of being subjugated, subservient, even *submitted* to anyone... Although somehow okay w/drugs/ alcohol/ lust/ pornography/ self/ boy-girlfriend abuse. ***But being a slave to God, a perfect God, can only be a good thing because He cares perfectly for everything He owns!***

**Opened the topic of ownership with the greatest proof text of all... "The LORD is my Shepherd!"**

**Psalms 23** THE LORD is my *shepherd*, I shall not want! "I am the Good Shepherd and the Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep... and I know My sheep and they know Me!" **John 10.11,14** (The devil thought he could smite the shepherd and scatter the sheep) "But after I am risen *I will go before you!*" **Mk14.27** "As sheep going astray you are now returned to the Shepherd and Bishop (epi-skopos: overseer) of your souls. 1Pet2.25

The Creator in tender relationship with His creation, as *Shepherd!* **John10.11 1P2.25** As a Good Shepherd He came to seek and save the lost sheep! **Lk 19.10** He laid down His life for the sheep! **J19** And lives to gather them together again! **John 20 1Pet 2.25** Until then He has given us under-shepherds that He will judge! **Acts 20.28 Eph 4.11 Ez 34.2**

**We've established who He is... Now we must establish who we are...** *Sheep* who hear His voice, follow His lead, resorting on His right hand... Or *goats*, who butt heads with the Shepherd, listen to the voice of the stranger (Estranger) and stray away... Only when we are finally "weak" can we proclaim: the Lord is MY shepherd!

**What are we saying?** Not God saying, "This is My shepherd!" Not an angel proclaiming, "This is my/the/your Shepherd!" Not a prophetic voice proclaiming, "The Lord is a shepherd!" Or a Biblical promise: "will be your..." Prophetic command, "He is your..." David, an experienced brother, weak and needy like us, testifying: The Lord, He is MY SHEPHERD!

**And only when you can say, "He is MY shepherd," can you fearlessly cast all your care on Him, for He fully cares for you! When I am His and He wholly has me, there will be "nothing that I can lack" [lit] for the life He has laid out for me!**

**Ownership Asides...** We fear "slavery" because of abuses throughout history... We fear, distrusting the character of the "enslaver/despot/capricious..." We fear because we are so used to, "My family, money, stuff, time, rights, life..." And someone trying to take it away! But God would have to cease being God if He could do harm to weakest of us! He wants us to have "life abundant!" But it only comes by "**Soul Ownership!**"

**Can there possibly be a more free feeling of life than when you own nothing, nothing owns you and you are owned by God? Yes, one more level of freedom is available to those who are wholly owned!**

**The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want!** It would be easy to spiritualize this as, "As long as I have Him I have all I need!" True, but we rarely state that "as truth!" Easily conclude, "I have Him as shepherd, who knows what I need, He will provide!" "God will supply all my needs..." Could arrive: As long as I am with Him my needs and desires will be changed... "Gives me the (new) desires of my heart!"

But what if we understood the HB implication to mean; no lack, no failure, no lessening, no decrease, no reversals? We understand, "What you meant for evil God used for good!" **Gen 50.20** "God added to Job twice as much as he lost!" **Job 42.10** "And we know that God works all things together for good for those who love Him and are called according to His purpose!" **Rom 8.28**

But if we believed this word... would we be willing to readjust our thinking? Would we *rethink* our commitment to complete submission? And it meant you still weren't perfect! Would we be willing to *reassess* the past and be free of the pain?

**Yes, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death...** And if He leads us there, being with us, it's only a stage/phase/passing instruction... All is not mountaintop views and chalet living for the ones called to His care! Many times Divine ownership of our lives means valley's and shadows of death! Not that we wouldn't face them on our own... *just alone...* **Not just because world is broken!**

**Many times He takes us there to observe...** Can you see what's happening here, can you learn from someone else's pain? How do you feel there? Satisfaction? Judgment? Justice? Compassion? Pastoral care? Really good place to answer: Please, tell me what I am seeing here!

**Sometimes He takes us there to keep us from the illusion of invincibility!** So many folks think they are stronger than they really are... Not until we are tested do we understand our need to be wholly owned/ kept/ loved/ protected... Medical issues/accidents/events/ circumstances...

**Sometimes He takes us there for the sake of someone else in our future!** "He is a chosen vessel (selected implement) for Me... I will show him the great things he must suffer for My name's sake!" **A9.15,16 2Cor 6.4-10 11.23-30 12.7-15** Would you? Be willing to suffer a while? "to change, resolutely turn, strengthen and confirm, and build on you?" **1P5.10**

**Paths of righteousness... Always the safest path, whether up or down, with Him there!** "If you suffer for disobedience sake, no reward, but if you suffer for obedience sake, rewardable!" Jesus to Calvary's road... Paul, to a pathway that led to resurrection highs and perils on land and sea/enemies and friends!

Thru the valley of the shadow of death doesn't just mean *funeral marches!* Can be the right side of the guard rail of danger and suffering or weakness... Or totally off the beaten path... On the path or hanging out over the edge, as long as the Righteous One is with you, you are okay! **Not all believers have the same path...but they all converge with HIM!**