

# .†.is my Shepherd

*The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.*



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## **HIS MYSTERIOUS WAYS**

**M**y very first assignment as a minister was to an inner-city parish in Camden, New Jersey. There was drug dealing and violent crime within sight of our home, and rough characters knocked on our door at all hours of the day and night.

Not long after we arrived, I had to attend a week-long church conference out of town. I dreaded leaving my wife and three children alone in our new neighborhood. **God**, I prayed, *take care of them.*

My first spare moment at the conference, I called home to make sure all was well. My wife assured me that everything was fine and that no one had bothered them. *"But there is one thing,"* she said. *"You had barely gotten out the door when a huge black Labrador retriever ambled up to our front porch and lay down. Now he won't leave."*

*"Don't feed him or touch him,"* I said. *"He's probably one of our neighbor's. He'll go back where he belongs soon enough."*

The next day when I called, the dog still hadn't left the front porch. *"He never bothers the children or me, but he won't let anyone else come to the door,"* my wife said. *"Not even the mailman!"*

At the end of the conference, I returned home to find the big black dog sitting on our front porch. He stood up when I opened the car door, his eyes trained on my every move.

Once I reached the steps, I said tentatively, *"Hey boy, I've got to get in the house to be with my family."* With that, he stepped aside.

After hugging my wife and kids, I asked what we should do about the dog. *"I don't know,"* she said. *"I have to admit, I felt completely safe knowing he was out there keeping watch."* We both looked to the porch. The dog was gone. I went outside and walked around the block-checking all the front porches. No sign of the big retriever! It was as if he had vanished off the face of the earth.

And perhaps he had.

Rev. John E. Troncale  
Forest, Virginia

## **REFLECTIONS** **HIS** **FOREVERMORE**

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(This story I wrote in June of 1997 about my father, I'm reprinting it now. My father died in a Nursing Home in Western Kansas. I was sorry to see him leave but glad to see him go...to his heavenly home. Hope you enjoy.)

**A**s I sat at my computer, I began to see that the printer was not working exactly as it should. I felt I knew what was wrong and unplugged it and did what I could to correct it.

As I ran another sheet of paper through, it was still doing the same thing. Once again I unplugged it and repeated the same procedure. This continued for probably five or six time of trying to correct it.

The computer is about 15 years old. That's about 104 in human years. I was frustrated. I depend on it so much. At the time I was listening to an old record of the Imperials. They were singing a song about healing, turning our lives over to Him living within the perimeters that are placed before us.

As I sat there, I bowed my head and asked Jesus to heal the computer, no begging, shouting or high element of emotion. Just simply, *"Jesus heal my computer. You know how much I rely on it as I serve you. Thank you."*

Well, you know the rest. The next sheet of paper went though the printer and was perfect. To be honest with you, it still doesn't spel very well but that's ok.

Have you ever considered that when we were saved, we were also healed? By His stripes we are healed. The greatest healing that you will ever experience occurred at the moment that He delivered you from your sin.

The perimeters that we live within are not found in obligation, but found in obedience. The Old Testament found us bound by law.

An illustration might be that of a dog with a chain around his neck. This chain is attached to a stake in the ground. The ten feet of chain is his life. **(cont)**

is my shepherd is not affiliated with any church or religious belief.

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(CONTINUED) his perimeter. The length of the chain determines his freedom.

The owner comes and allows another ten feet of chain. Now, twenty feet of chain increases his freedom; but he is still in bondage. The master comes, taking the chain off and giving freedom, but more importantly, removing the bondage that has held us captive. Healed, freed, walking with Him, feeling His hand upon our spiritual shoulder, we experience the freedom of salvation. His forevermore!!

The greatest example of healing that I have ever witnessed was when my father was saved. More than fifty years had gone by and my dad had never stepped inside of a church as far as I know.

That Sunday morning as the rest of us were getting ready for church, my dad walked into the front room dressed in a suit. I didn't even know he owned one, but there he was. I quickly asked my mom what was going on with dad. She just said that he had decided to go to church with us today.

As we sat in church, Pastor Lewis was closing his sermon when he asked the congregation to stand. At the time I was about twelve, standing next to mom and next to her was my dad. Pastor Lewis invited anyone that might want to come to the altar to step out. I saw my dad's big rough hand reach over and take my mom's hand and they stepped out into the aisle and bowed at the altar. That Sunday morning in Garden City, Kansas my dad was healed, saved to the uttermost after living in sin for over fifty years.

He has never stopped to look back and, now in his early 90's he awaits the return of his Healer, his Saviour, his Sanctifier, his Lord and Master.

Thank you, Daddy for giving me your life to lean on all these years. As I am now the same age that you were when you said yes to Jesus. I follow in your footsteps. And now your sons, your daughter, our families and Mom – we will all share in the prize together when we hear Him say, *“Welcome home, thou good and faithful servant.”*

I know God's healing touch is found in many ways, from my computer to my dad's salvation. It knows no limitations. He can heal an aching heart, a troubled marriage, your body, heart and soul. All you have to do is ask...anytime.

Stan Manley-editor

**MISSION STATEMENT:  
TO ENCOURAGE THE FAITHFUL  
TO SAVE THE LOST**



**FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD  
THAT HE GAVE HIS ONE AND ONLY  
SON, THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVES  
IN HIM SHALL NOT PERISH BUT HAVE  
ETERNAL LIFE. JOHN 3:16**



**IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY, DO IT TODAY.**

## **I ONLY YESTERDAY**

I don't know what tomorrow holds, but I do know this: Because of the cross I'll be doing much better than I deserve. That's why, for the rest of my life, I want only to move deeper into the wonderful mystery of God's love for me.

The gospel isn't just for unbelievers. It's for Christians, too. *“Every day of our Christian experience,”* writes Jerry Bridges, *“should be a day of relating to God on the basis of His grace alone. We are not only saved by grace, but we also live by grace every day.”*

This is why the gospel is truly the main thing. This is why it should always be at the center of our lives.

So even though this little book is over, don't put its precious truth on the shelf. May the truth that saved you always be the dearest truth of your life. As Martin Luther reportedly said, *“I feel as if Jesus had died only yesterday.”* May the reality of Christ's death for you be that near your heart.

Never move on from it.

Jesus died for your sins. May your every day be lived by His grace alone. May you know the joy and peace of the cross-centered life.

The Cross Centered Life

C. J. Mahaney

## **HUMOR**

Going out to meet trouble always proves to be one of life's shortest walks.

The worst part of doing nothing is that you can never take a day off.