

Published based on [What Does It Mean to Have Your Soul Restored? \(part 1\)](#)

What Does It Mean to Have Your Soul Restored? (part 1)



Psalm 23 lures us into a picture of calm and beauty. Green pastures. Still waters. Ahh. Makes this country girl want to kick off my shoes and dig my toes into the cool springtime grass. I imagine closing my eyes and lying back on the grassy land. I can almost hear the ever present symphony of birds tweeting, frogs croaking, crickets chirping, as the multitude of God's creation joins in the song.

And just about the time I feel I am beginning to connect with this calm picture, David slips in this phrase, "He restores my soul." Oh, yes, awesome, wonderful, restoration of my soul. Troubling, however, is the imagery that follows.

"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death..."

"I won't fear evil."

"Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me."

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

I don't know if you've ever noticed it, but these phrases seem juxtaposed to the peaceful beauty of the previously mentioned green pastures and still waters.

Are these two ideas connected in any way? And what does it mean anyway to have my soul restored? Is soul restoration needed by only a few or does everyone need it?

What is a soul?

Our soul could be described as our mind and emotions, our heart, character, and personality through which we encounter life and respond to it. Our soul has to do with depth, value, relatedness, and personal substance.

Life wounds our souls. All of our souls. No one gets through life unscathed.

Blazed into my mind is the emptiness and pain I saw in the young prostitutes eyes in Pattaya, Thailand. Their stories included elements of poverty, dysfunctional family systems, abuse, and bondage of all sorts.

Those of us who live so far removed from such realities can quickly tag these young women as having a soul that needs restored, and surely they do, but what about you? What about me? What is there in our life stories that has left us wounded, disillusioned, hurt, unwhole?

To enter into a process of restoration requires that we can begin to see and name the damage of our own souls.

The Holy Spirit is our change agent. He works in a myriad of ways. Many times, He works through others who can help us name the damage in our souls.

We often learn to use defense mechanisms such as denial, minimization, compartmentalization, rationalization, and other ways of coping, to avoid the truth of the damage in our own souls.

Yet God invites us into a process of restoration. Restoring what has been lost from His original design for all humanity, in general, and what has been lost in our hearts, specifically.

If God wants our souls restored, then we must be able to begin to give attention to what is happening in our souls. Our souls speak to us through their reactions. Depression, anxiety, remorse, inferiority, despair, addictions, dissatisfaction, anger... the soul speaks. Our problem is the ability and/or desire to listen.

When we open ourselves up to the work of God in our souls, we open our hearts wider than they have ever been before. Such opening is imperative to the restoration of our souls.

And as much as I hate it, pain and suffering are used (not caused) by God to open up our souls, allowing the pain to spill out, bringing us to the end of our neatly laid plans, bringing us to the failure of our ways of functioning, bringing the truth of the damage in our souls to the surface so that we can see it, name it, and enter into restoration.

Those valleys with the shadows of death, the presence of evil, God's rod and staff, the table in the presence of my enemies... these are not benign images. They evoke a scream inside of me, "NO! I don't want this path!" I feel like telling God that my soul is just fine the way it is, thank You very much.

But He invites me to walk through these places because it is in these confusing, dark, obscure places that I find the truth of who I am and who God wants me to be. In these formidable places, I am invited to find the truth of the condition of my soul and allow God to bring new levels of restoration to my soul.

I plan to write more on this topic this week so check back, but for today, what is the condition of your soul?

Are you willing to listen to what your soul is saying today?

What needs to be attended to?

What needs to be restored in your soul?

Take the next step on the journey. Perhaps you should pray a simple prayer asking God to help you to cooperate with the work of His Spirit. Ask Him to allow you to be able to name the damage then commit your heart to the process of restoration. God will be there as you walk through the valley, comforting and restoring.

It has been said that the path to your future is the next step. Will you take it?

You can also find this article published on [What Does It Mean to Have Your Soul Restored? \(part 1\)](#), and on the tag pages [Holy Spirit](#), [Psalm 23](#), [restoration](#), [soul](#), [truth](#).