

## **A WORD WITH YOU - By Ron Hutchcraft**

### **# 8439 / 5252 – “Why Your Big Bowl Suddenly Got Small”**

#### **Psalm 23:1**

May 16, 2019

Once upon a time, the Hutchcraft family had a very little fantail goldfish, and what did our daughter name him? Well, of course, Fanny. And the time came for Fanny’s murky old fishbowl water to get changed. Of course, he had to be in water while that was happening or he would have developed, shall we say, severe respiratory difficulties. So, we put Fanny into this cramped, tiny little bowl and we put it in the kitchen sink...poor little fish. He would try to swim as usual, and he just kept bumping into the sides of the bowl because the sides of the bowl came a lot sooner than usual! It really, obviously, was not fun being in that shrunken little environment, but hey, the purpose was to improve his world...right!

I’m Ron Hutchcraft and I want to have **A WORD WITH YOU** today about **“Why Your Big Bowl Suddenly Got Small.”**

If you think about the goldfish, frustrated in a world that suddenly got smaller, you might be able to see a picture of yourself and what God is doing all of this for.

Our word for today from the Word of God, Psalm 23:1, familiar words, describes some of the wonderful ways that God provides for us, and leads us, and restores us. You know these words, “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.” In Jesus, you have a Shepherd who knows exactly what you need and when you need it. Now here comes one of His methods for meeting your needs, “He makes me lie down in green pastures.” That part—that’s got a little sting in it, those words, “He makes me lie down.” Like I hadn’t planned to stop. I may not want to stop. “Hey, someone just hit the brakes! My world suddenly shrank!”

You could be in a time like that right now because of an injury, a change at work, a burden that’s been added to you that’s really slowed you down, or maybe a health setback, a financial setback, or maybe because of a closed door or a lost relationship. If you were a goldfish, you might be saying, “Hey, I was swimming along in a much bigger bowl. Why did my world suddenly get smaller?”

Here’s part of the answer in Psalm 23:3, “He restores my soul. He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.” God wants to restore your soul. He wants to give you specific guidance, and maybe neither one can happen as long as you’re swimming full speed in your fast-moving world. Our goldfish probably didn’t realize it, but we put him temporarily in a little bowl so we could improve his world. After his frustrating, but brief time in a little bowl, he returned to a better, brighter world in his big, clean bowl.

We're like that. For us to have the better perspective, the closer walk, the inner power that Jesus wants to give us - look, I've experienced it - He often has to slow us down and temporarily shrink our world. Years ago when my very active wife was bedridden for seven months recovering from hepatitis, here's what she said, "You know, God used this time to do something wonderful. He has cleansed my schedule." Hard process, but a liberating result. You know, that is often God's way.

He makes us lie down. He makes us slow down. He makes us quiet down so He can restore our beat-up soul that He could never restore at the pace we usually travel, and to give us some direction in our stressed-out mind. We can't hear His voice sometimes until He slows us down. Isn't it interesting that the Bible says, "Be still and know that I am God." So don't worry if you suddenly find yourself in a smaller bowl. God is calling you to a timeout so he can return you to a better and brighter world!

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