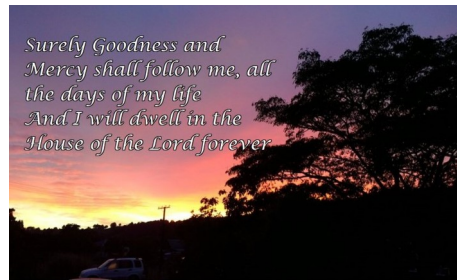


## Getting to Know our Pursuer

### Scriptures:

Psalm 23

Isaiah 30:18-21



**Annie**

One of my favourite family photos is one taken when our great grandson was barely 2 years old. It's a picture taken from behind them, of this wee man confidently striding through the paddock in his gumboots, with his Grandad holding one of his hands, and his Pop holding the other one. He clearly has no doubt that he will get to where they are going, he's safe, even if he stumbles over the big clumps of grass, Grandad and Pop are not going to let him fall over, or leave him behind.

Isn't that a wonderful metaphor for what David says in Psalm 23 "Goodness and Mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the House of the Lord forever." David knew exactly what walking with his God, who is Goodness and Mercy avidly watching over his every step, meant. The word that is translated as "follow", more appropriately means "pursue". David, better than most men, knew what it was to be pursued, he had been vigorously, unrelentingly pursued by enemies so often. So, what he intends to depict in this beautiful song of adoration to God, is that, he knows, God is doggedly at his side, keeping up with him wherever he goes. God will never leave him behind or lose sight of him on his journey to his eternal home in the glorious House of the Lord.

Over the past six weeks or so, my journey through life has been along a very different path. Because of a minor injury I had while we were on holiday in Australia, I went to my doctor who ordered an ultrasound that led to a biopsy, that led to a CT scan that revealed endometrioid cancer. I have just had a PET scan and am still awaiting the results of that to find out if there are any other rogue cancer cells floating around my body. During this time, I know without a shadow of doubt that God is, and has been, relentlessly, untiringly, intentionally and so lovingly pursuing me.

The twists and turns in this amazing journey never cease to astound me. If I hadn't had the injury, I would not have gone to the doctor; if the doctor had not followed a prompting to order the ultrasound that, she says, she had no idea why she requested, I would not have known I needed to see a specialist. If there had not been appointments inexplicably available at my very busy GP practice and at the overstretched hospital, the tests and scans would not have been done so rapidly. God's Goodness and Mercy are patently and beautifully obvious in every step that He is taking with me and my family along this unfamiliar and, honestly, sometimes a bit dark and scary path.

When I take a step back and view the tapestry God has woven over the past 75 years of my life, I can see, in wonderment and thankfulness, how He has crafted every step to bring me to this place. He formed me, He has known since before the dawn of time, what plans He has for me to know Him more deeply, for me to realise that He never leaves me, never loses sight of me and never gets shocked or fearful of what lies ahead of me. I am His precious

daughter, His warrior princess clad in His Armour, His Bride now and for all of eternity. To be pursued by the One True God, who is Goodness and Mercy, is a concept that fills me with awe and astonishment.

Just two days ago, I was in a lead lined room, having had an injection of radioactive sugar solution, seated in a luxuriously comfortable recliner chair, on my own for an hour while the solution travelled wherever it was meant to around my body. In that room I met my Abba Father in a way I have never experienced before. I knew beyond human understanding that God was with me, I may have looked, on the CCTV that was monitoring me, as if I was alone, but that could not have been further from the truth. The manifest presence of my Father, enfolded me, wrapped me in His Love. Those words from Isaiah describe so clearly what I was experiencing "you will hear a voice behind you, whispering in your ear 'this is the way, walk in it'." The gentle, confident voice of Holy Spirit filling me with a truly blessed assurance that, no matter what twists and turns my life's journey takes, I am never alone. God, who is perfect Goodness and Mercy, is pursuing me all the way, and I will dwell in His glorious home forever.

**Prayer:** Abba Father, in the words of the old hymn, "whatever my lot, You have taught me to say – it is well with my soul". May each soul joining in this prayer know Your Peace that is so beyond our understanding, Your Goodness and Your Mercy whatever their life's path to Glory with You may be. In Jesus beautiful Name, Amen.

