

Date: April 11, 2021

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Sermon Title: Jesus Says, "I Am The Good Shepherd".

Scripture: Psalm 23

Psalm 23 - A Psalm of David

Verse 1 - The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

The LORD IS MY SHEPHERD: I find it very interesting how King David relates to the LORD, (the God Almighty of the universe); as his personal shepherd, "my shepherd".

In the time of David, a shepherd was normally a position of employment forced upon the youngest boy in the family. Because of this, the job of being shepherd was considered the lowliest, and least prominent of any position of employment one could hold.

David humbles himself to an even lower position in this statement with the understanding that if God is LORD, then I must become as one of the lamb in His flock, and then and only then can David truly say, "**The LORD is my shepherd**".

Notice how David does not say, "The LORD is the shepherd of the world" or "The LORD is the shepherd of all mankind". David says, "**The LORD is my shepherd**", very personal and intimate.

Jesus says to us today...

"I AM the Good Shepherd and My sheep hear My voice".

But in order for God to become our Shepherd, (He must first be our Lord); and in order for God to be our Lord, He must first be our Savior, and there is only one Savior, and His name is Jesus Christ.

So if you do not know Jesus Christ as Savior today, we will give you an opportunity later to receive Him as your Savior and Lord.

But if the LORD is truly my shepherd, then I can trust that all of my needs will be provided for, completely and directly by Him, so that;

I SHALL NOT WANT: I shall not want means that all of my desires have been fully consumed by the LORD..., as my Shepherd.

Just as King David did, I should relate myself to the LORD as my Shepherd and I as His lamb. (I can do this by fully relying, and trusting upon Jesus Christ as my Good Shepherd). When I do, I will become a transformed human being. His desires become my desires. His thoughts, my thoughts, and His ways, become my ways.

As I realize the fact that, “The LORD is my Shepherd”, (how my Good Shepherd is actually Jesus Christ, Who is literally God Almighty knowing He created Me, and He knows me better than I know myself); then **“I shall not want”**; for I am content in Him.

Now I understand that all of my physical and spiritual needs are being fully and continually provided for by the LORD Jesus, who is my Good Shepherd. Jesus Christ Himself is caring for me. As long as I abide in Him, I do not stray away and my life is in His hands.

Philippians 4:19 the Apostle Paul tells us, “My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

Now look at verse 2

Verse 2 - He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.

HE MAKES ME LIE DOWN IN GREEN PASTURES:

Sheep are a strange animal in that it is nearly impossible for them to lie down unless the following four needs of the lamb are met:

- 1) A lamb must be free from all fear.
- 2) A lamb must free from any conflict with the other lambs.
- 3) A lamb must not be tormented by any pests. Flies or parasites.
- 4) A lamb must be free from hunger pangs.

As we examine the four needs of a natural lamb, we realize that it is all upon the Good Shepherd of our souls, (as a spiritual lamb of His flock); to accomplish fulfilling our four needs, in order for us to willfully lie down peaceably, to relax, finding rest and contentment

HE LEADS ME BESIDE THE STILL WATERS:

Sheep are very timid creatures. In fact an animal as small as a jackrabbit and frighten a whole heard of sheep into a stamped, and if the lead land runs off a cliff, the whole heard will follow if were not for the firm hand of the Good Shepherd. They are so timid that running water is to loud for them to drink peaceably. They need still water.

Sheep become very restless when they are thirsty. Without a good shepherd to lead them, one could wander off in search of water on his own, and if was not a pure source of water, then that lamb may contract parasites, or disease, or worse.

Jesus as the Good Shepherd said, “He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”

King David recognized that his spiritual Good Shepherd would always lead him to pure sources of still waters from above, where his soul could be now be fully restored.

Now look at verse 3

Verse 3 - He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.

HE RESTORES MY SOUL:

In Hebrew the words, 'Restores My Soul' can mean 'brings me to repentance'. The LORD my shepherd restores my soul by giving me hope and peace as I give Him my complete trust and repentance.

Psalm 42:11 King David writes,
“Why are you cast down, O my soul?”

A cast down is one who is stuck on his back and is vulnerable to attack or could be left there to die alone. Sheep are triangular and cannot get back up to his feet on his own strength, without the help of his loving shepherd.

This picture of our soul being cast down like a lamb, exactly why we cannot get back to God on our own merits.

Ephesians 2:8-9 says, “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”

**Because of the sin of Adam,
we are all spiritually cast-down at birth.**

In order to get back to our spiritual feet, to stand justified before God, we must be fully restored by the loving help the Good Shepherd Jesus, through complete repentance, and His complete forgiveness for our sin.

As a restored lamb, I choose to follow my Good Shepherd, by listening to His voice, and obeying His command, for I know that all His commands are for my good. **Only now I can be lead by Him...**

HE LEADS ME IN THE PATHS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS:

God will never tempt me. My Good Shepherd will never tease me, ridicule me, or lead me in the path of harm, evil, or sin.

He will lead me in the paths of righteousness, on the good paths of the fruit of the Spirit, **Galatians 5:22**, tells these paths are the paths of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. **Only now can the name of the Lord be fully magnified and glorified in my life.**

For He leads me in these paths FOR HIS NAMESAKE:

As I follow Jesus in the paths of His righteousness, then He is glorified in my life, and now He can boast in me as a faithful lamb.

Just like God boasted about Job to Satan, (in the Book of Job 1:8); as Job was one who followed in His paths of God's righteousness all the days of his life. May my Good Shepherd, the LORD Jesus Christ be glorified in my life as well as I follow Him.

Now let's look at verse 4

Verse 4 - Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

YEA, THOUGH I WALK THROUGH THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH:

**The shadow of a dog cannot bite;
the shadow of a sword cannot kill;
the shadow of death cannot destroy us.
So that I will fear no evil!**

I WILL FEAR NO EVIL; FOR YOU ARE WITH ME:

**The shepherd's presence does not eliminate the presence of evil,
but it certainly does eliminate the fear of evil.**

As I trust in the Lord and follow His leading, even shadows of death, or impending doom do not cause me to fear. Why, because...

YOUR ROD AND YOUR STAFF, THEY COMFORT ME:

Your Rod of correction, and your Staff of stability and protection, they comfort me!

Job 5:17 says, "Behold, happy is the man whom God corrects; Therefore do not despise the chastening of the Almighty."

**Will we allow the Lord to correct our wrongs today?
I believe we will, and when we do,
His comfort and peace will fall upon us in abundance.**

Now let's look at verse 5

Verse 5 - You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.

YOU PREPARE A TABLE BEFORE ME:

The good shepherd prepares the next grazing areas for his flock.

Just as God prepares a sermon through your pastor every church service. Meticulously the shepherd makes sure there are no poisonous weeds a lamb might eat and get sick on, (just like in preparing a sermon, a pastor makes sure there is no bad doctrine.

The Word of God what we as spiritual lambs must feast upon, and this brings us to the fact, that we do this in the open, we do not hide or practice our faith in the darkness. God reveals His light and love in their direct presence or our enemies.

IN THE PRESENCE OF MY ENEMIES:

Jesus says to us in Matthew 5:43-45, "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor' and 'hate your enemy.' **44** But I say to you, love your enemy and pray for those who persecute you, **45** so that you may be like your Father in heaven."

YOU ANOINT MY HEAD WITH OIL:

A lamb with fresh oil on his head would heal parasites, keep the flies away, and if two lambs should ever butt-heads, their heads would slip by one another, and cause each of them less harm.

Today, (our Good Shepherd the LORD Jesus); pours His abundant oil of gladness upon our heads to protect us, give us confidence in His care, and cause us to remember not to butt-heads with one another, but to love one another just as Christ loves us.

MY CUP RUNS OVER:

Luke 6:35 says, "Give and it will be given to you, press down, shaken together, and running over, for with the measure you give, it will be given back to you, If you give your life to God, His life will flow through you and over you in abundance.

Now finally let's look at verse 6

Verse 6 - Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.

SURELY GOODNESS AND MERCY SHALL FOLLOW ME:

As a shepherd himself, King David knew that any sheep with such a Good Shepherd as the LORD God almighty knows that he in in a position of privilege and blessing. Goodness and mercy follow the lamb who follows the Good Shepherd. If you are not showing any kind of goodness or mercy to others, they may call into question if you are truly following the Good Shepherd.

ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE:

King David was one who finished what he started. He did most everything in his life with excellence because God was with him and was working through him, blessing him with goodness and mercy.

Just like David, so we must trust in our Good Shepherd, the LORD Jesus today to sustain us and enable us to show goodness and mercy to others all the days of our lives, (just as we have been shown the same to us by God); allowing Him to works through our lives in excellence in all that we do, say, and think.

Philippians 1:6 says, "Be confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ." **Romans 8:28** says, "We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."

AND I WILL DWELL IN THE HHOUSE OF THE LORD FOREVER:

King Dave has just transcended from earth to heaven. He realizes that in following the Good Shepherd here on earth, that there will be an eternal reward in heaven waiting for the faithful ones.

Jesus said in Mark 10:29-30, "Anyone who lives for My sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will receive a hundredfold now, in this time, and in the age to come, eternal life."

Jesus says to us in John 14:3, “I go and prepare a place for you, and I will come again soon to receive you to Myself; that where I am in heaven, there you may be also.”

Notice the other side of your handout you were given. On it you will notice the Great I AM statement of God almighty, speaking to Moses from the burning bush in Exodus chapter 3.

You will also notice the (14) “I AM” statements of Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ has claimed to be the great I AM. In doing this, He claimed to be God Almighty, come in human form, in order to save humanity from their sins. **Let’s read through them. READ “I AM”.**

The reason we call today’s service, The Great Commission Sunday is because it is God’s will for everyone who hears His Word to believe in Him, and to accept His only begotten Son as their Savior.

I mentioned earlier that we would give you an opportunity to receive Jesus Christ as Savior. Let’s bow our heads and close our eyes now as each of you repeat this prayer in your heart to accept Jesus Christ, God Almighty, as your personal Savior and risen Lord.

SAY A PRAYER TO RECEIVE JESUS AS SAVIOR

John 7:37 says, “On the last day of that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. **38** "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." **39** He spoke concerning the Holy Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive.”

SAY A PRAYER TO RECEIVE FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

On that blank 3x5 card you received today, I want you to write the first thing the Lord puts into your thoughts as you ponder the notion of the LORD as your Shepherd, and you as his lamb.

Are you struggling with some addiction, like alcohol, nicotine, or some other substance, Jesus as The Good Shepherd wants to free you from it today... **Come and nail it to the cross!**

Do you have impure thoughts that cause you to do things physically that are not pleasing to the LORD, then The Good Shepherd Jesus wants to wash your mind, cleanse your thoughts, and remove the guilt of your sin today. **Come and nail it to the cross!**

Do you have dreams and hopes that seem to far away and you have thrown in the towel because you have lost your wonder, creativity, and desire to even try anymore because life is just too overwhelming, then The Good Shepherd wants to make you lie down in green pastures, lead you by the still waters, in order to restore your soul today and install the hope of wonder and your dreams fulfilled again today... **Come and nail it to the cross!**

Are you constantly fearful of the valley of the shadow of death, do you have thought of giving up on life or worse, thoughts of suicide, then the Good Shepherd is here to bring you His hope, His light, and His love, acceptance, and forgiveness to you today...

Some of you may simply want to offer a word of praise, thankfulness, and gratitude to the LORD, then write that down today and bring it as an offering of praise to your Good Shepherd by **coming up and nailing it to the cross!**

As we are coming forward to nail it all to the cross! lets worship the Lord Jesus as our Good Shepherd today...

WORSHIP TIME (2 or 3) SONGS

COME BACK UP TO PRAY OVER THE FOOD

GIVE A STRONG EXHORTATION TO COME BACK TO CHURCH NEXT WEEK TO LEARN ABOUT THE MIRACLE BIRTH OF GOD ALMIGHTY INTO HUMAN FROM LUKE CHAPTER 1