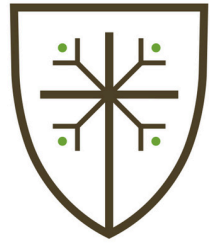


SERMON NOTES



July 21, 2024

PRIMARY
PSALMS SERMON SERIES
PRAYER

SERMON INFO

TITLE

“Prayer of Dependence”

PREACHER

Rev. Craig Chapman

TEXTS

Psalms 23

Revelation 7:9-17

John 10:2-4, 11-16

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How are sheep and humans similar? How does this help us understand our need for a Good Shepherd?
2. What can we do to help one another become faithful trusting sheep to our shepherd?

SERMON IN SUMMARY

This week, Craig continued our Psalms sermon series with Psalm 23 and the choice that we have to live lives dependent on Christ or independent from Christ.

Shepherd

Being a shepherd in ancient Israel was considered the lowliest occupation, one that often fell to the youngest son of a family like David. Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, rain or shine, you were expected to be with the sheep. And the God of the Universe, the only one who is truly independent and not reliant on others, has chosen to become our shepherd.

According to pastor and former shepherd Phillip Keller, sheep need four things in order to lie down and rest like the psalmist talks about. They must be free from fear, famine, friction, and flies. Our Good Shepherd reassures us that in him we will never want for any good thing. But often because of all the distractions and expectations of this world, before we can truly see this, he must force us to lay down, to be still and focus on him and the rest he provides. He makes us wait because he has things to do in our souls in which we are not interested and for which we would not slow down on our own.

Our shepherd provides rest and also life, both spiritual and physical restoration. A cast-down sheep who is stuck on his back relies solely on the shepherd to save its life. A good shepherd is always vigilant and attentive to the life of his sheep. And a good shepherd also provides constant guidance to the sheep, an outside force directing and curbing in good and safe paths.

Host

A good shepherd would go before his sheep and prepare the flat table lands for them to safely graze, removing hazards and predators. Our Good Shepherd is our heavenly host, overcoming our enemies of sin and death and preparing the table lands for us. God has a celebration meal with us not at the end of our trials but in the very presence of them, reassuring us that with his protection over us, they cannot touch us.

We are given two options, to follow Jesus as our Good Shepherd, trusting that he knows best and denying our own whims and inclinations. Or to deny Jesus and follow ourselves and what we think is best. Much like sheep, if we choose this latter path, we will soon realize how little we know and how, as Psalm 1 which we looked at last week says, we become empty unrooted chaff blown one way and the other by the wind.