

Psalm 23:4

Comfort and Confidence

Image Church // The Good Shepherd Week 4

MPS: No matter what happens in this life the Good Shepherd is with you.

Introduction

Well good morning Image Family, I hope you are doing well!

Watch Parties!

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I am going to read through all of **Psalm 23**, we're going to do that each week because I want it to become ingrained in you...

And then we will look at **verse 3...** *Ok let's read through Psalm 23 together...*

Psalm 23

1 The Lord is my shepherd;
I have what I need.

2 He lets me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside quiet waters.

3 He renews my life;
he leads me along the right paths
for his name's sake.

4 Even when I go through the darkest valley,
I fear no danger,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff—they comfort me.

5 You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

6 Only goodness and faithful love will pursue me
all the days of my life,

and I will dwell in the house of the Lord
as long as I live.

Ok, let's dive into verse 4:

4 Even when I go through the darkest valley,
I fear no danger,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff—they comfort me.

3 truths that I want to hold up for you:

1. We will have dark valley's

v.4 Even *when I go through* the darkest valley...

The wording **dark valley** is the idea of hardship that is short of death. So, it's not death, but any hardship that stops just short of death...

Every single one of u has either been there, is there, or will be there...

We live in a broken world because of sin... Flash back real quick:
Adam and Eve- sin=brokenness...

Result= dark valley's

No one will avoid this... And it can be **internal** or **external**... It can be **circumstantial** or **situational**...

Some of you are there now... Maybe COVID has caused this or maybe not, maybe you have been walking a dark valley or you just entered one...

- *And college students I am not talking about school starting...*

Valleys are real and unavoidable in this life... I want you to know that if you are struggling though something or if you are hurting, we want to be there for you. Please reach out to us **imageatl.com/contact**

So, it's not a matter of *if* but *when*... But here is the good news and it leads me to *truth #2*...

2. The Good Shepherd gives us confidence in the midst of the dark valleys

David says: **4** Even when I go through the darkest valley, *I fear no danger*...

Now we have to understand the weight of **David** saying this... If anyone had reason to be afraid it's him! My dude was always on the run for his life...

- Goliath...
- Spear thrown at him, in a cave hiding Saul is taking a leak in there, he's in the bushes...

As I was preparing for this message today, I was reeked by this...

Here's something about that we to understand, and it's hard to wrap our minds around this but... **The dark valley is just as much a part of the right path as the green pastures and quiet waters**...

v. 3: he leads me along the *right paths* for his name's sake.

Thou, at this point of danger, replaces the more distant 'He', in a person-to-person address; for the Shepherd is no longer ahead, to lead, but alongside to escort. In times of need, companionship is good; and he is armed. The *rod* (a cudgel worn at the belt) and *staff* (to walk with, and to round up the flock) were the shepherd's weapon and implement: the former for defence (cf. 1 Sam. 17:35), the latter for control—since discipline is security. Setting aside this metaphor,

only the Lord can lead a man through death; all other guides turn back, and the traveller must go on alone.¹

2. The Good Shepherd gives us comfort in the midst of the dark valleys

v.4 your rod and your staff—they comfort me.

We can have confidence and comfort in the Good Shepherd

No matter what happens in this life the good shepherd is with you!

The reason for such confidence is found in God's protection, described in the metaphor as the shepherd's "rod" and "staff." Power (art. cit., 435) has illuminated the poetry from a modern context; the Palestinian shepherd normally carried two implements, a *club* (or rod) to fend off wild beasts and a *crook* (or staff) to guide and control the sheep.²

¹ Kidner, D. (1973). *Psalms 1–72: an introduction and commentary* (Vol. 15, p. 129). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

² Craigie, P. C. (2004). *Psalms 1–50* (2nd ed., Vol. 19, p. 207). Nashville, TN: Nelson Reference & Electronic.

Apply... **What does it look like for the Good Shepherd to give you confidence? What does it look like for the Good Shepherd to comfort you?**

A. He will do it through His presence- the Holy Spirit inside of you...

- Be Still and know that I am God
 - There is a difference in rest and reflecting on the things of God...

B. He does it through His instruments...

- Word of God
- People of God

Psalm 34:4

Hebrews 13:5b

Matthew 28:20

Isaiah 41:10

Isaiah 43:3

Romans 8:31-39

Zephaniah 3:17