

The Good Shepherd

Psalm 23

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even 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. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Psalm 23

Main Idea: Jesus Christ Is Our Eternal Good Shepherd

I. He Will Provide for Us

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake." Psalm 23:1-3

- We see in the text from the Psalmist, that all of his needs were met by the Lord.
- He goes on to say, I shall not want, the Lord provides rest, restorations, he leads well.
- He will guide me through seasons of joy and rest, moments He will provide for me to find rest and restoration.
- Each year will bring high points and moments to celebrate and let's not forget it's God who provides those seasons of joy and celebration!

"And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19

- We have no reason to fear what this year will bring because God will meet all of our needs,
- **Illustration:** Each morning, a woman walked to her front gate and shouted, "Praise the Lord!" And each time the atheist next door would yell back, "There is no Lord!" One day she prayed, "Lord, I'm hungry. Please send me some food." The following morning, she discovered a big bag of groceries on her front porch. "Praise the Lord," she shouted. Suddenly, her neighbor jumped from behind a bush. "I told you there was no Lord," he said. "I bought those groceries for you." "Praise the Lord!" the woman said. "He not only sent me groceries, He made the devil pay for them."

- God will supply our needs, He will provide times for rest, He will lead, He will restore, as you allow the Lord to lead you this year, you will lack nothing! You will find rest, restoration, guidance and provision from the Lord! He will provide!

II. He Will Be with Us

"Even 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." Psalm 23:4

- We see the Psalmist continue that not only the Lord will provide for us, He will Be with us!
- God is a good shepherd, so why would the eternal good shepherd take me through the valley of death? This doesn't make sense
- This year will have great moments but there will be tough ones as well. Tough times should not come as a surprise to us. It's unfortunately part of this broken world but we can have hope.

"I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." John 16:33

- This year will bring some valley moments, but as the psalmist says, I will not fear, for you are with me!
- The Psalmist references the Shepherd's Rod and staff, David who wrote this Psalm was at one point a Shepherd and uses this as an illustration. The Shepherd would use a Rod, to fight off animals that try to kill and eat their sheep. A shepherd would use their staff to guide and correct the sheep and as they travel so they don't wander off.
- Oftentimes, when Shepherds have a sheep that constantly wanders in order to protect it from further harm, He will break the leg and carry the sheep, sometimes the Lord will allow us to go through difficult and challenging times in order for us to realize we need him!

"Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father?" Hebrews 12:7

- These moments of affliction our caring shepherd allows us to walk in will bear fruit in our lives.

"No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it."

Hebrews 12:11

- Through this passage we can find comfort because the rod and staff symbolizes the protection and guidance we will have from the Lord, regardless of where you find yourself, He will be with us!

- Why would the eternal good shepherd take me through the valley of death? Because he's with me and taking me somewhere better!

III. He Will Sustain Us

"You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Psalm 23:5-6

- There is no escape from difficult moments in life, but remember God has allowed it!
- As we face difficult times, and troubling seasons as believers we can have joy and peace through it.
- David, the Psalmist uses this imagery of God of being a generous host, He prepares a table, anoints the head with oil, while being surrounded by enemies! This is a powerful picture because we as believers can take heart, find true joy in the presence of God while we are in our toughest moments.
- It is through the presence of God, that he will sustain us through it all!

"Cast your burden on the Lord, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved." Psalm 55: 22

- It may be a surprise to you but not to God, and there is no wasted season. The goodness and mercy of God will follow us all the days of our lives because we are with God.

"You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore." Psalm 16:11

- God will sustain us to the very end, we have no reason to fear what may lie ahead because his presence goes before us, and there is nothing that can separate us from Him or his presence!

"For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 8:38-39

- We can have full confidence in the Lord because he is our Good shepherd, as a good shepherd, He will Provide for us, protect us, and sustain us!

Conclusion:

- Jesus Christ is our good shepherd, and he is the perfect embodiment of a caring shepherd in John 10:

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me"

John 10: 11-14

- So for the believer we can have full assurance in Christ, regardless of what may come in this new year, Jesus Christ is our eternal good shepherd. But maybe you find yourself in this room, and don't have a relationship with Christ, and are lost,

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isaiah 53:6

- Each of us at one point or another have turned our back against God, but it is only through faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ that we can be saved!
- So have hope this new year, because Jesus Christ is our Eternal Good Shepherd!

Sources & Further Reading Opportunities:

- **New Bible Commentary** – D.A Carson (1994)
- **The Bible Background-** John H. Walton & Victor H. Matthews
- **Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary-** Matthew Henry
- **Baker Commentary On The Bible-**Walter A. Elwell
- **Tyndale Old Testament Commentary-**David C. Firth