

August 12, 2018
IT'S A MAD, MAD WORLD – Part 2
“Schools and Violence”

We live in a mad, mad world – a mad, as in angry world, and a mad, as in crazy world.

An ambassador represents another country in a foreign land, and while the ambassador interacts with the local culture, he's always committed to his home country.

2 Corinthians 5:17-20 (ESV): “¹⁷Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. ¹⁸All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.”

Psalms 23 uses two metaphors or images of God's goodness – He's a shepherd deeply concerned about His sheep, and He's a host who's prepared a lavish banquet.

Psalms 23:1 (ESV): “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.”

David's use of the word “LORD,” represents God's own personal name, YHWH – Yahweh – which He revealed to Moses at the burning bush.

Exodus 34:6-7 (ESV): “⁶The LORD passed before [Moses] and proclaimed, ‘The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, ⁷keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty...’”

David doesn't simply say *the* “shepherd” but “my shepherd.” (*italics added*)

Psalms 23:2-3 (ESV): “²He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. ³He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.”

Psalms 23:4 (ESV): “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.”

David has confidence and “comfort” that his God, who is with him, has everything he needs to get him through whatever he's facing.

There's nothing the enemy, the devil, loves more than to help our imaginations run wild, thinking all the worst things.

Psalms 23:5 (ESV): "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows."

The image here is of the heavenly banquet at the end of time, where all God's children will be gathered.

Psalms 23:6 (ESV): "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever."

In the New Testament Jesus picked up some of these same metaphors.

Jesus: "'I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.'" (John 10:11 ESV)

Luke 22:19 (ESV): "And [Jesus] took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'"

Weekly worship and daily time with God are so important because they continue to remind us and reinforce in us who God is and who we are.

Romans 8:15 (NCV): "The Spirit we received does not make us slaves again to fear; it makes us children of God...."

I Can Overcome Fear And Anxiety By Remembering...

1. God is with me.

Psalms 23:4 (ESV): "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me..."

2. God comforts me.

Psalms 23:4 (ESV): "...your rod and your staff, they comfort me."

3. God strengthens me.

Isaiah 41:10 (ESV): "fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

Philippians 4:13 (ESV): "I can do all things through him who strengthens me."

4. God saves me.

Isaiah 35:4 (NLT): "Say to those with fearful hearts, 'Be strong, and do not fear, for your God is coming to destroy your enemies. He is coming to save you.'"

Nothing evil can throw at us can ultimately defeat us because God will save all of us who put our faith and trust in Him.

Jesus: “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** ESV)

We may live in a mad, mad world, but we have a great, great God in whom we can entrust ourselves and those we love.

Philippians 4:6 (NLT): “Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.”

As Christ’s ambassadors, we can be agents of his kingdom who point others to Christ and the strength, comfort and peace he offers.

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