

Harris Creek Baptist Church
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Series: The Shepherd in the Psalm
May 2, 2021

The Shepherd Provides

Psalm 23:5-6

“You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”

Good morning! Good morning, good morning, good morning. So, when our family moved here two years ago, the first thing that we did was this Q and A on this stage. Really so that the body could get to know us. So, we sat up here with an elder and they asked us questions, we were sitting up here. Anybody, was anybody here for that? Yeah, there were some of you, it was “Imagine Banquet” is what we called it and so we were up here, they were asking us questions, kind of get to know you questions. And I was answering them and in the middle of this Q and A, something happened, okay. The room started shaking and there was this like, low tone rumble. I’m up here and I’m thinking, “Okay, this is it. Like Jesus is coming back. He was waiting for us to move to Waco.” That is what was happening. I guess you know, before the rapture or the return of Christ, He wanted us to move to Waco. And now that we did, the sky is about to crack open. So, I am sitting, and I’m just like this (exhibiting a very on edge JP) you know. And everybody else does not even notice it. Right, we are new to Waco and everybody else is, it is almost like they do not hear it. I am thinking maybe I am the only one. Maybe I am the only one going to be raptured you know? Like I do not know this church, I am new. You know maybe they do not – okay I am glad you are here you know. And I am sitting up there, and I learned it was not Jesus coming back.

It was a phenomenon rather normal to us now called, that’s right, SpaceX right up the road. They launch rockets, I mean they power them up every day, and it is normal. It is not, was not normal to me! No one in Dallas, there is nobody firing up rockets, okay? And nobody gave me a warning when I signed on. They did not say, hey just a heads up, every now and then, you know, once a day, we fire up a rocket, no big deal. And so, this happened, so then I am kind of like, I am interested in this. I want to learn more about you know, firing up rockets. Did you know that every time they fire that rocket up past 9 p.m., they get hit with a \$25,000 fine? 25 grand! Which is interesting, because now like, I have started to, you know, watch the clock, and it will go, and it is like 9:05. Like, why did they do that? They could have backed that up like 10 minutes and not had to pay any money. If you are driving down the road, and you get pulled over a police officer for speeding. And they are like, yeah, I am going to write you a ticket for \$25,000 fine.

Like that's life altering, you know. That is like – oh no big problem. And so how did they just do this? Did you know that between 2017 and 2019 they had to pay over \$500,000 in fines? Half a million dollars. And like I do not understand, why would you do that. I can tell you why. Because Elon Musk, he is worth 172.6 billion dollars. It is a big number. Like I could have just said a quadrillion zillion - once you get to the hundreds of billions it is just imaginary money.

So, \$500,000, a half a million dollars, is .0002897% of his net worth. Now those first three numbers after that decimal were zeroes. Okay? Here is what that means, if your net worth is \$50,000, the fine over those two years - the \$500,000, would be the equivalent of 14 cents. Yeah, a stick of gum. You would be like, "Okay do I fire up the rocket at 8:55 or 9:10?" Who cares! Here is the answer to that question: whenever I want, okay. Because it is a fraction, of a fraction, of a fraction, of a fraction of the amount of money that he has. It almost seems like he has limitless provision.

Here is what I want you to know, he does not. He does not have limitless provision. Do you know who does have limitless provision? Your Father in Heaven. He has limitless provision, and the Scriptures we have been in says that He provides for His sheep. And that is really where we are going to be this morning. This idea that we have a Good Shepherd who provides for His sheep. And if we sit under His provision, if we really believe it, if we really grasp it, then what are we concerned about? What are we focused on? What are we worried about? Because if Elon Musk has not placed his faith in Jesus Christ, then one day these shares, these stocks, these pieces of paper with these residents on them will mean nothing. But if he has, then one day, he will truly be the wealthiest person in the world along with the adopted sons and daughters of God.

Now this is an idea you have heard. Maybe you have learned along the way. But when they really hit you hard, it changes the way you live. It changes your perspective, it changes how you spend, what you save, what you do, how you worry. Man, I have been a Christian for almost 20 years. I have preached the Bible for 14 years now, and this is the lesson I cannot learn. I do not know why. If I am driving down the road, and I pass the house with the gate, and the estate, and the guard house, and the six-car garage, there is just something in me that says you would be happier if you had that. It is a lie! But there is something in me that wants to believe it every time.

Who is the happiest person in the room? Who is the most content person, think about it? There will be a lot of people in this room today. Who is the most content? Is it the Baylor faculty member working their way up moving to that position where they teach you know every now and then, kind of when they want to? Is it the entrepreneur, the one that started a business, and it is going well and now they are multiplying locations? Is it the business owner? Is it the stay-at-home mom? Is it the Etsy hustler? Who is the happiest? Is it the college student that sits under the provision of their parents and they provide everything that they need? Is it the single mom who is the happiest, who is the most content? What is the age? Here is the answer. The person who most trusts in the Shepherd. The person who most trusts in the Shepherd's provision, who is able to find peace that there is a God in Heaven, and He is going to care for them. The one that most can get their heart around that reality, they are going to be the most content in this room today. They can look at the person building the 12,000 square foot estate, who cannot sleep, and

not want anything they have because they belong to the Creator of the Heavens and the Earth. And the person with so many worldly things look upon their contentment with jealousy, with envy. “I really, really want what they have. How did they get there?” Some of us, we have been in church so long, we do not even think that is possible. We think that is just preacher talk. “The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.” We are talking about how the Shepherd provides today. How all of our needs are met in Him, how He really is our provision.

We are in a series wrapping up today. The Shepherd in the Psalm is the name of the series, focused on Psalm 23, the most famous chapter in the Old Testament. Week One we talked about how the Shepherd Leads Us. He leads our paths; He guides us in paths of righteousness; He leads us besides still waters. Week Two, we talked about how He is our Protection and our Comfort. **“Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will not fear for you are with me, your rod and your staff they comfort me.”** Today, we are talking about how the Shepherd provides. **“My cup overflows. He provides a table or prepares a table before me. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life.”**

And my perspective is, as I live in this temporary world, that I am going to die, and I am going to dwell in your house forever. And if it does not matter a hundred years from now, then it does not really matter all that much. Because I am going to be with God in His Kingdom! This perspective to correctly live the Christian life, this perspective is of the utmost importance. You cannot rightly live the Christian life unless daily you think that I am going to die, and I am going to be with God forever. And if it does not matter a hundred years from now, a hundred thousand years from now, a hundred billion years from now, then it does not matter all that much. How do I keep that perspective?

As we move through this section, we are talking about how the Shepherd provides peace; how the Shepherd provides contentment; and really, before you leave here today, how the Shepherd is our provision. Not just that He provides these things, but these things are provided in a right relationship with Him. David wrote this Psalm. A Psalm is like a poem. This is David - the Shepherd in the field David; David anointed by Samuel; David slaying Goliath with a slingshot David; David playing the harp for King Saul; David who is best friends with Jonathan; David who is running from Saul; David who is hiding in caves; David who had relationships with Bathsheba; David, King of Israel. Psalm 23:5, **“You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.”**

Let me just say this up front. If you have been with us, we are on a journey. We are sheep, He is the Shepherd. Sheep need a Shepherd; they are the most defenseless animal in the Animal Kingdom. We start in the pasture lands; He makes me lie down in green pastures. Then He leads me through the darkest valley. So now we move to the valleys, we are on a journey, and we are getting to our destination. And the destination is the table lands. These are the mesa, this is the tablelands where there is grass that we can graze, but we have to get there. And the only way that we can get there is through the valley. And that is where we are going, and that is where this punctuates today. This is where this end, today. That is where there’s great grazing.

I want to start with this point.

1. *The Shepherd Provides Peace.*

It says, **“You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.”** Let me teach you about shepherds, it comes from Philip Keller. He says, “that the sheep would have to be left in the pastureland with another Shepherd as a Shepherd goes up into a tableland to make ready the fields. And then the Shepherd would have to come back to get the sheep.” Now why would he have to go and make ready the fields? There is a follower up there called the White Camas. If you are going to google, it is also known as the Death Camus. This flower will grow wildly. It is really a weed, it is pretty, but it grows wildly in the green grass. It is everywhere. It is called the Death Camus because if cattle or sheep eat that, they die. It is incredibly poisonous to them. So, that shepherd has to go up to the tableland to prepare a place for the sheep to graze, or they will be in a grave. Right?

Now, I know some of you do not like your food touching each other. Anybody here, you do not like your mashed potatoes touching the meat, or you are like, “Yeah I’m done!”. “I got a little gravy on my ham, I’m out.” You build barrier walls, like border patrol on your plate. Maybe it is your kids, and you know what I am talking about. Sheep do not care; if it is in front of them, they eat it. They will eat anything – grass, yum! White Camus – yum! Boom -dead. So, the shepherd has to go up there and prepare a place for them.

And we begin to see the care that the shepherd gives them here. In the presence of my enemies, In the caves that we talked about this last weekend, and in the hilltops and in the crevices, where the cougars live. They watch on as the sheep graze, but they cannot come near them. Why can’t they come near them? Because the shepherd is there. Not afraid of sheep, not at all, not at all. A cougar is not at all afraid of sheep, but they will not come near a shepherd. In fact, some shepherds will go their entire lives never actually seeing a cougar. Even when they are all around and they are watching, there’s dozens of eyes on them, they will never see them because they will not come near the sheep if the shepherd is present. But, if a shepherd sleeps, if he sleeps a cougar can come in at night - two cougars can kill 200 sheep. A hundred head each in one night and destroy the entire herd if that shepherd sleeps.

But this is what Psalm 121 says, we are going to jump to Psalm 121. It says, **“I lift my eyes to the mountains—where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth. He will not let your foot slip—He who watches over you will not slumber. Indeed, He who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.”** (Psalm 121:1-4). So, you have a Shepherd who never sleeps; He never tires; He has prepared a place for you. It says, **“My enemies watch as you prepare the table before me.”** My enemies watch as you have prepared a table before me. You know what I think the worst thing about Hell is? Hell is just a place where you pay for your sins forever and ever and ever and ever. I think the worst thing about Hell is you can see what you missed out on forever. It is like eternal FOMO (fear of missing out). You see what you are missing out on forever and ever and ever.

We see this in Luke 16. Let me read this to you out of Luke 16:22-23 - it says, **“The time came when the beggar died, and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side.”** So, for the rest and the rest and the rest of time, as he

suffers in torment, he can look across a great chasm that he cannot cross and see everyone delighting in the Lord for eternity. He sees that he missed out forever and thinks if only I would have just changed my mind about that Jesus guy, everything would be different. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You prepare – a shepherd who never sleeps goes to a place to prepare a place for you. If you have been in the Bible long, this should ring a bell because it sounds familiar. It is almost like what Jesus told Thomas - “Hey, we don’t know where you’re going.” “Listen, you do know where I’m going. I’m going to prepare a place for you.” In John 14 He says that. He comes here, He is with the flock, He is with the sheep and then He goes there to prepare a place. **“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”** (John 14:3). I told you I am going to prepare a place for you.

Last week we talked about how you have an enemy, and your enemy seeks to devour you. He seeks to devour your children; to devour your relationships; to devour your faith. He is in no way, not even a little bit, not in the slightest bit intimidated by you, but he is terrified of your shepherd. So, you want to stay close to the Shepherd. As you are with the Shepherd - because there is this unsettling feeling that you are being hunted unless you are with the Shepherd. Then I can eat. In the presence of my enemies, I can eat. I am at peace. I am not worried about the war on the other side of that door. This is what Spurgeon said, “When a soldier is in the presence of his enemies, if he eats at all, he snatches a hasty meal and away he hastens to the fight. But observe: ‘You prepare a table,’ just as a servant does when she unfolds the tablecloth and displays the ornaments of the feast on an ordinary peaceful occasion. Nothing is hurried, there is no confusion, no disturbance. The enemy is at the door and yet God prepares a table. And the Christian sits down and eats as if everything were in perfect peace.” It is a picture of contentment. I am not concerned about my enemy if I am with my Shepherd, that is what you see in this Psalm.

Towards the end of the Psalm, it is a giant exhale. I am with my Shepherd forever. Nothing can get me for the rest of the rest of the rest - there is no weeping, no sadness, no heartbreak forever. I am in the table lands. I will dwell in his house forever and ever and ever. It is great peace, and the contentment continues. This is what it says, **“You anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life.”**

There are commentaries that you will read that will talk about how the metaphor shifts from a sheep to a king in verses 5 and 6. Now this is poetry. The literary device that we are reading here in the Scriptures is poetic. So, it is both - the sheep and the king metaphor mixed together. Why? Because David was a shepherd, and he was also a king. And so surely as he begins to talk about **“You anoint my head with oil”**, he would think about that Cinderella story where Samuel comes to the house of Jesse and says, “Where is your son?” And he says, “Here, he is. It is Eliab – he is big and strong.” “No, it’s not Eliab.” “What about this one?” “No, not him.” “What about this one?” “Nope, not him. Is there anyone else?” “No, there’s really no one else except for the boy in the field.” “Let me go see him.” Samuel goes to David. “Oh, this is the one. The Lord says, ‘this is the one. The world has rejected him, but I do not look at what the world looks at, I look at a person’s heart and his heart is after me. He has a heart like mine. He has a heart for the things I love.’ So, Samuel anoints him, and David lived that. And David’s anointed king, everything is going to be his. The palace? His. The kingdom? His. He will be the most powerful

man in the land. What does he do? He goes back to the field. He goes back to caring for the sheep. He goes back to being the lowest of the low in this economic society. He is not grabbing for power; he is not in a hurry. "The Lord's going to give it to me when the Lord's ready. All I need to do is focus on faithfulness. All I need to do is walk in contentment, knowing that He is my provision. When He wants me to have something, He will give it to me. So, between now and Him giving it to me, I will serve Him. I will walk faithfully. He is in charge of what I make; He is in charge of what I do; He is in charge of what others think of me. I will just serve Him faithfully and I will trust His timeline.

2. *The Shepherd Provides Contentment*

"You anoint my head with oil." So far, we have talked about the enemies of the sheep. We have talked about the cougar; we talked about the bear; we talked about the lion; we talked about the White Camus - a flower that will kill them. But did you know the sheep's greatest enemy that we have not talked about? It is really, really small. And it is the greatest annoyance and troublemaker for the sheep. It is called a blowfly. It is a tiny little insect called the blowfly. What will the blowfly do? This is going to be graphic; I apologize. A blowfly will lay its eggs in the soft membrane of the sheep's nose and those eggs will hatch and the larvae will crawl up the sheep's nose into their brain. Then it will live there. That larva will crawl up the sheep's nose into their brain and it will live. That larva will live in the sheep's brain, and it will drive them quite literally mad. It will just be the most bothered, sometimes you will see sheep just shaking their head trying to find relief. In effort of relief, they will begin to butt their heads against trees and against rocks. Anything to try to find relief from this bothersome thing in their brain they will try. A sheep has actually been known to hit itself against a rock until it kills itself trying to find relief from the things in its head. And there is one solution, a very simple solution. A shepherd comes to it, and puts an ointment of oil, a salve, on the sheep on its head. Then, the blowfly will not come anywhere near it. Relief from any future pain and suffering.

You know how I told you the sheep were the closest to the shepherd in the valleys. I said that they are the closest to the Shepherd in the valleys. I led you astray, that is not actually absolutely true. The sheep are closest, in this broken world, in the valleys. That is when we are the closest to God on earth, but it is not when we will be the closest. We will be the closest to God is when we are face to face with Him. There's intimacy here to anoint someone with oil. It requires physical touch. Can you imagine being in the presence of God like that? That is what you see here. He anoints my head with oil, He protects me from these tiny predators.

And is not it amazing, how your and my biggest enemy is so often up here between our ears. You wake up and it just jumps on you. Work tomorrow; school; how are we going to pay; where are we going to go; where are we going to live; what about the house; what about...? Man, it is there just spinning, getting all worked up. "How do I - I cannot control my thoughts. How do I get relief from this?" And you turn to supplements, and you turn to working out. "What if I hire a trainer? Well maybe I will get a nutritionist. Well maybe I will do that. I am going to get this app on my phone. I will do headspace; I will start meditating. You know what I'll go..." And you start turning to all of these different things. What do I have to bump my head up against to try to find relief? And I know that phrase, "just be closer to God," I know that can be the most frustrating advice in the world, but it does need to be our first turn. I need to get my head

anointed. It is really interesting, I have done pastoral ministry for a while, and there can be two people in the exact same situation, like two people same age, same situation, same marriage troubles, same work troubles, same kid troubles, same test troubles. Two people in the exact same situation - one is out of their mind; they are being driven completely crazy, they cannot sleep, they are up, they are pacing, it consumes their thoughts; and the other one has complete and total peace while they are in the same situation. What is the difference? One has learned to trust the Shepherd. They have learned a discipline through life, to believe all of the things that we have heard. That there is a Shepherd who cares for us - He is for us. He has got plans for you. He is watching over you; He is not hands off on this deal. He is actively involved in your life; He knows you.

“My cup overflows, surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life.” Our cup, that is our lot. What does that mean? That means what God has entrusted to us, let me explain. So, Jesus says, “if there’s any other way, let this cup pass from me.” Remember when He says that? So, the cup is what is coming my way; it is my lot; it is what I receive from God. But not my will, Thy will. Here’s how Psalm 16:5 says it, I think this will help you understand what is “a cup”. It says, “LORD, you have assigned me my portion and my cup; You have made my lot secure.” Your cup that overflows, it is the lot – the hand that you have been dealt with by God. So, David, as a sheep, says “I am satisfied in my lot for the Lord is my Shepherd.” This is poetic. **“The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.”** I shall not be in want, the Lord is my Shepherd, I have everything I need. He is showing you, his perspective.

Now keep in mind, this is a man that was getting spears thrown against him. This is a man who came against a giant. This is a man who dealt with some real adultery. This is a man guilty of murder. This is a man whose sons tried to kill him. This is a man whose best friend’s dad turned on him and hunted him. As he hid in caves and had to pretend to be crazy so that he could survive, he said, “I have no worries, God’s got me.” What is his secret? What did he learn that we cannot learn? It is an indulgence of trust. The shepherd provides all that I need, I will be content. In fasting, I will make it purposeful for God’s glory when I go without. I will be content in feasting - whatever I eat, whatever I drink will be done to the glory of Him. I have an optimistic perspective that leads to this statement, **“your goodness and your love will follow me all the days of my life.”** It is a statement of certain confidence, almost arrogance. Your goodness and love will follow me all of the days of my life. Because His goodness and His love always follow contentment!

When you find contentment in the Lord, then His goodness and His love follow you. He says, “You’ve taken care of my enemies, even though I walk through the valley. You have taken care of my worries with Your rod and Your staff. You are taking care of those things that are driving me crazy. You anoint my head with oil. You’ve given me a good lot and goodness and love are mine.” Friends, why do we have a scarce mentality? Why do we live with a scarce mentality? We live like we are going to take this stuff with us. We play this game - we get on the treadmill, and we run as fast as we can until we fall over dead, empty handed.

My friend adopted a sibling group. Brought children into his home - now we are your mom and dad. They were adopted from a third world country; from an orphanage where they went without. And there is this phenomenon called “food hoarding”. I do not know if you have heard

of this, but this is a real thing that happens sometimes when you foster, or you adopt children. When you sit them down at the table, they will sneak food in their pockets, or they will begin to hide it around the house so that they can find it later - in case they run out. Now here is the reality about my friend. He is very well resourced. Ok? Very well... think private jets to Disney World well-resourced. Ok? These kids, they do not know, they just hit the lottery. This family loves Jesus, amazing home. He can take them to the pantry and say, "Look now we have enough. You will not go hungry! Look at all the food we are good. This is yours; this is your home now." But it does not help. There will just be a season where they cannot learn that because of what they have seen and because of where they have been. They have developed this scarce mentality. I have to grab these things because what if we run out? What if you don't provide for me? We look at those kids, you and I, with sober minds this morning think - man, that is so sad. Why do they do that? BUT...why do we do that? We have that same scarce mentality. "What if I run out? What if You do not provide for me? What if You turn Your back on me?" It is interesting, I have been doing this a while, sometimes it is the people with the most - the biggest pantries - that say, "What if I don't have enough?"

Just like those children, we've been adopted into a home by the one who says, "the cattle on 1000 hills are mine." We hear it and we can praise His name and then we leave and turn back to "I don't know man." Tell me we do not. Tell me we do not do that; we do not live like that. We hoard like this world is all we got. So, we get as much as we can.

"I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Period. The end. There is the backdrop to the sheep who says the Lord is my Shepherd I shall not want. The front, page one until the last page I will dwell in His house forever and that is why I do not want. You cannot live the Christian life without this perspective.

3. The Shepherd is our Provision.

The Shepherd is our provision. Not just simply that He provides. Ok? That is not what I am teaching. I am not just teaching that He has a lot, and He gives you what you need. That is true, but it is incomplete. Everything you really need is found in Him. When we understand that, and we realize - we have had the realization - that we are going to be with Him forever and ever and ever and ever and ever then we live different. What you are really longing for - the longing of your soul; the reason that you hoard; the reason that you collect; and the reason that you think that you have to cram as much experience as possible in your 76 years here is because there is a doubt. A seed of doubt that the Lord is not your provision. We do not spend enough time renewing our minds around the fact that He has another Kingdom that we have been built for and we are going to be there forever and ever and ever. The greatest thing about the Kingdom is the presence of God.

Imagine I say - I do not know who you are into, so I have to throw out some names here - that there is somebody here this morning and they want each of you spend some time with you. Elon Musk is in the other room, and he would love to talk anybody interested in free business consulting; he is in Stage 2. Or maybe, it's Justin Bieber - don't get business advice - but he has come as an advisor to write songs. Or Taylor Swift. Ok? Or Zendaya. I do not know who you are into. If you do not know who Zendaya is - maybe it is Frank Sinatra or one of The Beatles. I am

not sure, Paul McCartney's in the other room. Or Beyoncé, the queen, she is in the other room. You're going to be excited to meet them! Or maybe, guess what, Jesus is here! He is here this morning, and He has time to meet with you. It is the moment you have been waiting for your entire life. You are going to be face to face with Him. Now I do not know where you would be more excited, another name or Jesus. Here is my fear; that I will stand in front of people and talk about Him, yet one day we will meet Him, and He will be a stranger. Because the reality is that He is available to you every day. You can spend time with Jesus every day! I get it, I get it you cannot touch Him, you cannot hug Him, you cannot see Him. It is different. But that is the great news! It is okay that you are like, "Yeah! But I cannot see him, I cannot touch Him." Turn that cynicism into your heart's longing. "One day though! One day I am going to get to see Him, and touch Him, and hug Him, and feel Him. I will kiss Him on the cheek. That is going to happen one day!" Make that the longing of your heart. I will dwell in His house forever.

Some of us are not looking forward to heaven. If you do not look forward to heaven, you will make the gross, heinous, foolish mistake of trying to make your home here. And you will look like that couple that tried to build the house on a camping trip. As if they were going to stay there forever. This is what C.S. Lewis said, *"There have been times when I think we do not desire heaven, but more often I find myself wondering whether in our heart of hearts, we have ever desired anything else."* That is a word! *There have been times when I think we do not desire heaven, but more often I find myself wondering whether in our heart of hearts, we have ever desired anything else."*

When Jesus was here, He chose His words carefully. He preached sermons and He told stories; this is one that He told. **"Church, be dressed and ready for service and keep your lamps burning, like men waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks, they can immediately open the door for him. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. Truly I tell you, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them."** Luke 12:35-37. This is crazy! Jesus paints a picture of preparing a table before you and as you look forward to meeting with Him, He dresses Himself like a servant and He begins to serve you. And if He did not say that, it would be blasphemous! "Wait! No, no, no – not the Lord serving me." But it should not surprise us that this is what He says, because that is all He has ever done; is serve you. All the sins you have committed; all the things you have done. The fact that right about now, you are feeling pretty guilty about being materialistic He has already covered. He says, "I covered that. I paid for that. I got you, I am bigger than that."

This is what the prophet Isaiah says, **"But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on Him, and by His wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all"** (Isaiah 53:5-6).

Psalms 100 says this, **"Know that the LORD is God. It is He who made us, and we are His; we are His people, the sheep of His pasture."** I will dwell in His house forever!

So, the greatest thing that we can do - in your life, for the rest of your days, no matter how much time you have. Whether it is a day, or 70 years, the greatest thing that you can do is live your life

completely surrendered to Him. That is a Psalm 23 life. The Lord is my Shepherd, I am His sheep. What do I want? Nothing, apart from Him.

As a pastor there are these things that we do – we administer baptisms, weddings, communion, funerals. I actually did a funeral before I ever did a wedding. It is just a part of this job. And Psalm 23 is the most famous passage, the most read Scripture at funerals. Psalm 23. Do you know what the most read song is, like a modern song? It is Coolio, Dang....no I am kidding, it is not. It is actually Frank Sinatra's *My Way*. People want that read at funerals. Sometimes Psalm 23, sometimes Frank Sinatra's *My Way*. Listen, I once did a funeral where they actually asked me to do both. And I sat the family down and said, "You realize these contradict each other? If one is true of your life, the other cannot be." See I will read Frank Sinatra's *My Way* as an example of what not to do.

Let me read you the words in case you have not heard it.

*And now the end is here
And so I face that final curtain
My friend, I'll make it clear
I'll state my case, of which I'm certain
I've lived a life that's full
I traveled each and every highway
And more, much more
I did it, I did it my way*

*For what is a man, what has he got?
If not himself then he has naught
Not to say the things that he truly feels
And not the words of someone who kneels
Let the record shows I took all the blows and did it my way*

Now friends if that is true of your life Psalm 23 is not. You can choose right now; do I want to live my life my way or do I want to live my life His way?

In summary, the Shepherd provides peace; the Shepherd provides contentment; and the Shepherd actually is our provision. Funerals are a part of what we do as pastors. I had the privilege of pastoring a church in Dallas in a very affluent community. And someone well-known, beyond Dallas, passed away. It was someone who owned a very large hotel chain. A global hotel chain, a hotel that you have probably stayed in once upon a time. And he died. Friends and some of his family went to this church, and they were looking for a place – they knew it would be a big service – they asked if they could host it there at that church. I remember the church held it there and the parking lot looked like a car show. There were Maybachs, Bentleys, Rolls Royces – it was a car show!

And I remember my friend and his son stood there and they took that casket and they put it in this really nice Rolls Royce hearse. And the man who died was as best we can tell, not a believer. They put that box in the back of the car and the dad turned to the son and said, "Hey do you know what he owns?" The son looked up to his dad and said, "Yeah, a bunch of hotels." And the

dad said, “No.” And the son said, “Well what does he own?” And the dad said, “Nothing. He doesn’t own anything.” He has got nothing. That is going to happen for all of us. It is appointed to each man and woman that they die once. They face judgment once. And then, their eternal lot is cast; it is determined by the Creator of the heavens and the earth.

Unless Elon places his faith in Jesus Christ, then one day he will own nothing. Lest you envy him. That \$706 a share stock, the angels are not interested in it. It is worthless in eternity. It has no value there. It has no value there. And remember when I joked with the rumble, “maybe Jesus is coming back”. Friends, one day He will. It might be before lunch. Maybe it is tomorrow. Maybe it is 10 years from now. But He is coming back! Do not get deluded by the stuff you see, touch, and feel. Ok? Live for that Kingdom.

Let me pray that we would. Father, help us to live for that Kingdom. We are so tempted to get swept up by what we see here. What we know here. Father, would you help us not to conform any longer to the patterns of this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. Help us to test and to prove what Your will is. Your good, pleasing, and perfect will. Father, if you have given us lots of stuff - help us to use it for Your glory. Help us to share it freely! Help us to give generously. And if you have given us very little stuff, help us to sleep in complete peace knowing that you have made our lots secure. Our cup overflows, surely Your goodness and Your love will follow us all the days of our life. And we will dwell in Your house forever. We have Your mercy, Lord; we have Your mercy. Thank you, in the name of Jesus. Amen.