

The Lord is my Shepherd

I. Slide#1 Announce:

- A. **Slide#2 Luciani's Send Off:** [Paul, Suzanne, Gabe & Priscilla] Leaving for Spain this week. Stop by tent after service.
- B. **Slide#3 Happy Mothers Day:** esp to the 3 moms of *Michelle Knight, Gina deJesus, Amanda Berry*. The 3 girls held for 10 years. **And** to the mother of the seamstress, *Reshma Begum* found yesterday after **17 days** under the rubble of that garment factory in Bangladesh.
1. I was watching *Ted Talks*...it was *Rita Pierson*, A professional educator since 1972.
 2. One student got 18 wrong out of 20 on a quiz. **She put a +2 and :) on the page.** The student came up & said, "Isn't this an **F?**" Yes. "Why a smiley face?" Because you're on a roll.
 - a) She went on to say, "*-18 sucks the life out of you; but +2 says, I aint all bad.*"
 3. Moms, **I don't know how you'd rate your mothering?** I **know** you weren't a perfect **20!** **And**, I also know its easy for you to focus on the handful of things you wish you could **do over**. But whatever your grade, I pray you'd see *God's smiley face* upon **you** today. **He...loves...you!** **And, He honors Motherhood.** **And, so do we.**

II. Intro:

- A. **Slide#4 Do you remember what it was like to learn how to swing?** Learning how to pump. Feet extended toward the sky. Leaning way back. The spin maneuver. Timing the jump.
1. Its one of the first places we learned to **trust!** See, it all depended "**who**" was pushing us. **If** it was someone we **trusted**, they could try anything with us & we'd shout, "Again! Again!" **But if** it was some kid on the playground, or some random cousin at a family get together...oh man, sick feeling in your gut...& hang on.
 2. **Who pushes your swing?** In the **right hands**, you can find peace...**even** in the **twisty's** of life. **Even** in the **big pushes** where all you see is sky. **You can trust Him!**
 - a) This is what Jesus seeks to teach his disciples in these **3 life lessons**.
- B. **Slide#5 Outline:** [1] **He makes me to lie down** in green pastures [2] **He leads me** beside still waters [3] **He restores my soul.**
1. **Slide#6** This outline is built from the **why** Jesus gives in vs.34, **they were like sheep not having a shepherd.** [shepherd-less sheep; folks trying to make it on their own through life]

III. Slide#7 HE MAKES ME LIE DOWN IN GREEN PASTURES (31-44)

- A. **Slide#8a Their Rest** (31,32) - **Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.**
1. Every **weary** Christian worker needs to hear those words by Christ.

2. “We need times when we smooth out the **wrinkles of our soul**, get alone w/God, refresh our bodies, & then get ready to serve the Lord again.”
 3. A rest is much needed...but is not to be. [sometimes you just HAVE to disconnect; other times, He'll give you that extra measure of grace/strength]
- B. **Slide#8b Their Interrupted Rest** (33,34)
- C. Eager to be w/Christ they ran around the Northern shoreline.
- D. Instead of resenting their **interruption**, He was gripped w/**compassion**!
1. How do you react when your plans are unexpectedly spoilt?
 2. Jesus saw this crowd not as a **mob**, but as **individuals**.
 3. We all look at people through different lenses. We all have the gift of **sizing people up**, & we can do it in seconds.
 - a) If you're a **cosmetologist** maybe you are 1st to notice someone's hairstyle.
 - b) If you're **into working out** maybe you quickly size someone up to see whether they are in shape or not.
 - c) If you're **into name brands** you probably notice the stitching on the back pocket of their jeans, sizing up if the shop at *Target* or *Hollister*.
 - d) As **Jesus** sized up the crowd, He noticed, **they looked like sheep w/o a shepherd**. [They were leaderless]
 - e) **Know anyone that could be described that way?** – How can we help them to find the Good Shepherd?
- E. **Slide#8c Their Respite** (35-44)
- F. The only miracle found in all 4 gospels (except for the Res). **Most public of all the miracles**.
- G. (35,36) *Here they remind Jesus it was a deserted place. (There wasn't a Jack-n-the-Box, Burger King, Chipotle, or McDavids, & not even a Starbucks for miles)*
- H. **Send them away** - Never send someone away who is **hungry** [Spiritually, Emotionally, Physically hungry]
- I. (37) Jesus will give us **seemingly impossible challenges**...you give them something to eat.
 1. May this be written on every church, & every believing heart, **We have the bread that satisfies!!!**...you give them something to eat!
- J. (37b) **200 denari** – Leave **Jesus** out of your calculations...& you'll come up **short** every time.
 1. Oh, they were keenly aware of the need, **but** powerless to meet it.
 2. Standing before them was the One who created the Heavens & the earth. One who had all power.
 3. So, the 1st step is not to measure our **resources**, **but to determine God's will & trust Him** to meet the need.
- K. (39) **Green Grass** – Just to show you how detailed Scripture is...in John's account(6:4) he mentions it is right before **Passover** (i.e. spring time) the only time of year there is green grass.

1. Here he makes them to lie down in green pastures. Ps.23:2
 2. Slide#9 Ezek.34:14,15 I will **feed** them in good pasture, and their fold shall be on the high mountains of Israel. There they shall **lie down** in a good fold and **feed** in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. "I will **feed** My flock, and I will make them **lie down**," says the Lord GOD.
- L. Slide#10 (40) Sat down in ranks – (lit. πρασια) A garden bed. Refers to the arrangement in rows, like a well-kept flower bed. It often was customary for the students of the rabbis to sit in rows which were compared to the rows of vines in the vineyard or to well-ordered gardens.¹
1. They must have looked literally like **flower beds**.
- M. (41) Blessed & broke – We are not *manufacturers*, we are only **distributors**. (the miracle took place in Jesus hands, not theirs)
- N. Jesus didn't only **feed** the 5000, but he **taught** the 12...even sends them home w/a doggie-bag reminder!
1. Instead of telling Jesus what to do (vs.35,36) let Him bring you back into a place of service as waiters!
- O. Jesus gave them something **impossible** or **preposterous** to do *in their own strength*.
1. When Jesus gives us a **command**...He enables us.
 2. Oh, that we might **face up to our own inadequacy**, & learn that Jesus is able to **cope w/any crisis**.
 3. Oh, that we might learn again **total dependence** upon Him!

IV. Slide#11 HE LEADS ME BESIDE STILL WATERS (45-52)

- A. Why this urgency? – The answer is in John's account.
1. Jn.6:15 Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come & take Him by force to make Him king, He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone.
- B. (48) They were battling this storm all night, their arms were tired, sore, aching, their bodies filled with pain & fatigue.
1. Again Jesus sent them right into this storm. Obeying Jesus isn't always easy!
 2. Sometimes it is hard to do the will of God!
 3. Slide#12 Notice also that Jesus **saw them** while they were straining.
 - a) He **saw them**! They didn't have to send up a flare, or wave a white flag, nor radio in "Mayday, Mayday!"
 - b) Jesus **saw** their dilemma **but** chose to wait several hours before He got there (4th watch/3-6am)

¹ Linguistic Key to the Greek N.T., pg.105

- C. (49) **Ghost** - “There was a local rumor that the last thing a boatman saw before drowning in Galilee was a **ghost on the water.**” David Hewitt, Mark, pg.99 [diff. than *Smoke on the Water*]
- D. **Slide#13** (50) He quickly reassures them w/words that are reminiscent of Gods revelation of Himself throughout the OT. **It is I; do not be afraid.**
- E. (51) I’d rather be in the midst of a storm & have the presence of Christ than be in calm waters & Jesus be nowhere around!
1. **Slide#14** “It’s better to have **Christ in a crisis**, than to have **life-as-usual w/o His presence.**”
 2. **He leads me beside still waters!**
 3. They had seen Him **calm a storm**, **now** they get to see Him **trample it under foot.**
- F. (52) They had **not understood** the miracle of the loaves...for their heart was hardened.
1. The miracle about the loaves were **a pointer to who He was** & they missed it, **thus they didn't perceive who it was walking across the water.**
- G. We need to trust Him even when we cannot see Him physically there alongside us.
1. **Slide#15** **He will send us - He will watch us - He will come to us - He will talk w/us - And, we will reach shore.**

V. **Slide#16 HE RESTORES MY SOUL (53-56)**

- A. **Hurting people** – Some of you are going through the trauma of a **divorce**. Others battling the hurts that come w/a husband/wife that **drinks too much**. Or the parent that is **verbally abusive**. The son contemplating **homosexuality**. The daughter who just **moved in** with her boyfriend.
1. We Christians are to find **hurting people** & get them to **Jesus**.
 2. **Bring them to the One** who has power to heal.
 3. **Bring them to the only One** who can truly restore their soul.
 - a) **Saved or not saved**, we all have *hurts, habits, & hang-ups* & we all need to come quickly to **Jesus**...and let Him *Restore our soul*.
- B. **Slide#17,18** So, **Who pushes your swing?** In the **right hands**, you can find peace...**even** in the *twisty's* of life. **Even** in the *big pushes* where all you see is sky. **You can trust Him!**
1. **Trust Jesus in every circumstance:** hungry crowds, raging seas, broken humanity.
 2. **Trust Jesus for...His Provision** in *seemingly impossible* situations. **His Presence** in the **scary** circumstances we often find ourselves in. **His Power** for the **hurting** of our world.