

What Is God Really Like?

July 22, 2018

Wonderful Mercy Church

Psalm 23

- In this poem David is comparing life as he has lived it in the fields with the life God invites him into
- He's an anonymous nobody when he composes these lines
- He's so anonymous, even within his own family, that when the prophet Samuel comes to Jesse's house to anoint Saul's successor as Israel's next king, it doesn't occur to anyone that David's not there

Psalm 23

- Samuel peers at Jesse and inquires (1 Samuel 16:11), “Are these all the sons you have?”
- MESSAGE: “Well, there’s the runt. But he’s out tending the sheep.”
- The inference being: *so it can’t possibly be him, right?*

Shepherds

- Shepherds, the ultimate anonymous nobodies, have played a remarkably important role in God's shaping of human history: Abel, Moses, Amos...
- The image of God as Israel's shepherd begins in the first book of the Bible, Genesis, and continues all the way to the last, Revelation

Shepherds

- **Genesis 48:15** “Then he blessed Joseph and said, “May the God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked faithfully, the God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day...”
- **Revelation 7:17a** “For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; ‘he will lead them to springs of living water.’”

What Is God Really Like?

- In Psalm 23 David paints a picture of what God is really like. Thus, this question emerges: what is *your* picture of God?

**What Is
Your
Picture of
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What Is God Really Like?

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- “The love you have for God will never outrun the beauty of your picture of God.” – Greg Boyd

What Is God Really Like?

- If you're not passionate about God it's because you have a picture of God that's not worth being passionate about
- Psalm 23 is a portrait of David's passion for God. Why such passion? Because his God is so beautiful

The Lord Is My Shepherd

- “Shepherds guard their sheep, lead them, provide food and water (sheep will not lie down when they are hungry, nor will they drink from fast-flowing streams), rescue them when they stray, know their names, assist in delivering the lambs, and in every way simply love them.” [Warren Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary – Wisdom and Poetry*, adapted]

The Lord Is My Shepherd

- Psalm 23 describes every facet of human existence and declares that God doesn't miss a single moment of it, but loves us all the way through. *That's* what God is like
- Few would disagree that Jesus is a good shepherd. So where did he learn how to be that?
- "The Son can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does... And that's why anyone who has seen me has seen the Father." (Jn. 5:19; 14:9, adapted)

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