

5-Day Devotional: The Good Shepherd's Care

Day 1: Acknowledging Our Need

Reading: Psalm 23:1-3

Devotional: "The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing." These opening words require us to acknowledge a fundamental truth: we need a shepherd. Just as sheep cannot navigate on their own, we cannot find our way through life's valleys without divine guidance. Today, reflect on areas where you've been trying to lead yourself. Are you exhausted from charting your own course? The first step toward peace is admitting our dependence on God. He doesn't shame us for our need—He delights in providing what we lack. His presence brings the rest our souls desperately crave. Will you surrender control and allow Him to lead you beside still waters today?

Day 2: Protected in Dark Valleys

Reading: Psalm 23:4; John 10:11-15

Devotional: "Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me." Notice the psalm doesn't say "if" but "though"—difficulty is guaranteed. Yet Jesus, our Good Shepherd, walks with us through every shadow. His rod defends against predators; His staff guides us back when we wander. You may be facing a dark season—illness, loss, uncertainty, betrayal. The darkness doesn't mean He's absent. His presence is what transforms fear into peace. Jesus laid down His life for His sheep. If He would go that far, won't He see you through this valley? His presence is your comfort.

Day 3: The Daily Anointing

Reading: Psalm 23:5; Acts 10:38; James 5:14-15

Devotional: "You anoint my head with oil." In ancient times, shepherds applied oil daily to protect sheep from parasites that would torment them. The Holy Spirit is our oil—our daily protection and healing from the anxieties, wounds, and spiritual attacks that plague our minds. Just as sheep

needed repeated anointing, we need fresh filling each day. Yesterday's encounter with God, while precious, isn't sufficient for today's battles. Are you seeking daily renewal in His presence? The oil doesn't just protect; it heals the internal damage already done. Come to Him today for fresh anointing. Let His Spirit heal what's been broken and protect what lies ahead.

Day 4: Known by the Shepherd

Reading: John 10:27-28; Isaiah 40:11

Devotional: "I am the Good Shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me." This isn't casual acquaintance—it's intimate knowledge. Jesus knows your fears, your questions, your midnight doubts. He gathers you close to His heart, carrying you when you cannot walk. But do you know Him? Head knowledge about God differs vastly from heart knowledge of God. Sheep recognize their shepherd's voice because they spend time with him. Your testimony isn't built on theological facts alone, but on personal encounters with the Good Shepherd. When did you last hear His voice? When did His presence last bring you peace? Cultivate that relationship today—it's what transforms religion into reality.

Day 5: Choosing to Believe

Reading: Psalm 23:6; 1 Peter 2:25

Devotional: "Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life." This is a declaration of faith, especially powerful when circumstances suggest otherwise. Like the woman who said she'd choose to believe in the Good Shepherd regardless of her suffering, we must wake each morning choosing faith. You were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd of your souls. True healing always involves coming home—sometimes repeatedly. He runs miles to find you and bring you back. His goodness and love aren't occasional visitors; they pursue you relentlessly. Today, will you choose to believe He is good, even when you don't have all the answers? Your hope in Him is never wasted.

Reflection Questions:

In what ways have you experienced Jesus as your Good Shepherd during a particularly dark or difficult season of your life?

The sermon describes sheep as emotionally complex yet easily frightened and poor at navigation. How does viewing yourself as a sheep in need of a shepherd challenge or humble you?

The shepherd's oil protected sheep from nasal flies and healed internal wounds. What are the 'nasal flies' in your life that cause internal torment, and how have you experienced the Holy Spirit's healing oil?

David writes that the shepherd's rod and staff bring comfort even though they involve correction and guidance. When has God's redirection in your life actually been protection from something you couldn't see?

The sermon mentions that people often look fine externally while facing internal torment. How can we become more aware of the hidden struggles of those around us and point them toward the Good Shepherd?

Michelle shares that daily anointing with oil was necessary for the sheep, not just a one-time application. What does daily renewal and anointing by the Holy Spirit look like in your practical, everyday life?

The woman in the story said that even if her faith turned out to be false, it would be worth it for the hope and peace it gave her. What does this radical trust in the Good Shepherd reveal about the nature of faith?

How does understanding Jesus as Shepherd shape the way you view God the Father, especially if you've struggled to see God as loving and involved?

The sermon emphasizes that true healing always involves coming back home to the Shepherd. What areas of your life have wandered away, and what would returning home look like?

If someone asked you why you trust Jesus, could you answer with your testimony of what He has done for you rather than just head knowledge? What is one specific way the Good Shepherd has led, protected, or restored you?