

Psalm 23 – Study 2

We've been looking at Psalm 23 and we've been introduced to David, and later on in the Bible, the Bible says that David was a man after God's own heart. We look in the book of Acts, and it's perfectly clear there that God said that about David.

We've seen David now in Psalm 23 and David views himself as a sheep, and we've seen how that the sheep, David, exalts the Shepherd. He exalts Him through His name. He just says that there's no one like his God, his Shepherd. Then we look at the Shepherd's nature, and we look there and we realize that the nature of the Shepherd is a nature that is nurturing. He takes care of the sheep. David knew this, and David considered himself one of the Shepherd's sheep. And, of course, we know that the Shepherd David is speaking of here is none other than Jesus Christ.

We've seen so far that David exalts the Shepherd, and then we started looking into what the sheep experiences, what David experienced. First, we looked at he experienced a personal relationship with the Shepherd. He also experienced a precious relationship. We talked about how that there was tenderness that came from the Shepherd, how He took care and takes care of the sheep.

And then we need to see that there is a picture of what the Lord Jesus does for His children. He knows we must feed. He provides the best food for us. He knows we must rest. And remember, we go back and read this in Psalm 23:2. It says, *He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. He leadeth me beside still waters.* The Shepherd takes care of us. He gives us the right food. Just as we know that a shepherd who is a shepherd of sheep who are walking on all fours, those animals who have

wool, we know just as that likeness is there of that shepherd taking care of his sheep that the Great Shepherd takes care of us, takes care of His children. He knows that we must feed. He provides the best food for us. He knows that we must rest, and He allows what we have ingested from Him... that's His word... to digest properly.

If we are to be a healthy sheep for the Lord, we must eat properly, and that proper diet for the Lord's sheep is His Word and His Word alone. After eating His Word, we're to meditate on it, asking the Holy Spirit to lead us and guide us into all truth so that we can do all things to the maximum for the Lord's glory. He leads us into the green pastures of His Word, allows us to graze on the riches contained therein, and shelters us while we rest in the riches of His grace. What a tender Shepherd. He fights off the world so we have time to rest in Him. He tenderly meets our needs. Do you take advantage of that privilege and provision?

As we look on here, we've seen the tenderness of the Shepherd and now the thoughtfulness of the Shepherd. Verse 2 says, *He leadeth me beside the still waters.* The Shepherd leads His sheep beside the still waters because He knows the sheep will not drink from a running stream. You see, sheep have a morbid fear of the water. Why? Well, they're not designed for swimming. With their heavy coats of wool and their little spindly legs, sheep are extremely top heavy, and in the water, their wool fills with the water and they easily flip over and drown. The sheep know this and shy away from running water. Well, the shepherd knows this and searches for calm pools for them to drink from and if necessary He will dam up a place in a stream

to make them a calm pool of water. The Great Shepherd also knows that His sheep need the cool waters of His grace to make it through the world. He knows that they need places of stillness where they can rest and reflect upon Him and His blessings.

He cares about the feelings you are facing in life today. Hebrews 4:15 says, *For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.* And the Bible goes on further to say in I Peter 5:7, *Casting all your care upon him for he careth for you.*

He also provides a place of rest, peace, and safety from the world today. Hebrews 4:16 says, *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

In Matthew 11:28, the Bible says, *Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.* Therefore, the Shepherd provides those places of escape for you and me.

We've seen the experiences that David had. David experiences a person relationship with the Shepherd. He experiences a precious relationship with the Shepherd and this is something that you and I need to take to heart, because we need to experience this same relationship with our Lord.

And then we see that, next, David experiences a profound relationship. In Psalm 23:3, it says, *He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.* The Good Shepherd provides life. Here's where the relationship between the human shepherd and his sheep and the Heavenly Shepherd and His sheep move in different directions.

The Good Shepherd gives his sheep something no human shepherd could ever provide for his flock and that is life. While the human shepherd provides everything that his sheep needs to maintain life, the fact remains that he receives the sheep after they have life. Jesus on the other hand finds His sheep dead in trespasses and sins, according to Ephesians 2:1. You see, the phrase "restoreth my soul" in the verse we've read literally means to bring back. The Good Shepherd brings back the wayward soul from death into life.

In John 5:24 Jesus said, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*

And again, we read in Luke 15:4-7, we read this in our last study, but I want to read it again. It says there: *⁴What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?*

This is Jesus looking for people who need to be saved, looking for that sheep. And keep in mind that you're not a sheep until you receive Jesus Christ as Savior. He wants to see you. He wants to give you birth. The Bible says that we must receive the new birth and that new birth comes through Jesus Christ. And when we are born again, we become one of His sheep.

Luke 15:5 goes on to say, *⁵And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. ⁶And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. ⁷I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over*

one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

Just remember, if you know Jesus, then you have eternal life right now. If you do not know Him, then you are dead in your sins where you sit. First John 5:12 says, *He that hath the Son hath life and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.* Do you have life today in Jesus Christ? You need to have that life. You need to be one of His sheep. He wants to take care of you.

The Good Shepherd provides life and also we see that the Good Shepherd provides leadership. The Good Shepherd always leads His sheep in the right way whether His path leads us through the glen as in verse 2 or into the gorge as in verse 4, He always leads us in the best path of all, and that path is His path.

No one always likes where the path of life leads them, but if they're following the Good Shepherd, they can be assured that He will always lead them in the right path. In fact, Psalm 37:23 says, *The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord and he delighteth in his way.*

The word "paths" here comes from a word that means circuit or orbit. In other words, the Lord's leadership always leads us in a path that causes us to orbit or revolve around Him. And just as the bodies in Heaven are subject to the gravitational pull of the sun, those who are in the Lord's orbit are kept in a right path about Him at all times. That doesn't mean that we don't make mistakes. We're human beings, and until we are with the Lord personally in Heaven, wherever He's at, until we're with Him, we're going to have problems. We're going to make mistakes in this life, and that's another reason that we need our Good Shepherd. The Bible teaches us that once we

receive the Shepherd that nothing can remove us from that relationship we have with Him. In that relationship, He has given us eternal life. He gave us that eternal life by shedding His blood on the cross of Calvary. Without the shedding of blood, the Bible teaches us there is no remission. In other words, there is no remission of sin without the shedding of blood, and the good news is that Jesus shed His blood on the cross of Calvary for you and for me.

Now, if you do not perceive Him as Savior, it's as though you are just trampling underfoot the blood of Christ. You're saying, "I want nothing to do with Jesus." But one day you will stand before God and you will give an account as to why you refused Jesus Christ as Savior, and guess what! The Judge is going to be Jesus Christ Himself, because He will be sitting upon a great white throne. The Bible tells us and teaches us that those who are not found written in the book of life shall be cast into outer darkness. Jesus will say to those people who think they've been serving Him without receiving him as Christ, as the Savior, He will say to those people, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting darkness. I never knew you."

What a sad time that will be. And my question to you today is this. Do you know Him as your Savior? If not, why not? Why not receive Him right now. Receive Jesus Christ. Trust Him to save you. It says, *For as many as received him to them gave he the power to become the sons of God.* If you will receive Him today, He will become your Great Shepherd, and He will lead you through this life.

I can't promise you a bed of roses. I can't say that everything is going to be just hunky dory in this life, because we're still human, but Jesus Christ will take care of you. He will lead you through and help you understand that

you have a better life waiting for you, because that life is going to continue with Him.

May the Lord bless you richly is my prayer.

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Until next time, this is Doug Anderson reminding you it's a good life living for the Lord. May the Lord bless you richly is our prayer.