

## 23. THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD: Psalm 23

by Brett Baggett on Sunday, June 6th, 2021

The Bible speaks of sheep 176 times, of lambs 164 times, and of shepherds 80 times.

### IS THE LORD JESUS CHRIST YOUR SHEPHERD—ARE YOU ONE OF CHRIST'S SHEEP?

**Psalm 23:1** “The Lord is my shepherd...”

**Q.** How do I know that Jesus is my Shepherd?

- **I) You trust Christ Himself and what He has done on the cross to cleanse you from your sins!**
  - **John 10:11** “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”
  - **If Christ died for you, so that you would be forgiven, then He is your Shepherd**—you can only know you are forgiven if you are trusting *NOT* in your prayer, not in your works, not in your baptism, not in your obedience, but *IN HIS BLOOD* alone!
- **II) You listen to His voice in the scriptures and you follow Him!**
  - **John 10:27** “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”
  - **If your faith is in Jesus to cleanse you from sin, your devotion will be to Him to walk away from sin!** His sheep listen to His voice and they follow Him. If you do not follow Him, He is not your shepherd!

**Q.** Is your faith in Jesus to save you? Is your obedience to Jesus to lead you? Then He is surely your Shepherd!

- **WILLIAM PLUMMER:** “In condescension to our weakness he calls himself a Shepherd, that he may persuade us of his care and pity (v. 1). None but he, who dwells with the humble and contrite ones, would allow such titles to be given to him.”
- **MARTIN LUTHER:** “The other names sound somewhat too gloriously and majestically, and bring, as it were, an awe and fear with them, when we hear them uttered. This is the case when the Scriptures call God our Lord, King, Creator. This, however, is not the case with the sweet word shepherd. It brings to the godly, when they read it or hear it, as it were a confidence, a consolation, or security...”
- **See in this first verse of Psalm 23 the great love of Christ! He stoops down to call Himself our Shepherd and we His sheep!**

**BOYS AND GIRLS:** If you trust in Jesus and seek to obey Him, He loves you so much and cares for you like a Shepherd does his little sheep!

**TRANSITION:** Now look with me at the rest of this Psalm and see all the blessings Christ's sheep have according to His tender love and mercy!

### I. Is the Lord Jesus your Shepherd? Then He will provide everything you need (v. 1b)

**Psalm 23:1b** “I shall not want.”

- **Isaiah 40:11** “He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.”
- **Romans 8:32** “He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?”
- **See how truly poor is the one who does not have Christ as their Shepherd!** Money will fly away, beauty is vain and fleeting, worldly comforts can be ripped from your hands at a moments notice, the opinions of man may turn against you and destroy your reputation tomorrow; but the one whom Christ buys and provides for never lacks anything they need for life and godliness!
- **WILLIAM PLUMER:** “How can the saints want? The Lord will give them every good thing, “every good cross, every good comfort,” every needed chastisement, every needed supply, all timely lessons, all good deliverances.”

### II. Is Christ your Shepherd? Then He will give you rest and nourishment (v. 2)

**Psalm 23:2** “He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters.”

- **Ezekiel 34:15** “I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord God.”

**Q.** How does the LORD ordinarily give rest and comfort? **A.** It is through worship! Private, family, and public.

### III. Is Jesus your Shepherd? Then He will never abandon you when you wander; He will bring you back when you go astray (v. 3a)

**Psalm 23:3a** “He restores (*returns; brings back*) my soul.”

- **CALVIN:** “As it is the duty of a good shepherd to cherish his sheep, and when they are diseased or weak to nurse and support them, David declares that this was the manner in which he was treated by God.”
- **Matthew 18:12** “What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the **ninety-nine** on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray?”
- **Jeremiah 50:19** “I will restore Israel to his pasture, and he shall feed...and his desire shall be satisfied...”
- **Q.** How many times have you gone through periods of backsliding in your life, and yet the Lord has graciously revived, restored, brought you back, again?

### IV. Is the Lord Jesus Christ your Shepherd?

**Then He will direct your paths in righteousness for His glory (v. 3b)**

**Psalm 23:3b** “He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.”

- **John 10:27** “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”
- **1 Peter 2:25** “For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.”

**BOYS AND GIRLS:** Jesus is not only a Savior to forgive us, He is also a Shepherd to guide us—He speaks to you in the Bible! Listen!

## V. Is Christ your Shepherd? Then He will be with you when you suffer, comforting you so that you may fear no evil (v. 4)

**Psalm 23:4** “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”

- **John 10:12-13** “12 He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. 13 He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.”
- **John 10:27** “I give [my sheep] eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.”
- **Q. Beloved, when was the last time you were in the valley of the shadow of death?** Jesus was there with you.
- **Q. When will you walk through the valley of the shadow of death next, dear one?** I do not know when, but I know Christ will be there to comfort you!

## VII. Is Jesus your Shepherd? Then He will protect you from all your enemies and bless you at His table (v. 5)

**Psalm 23:5** “You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.”

- **2 Cor. 6:8-10** “8b We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; 9 as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; 10 as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.”
- **Luke 21:17-18** “17 You will be hated by all for my name's sake. 18 But not a hair of your head will perish.”
- **Who cares that the world hates you if Christ loves you?** What does it matter if you have great enemies if your Redeemer prepares a banquet table before their scoffing eyes? So what if the wicked fill up a cup of condemnation?—Christ has filled up the cup of salvation! Who cares if the world throws manure at you; Christ anoints your head with oil!

**Q. Do you care more about your enemies than your Redeemer?** If Christ smiles at you, it does not matter who frowns!

## VIII. Is the Lord Jesus Christ your Shepherd? Then He will chase you down with lovingkindness every day until you die (v. 6a)

**Psalm 23:6a** “Surely goodness and mercy (*lovingkindness*) shall follow me all the days of my life,”

**BOYS AND GIRLS:** Jesus is faster than you, He is in better shape, and He is more skilled at hide and seek. *If you trust in Jesus*, He will chase you down with His goodness and lovingkindness the days of all your life!

## IX. Is Christ your Shepherd? Then He has bought you, is providing for you, will protect you and bring you safely to His glorious presence where you will live forever (v. 6b)

**Psalm 23:6b** “and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”

- **1 Peter 5:4** “And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.”
- **Q. Don't you want this shepherd to be YOUR shepherd?** You can have Him. He will not refuse you. Go to Him confessing your sins and trusting in His work on behalf of sinners and He will accept you.
- **Hebrews 13:20-21** “20 Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, 21 equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.”

- **Ezekiel 34:23** “And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd.”
- **Ezekiel 37:24** “My servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd. They shall walk in my rules and be careful to obey my statutes.”
- **Zechariah 13:7** “‘Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man who stands next to me,’ declares the Lord of hosts. ‘Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered; I will turn my hand against the little ones.’”