

Shepherd, Guide, Protector and Friend

Psalm 23



Background: When life spirals out of control, our most common response is fear. Even for those of us who are followers of Jesus, it is easy to lose our focus and be overcome with anxiety, even despair. This week in the midst of the coronavirus crisis we will draw near to our true Shepherd in Psalm 23. Derek Kidner writes, “Death and strength underlie the simplicity of this psalm. Its peace is not escape; its contentment is not complacency: there is a readiness to face deep darkness and imminent attack, and the climax reveals a love, towards no material goal but to the Lord Himself.”

Sermon Text: Ps 23 (ESV)

- 1 *The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.*
- 2 *He makes me lie down in green pastures.*
 He leads me beside still waters.
- 3 *He restores my soul.*
 He leads me in paths of righteousness
 for his name's sake.
- 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.
- 5 *You prepare a table before me*
 in the presence of my enemies;
 you anoint my head with oil;
 my cup overflows.
- 6 *Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me*
 all the days of my life,
 and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD
 forever.

Discussion Questions

1. Preparation

- a. As you reflect on the sermon, what stands out to you most?
- b. What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- c. What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?

2. Sermon questions (pick 3)

- a. Reflect on how God as the good shepherd has gently led you to green pastures in your life. Can you name specific experiences?
- b. Reflect on how God as the good shepherd has refreshed you and given you new life. Can you name specific experiences?
- c. Reflect on how God as the good shepherd has taken the initiative to protect you. Can you name specific experiences?
- d. Especially during this time of uncertainty, do you feel safe and secure in his arms? Why or why not?
- e. As you reflect on these characteristics of God as the good shepherd, has your trust deepened in him? How can these reflections encourage you moving forward?
- f. How can you practically be an ambassador of hope this week?