

PSALM 23

THANKFUL 4 His Care

Dr. Derwin Gray

Take time to pray and read through all of Psalm 23 as a group. (Note to Leader: Encourage your group members to read through Psalm 23 several times during the week so they can soak it in.)

1. Verse 1 of Psalm 23 says, “The LORD is my shepherd...” Lord is translated from the word YHWH, the name of God. Take a moment to reflect on that awesome truth. YHWH (God), the Self-existent, Triune, Eternal Mighty One, is our Shepherd.
 - a. How does it make you feel to know that our Shepherd is all-powerful, all-knowing, always present?
 - 1b. Think about the attributes of God.
 - b. God is: Love, Justice, Holy, Good, Immutable, Mercy, Grace, Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omniscient, Righteous, Self-existing, Sovereign, Eternal.
 - c. Does knowing His attributes help you trust Him more?
 - d. Is there one particular attribute of God that you connect with?
 - e. You can do further reading on the attributes of God here:
<https://www.blueletterbible.org/faq/attributes.cfm>
2. The second part of the verse says, “...I have what I need.” From the very first verse of this psalm, we have a declaration and its immediate result. God is my shepherd; therefore, I have what I need. This declaration shows confidence in, and intimacy with, God.
 - a. Do you have confidence in God to provide all your needs? Do you feel you have an intimate relationship with God? Why or why not?
 - b. **Read Isaiah 40:11** – “**He protects his flock like a shepherd; he gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them in the fold of his garment. He gently leads those that are nursing.**”
 - c. Throughout the Bible, God is described as a shepherd. This metaphor may not be as meaningful to you if you’re not aware of all a shepherd does for his sheep. Isaiah tells us that a shepherd: “He protects, gathers, carries, and gently leads.”
 - d. What can you do to form a more intimate relationship with God?

Read Hebrews 13:20-21 – “**Now may the God of peace, who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus—the great Shepherd of the sheep—through the blood of the everlasting covenant, equip you with everything good to do his will, working in us what is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.**”

3. It’s important to remember that He provides for our needs, not necessarily our wants.

He provides:

- a. **HESED Love.** Hesed is God’s loyal, constantly pursuing, unending, consistent, extravagant, empowering, life-giving, one-way love for His people. This is the love we were created for. As The Jesus Storybook Bible for Kids says on page 200, “God loves us with a Never Stopping, Never Giving Up, Unbreaking, Always and Forever love.”

- R.C. Sproul says, “There may be no more significant Old Testament description of how God relates to His people than this Hebrew word *hesed*. I argue that the best translation of this term would be ‘loyal love.’ God loves His people genuinely, immutably, loyally. Both the love and the loyalty are, of course, tightly bound together. That is, just as one cannot love capriciously so one cannot be loyal without love. God is for His people, and will never cease to be for them.”
 - i. The second half Hebrews 13:20 says, “...through the blood of the everlasting covenant...” We are a part of God’s covenant family. That means He has an everlasting, faithful, loyal love for us. He lavishes this *hesed* love on us.
 - ii. Through identity in Christ, God meets our need for emotional stability through His love. Our sense of worth and value come from belonging to Jesus.

- b. Security.** Read John 10:28-30 – “My sheep hear My voice, I know them, and they follow Me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all. No one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. I and the Father are one.”
 - i. We are eternally secure in the hands of our Shepherd. God cannot and will not let us go. Once we are His, we will forever be His. In response to God’s grace, we are compelled to rest in Him.
 - ii. Throughout the Bible we see many shepherds rise up in Israel, only to fail. In this passage, Jesus depicts Himself in that messianic role of the ideal shepherd. He is both the shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep, and the gateway to eternal life. It is because of Him that we have eternal security.
 - iii. What does it mean to have eternal security?
 - 1. We have salvation because of Christ. We don’t have to worry about “losing” our salvation. Furthermore, we will one day be raised again and will experience complete physical healing in our bodies.
 - iv. Matthew Henry says, “Shepherds that have large flocks often lose some of the sheep and suffer them to perish; but Christ has engaged that none of his sheep shall perish, not one.”
 - v. Share thoughts you have on eternal security.

- c. Significance.** Read the first part of John 10:28 again. It says, “I know them.”
 - i. The fact that God knows us has to be enough or nothing will ever be. It’s all too easy to get caught up in the quest for fame. We long to be known but must realize that we are known. We are known by God and that is where we get our significance.
 - ii. Why is it that we long for fame or to be known? What is the difference in being famous or known by many people versus being known by God?

- d. Purpose.** Go back and read Hebrews 13:20-21. The word “equip” in vs. 21 comes from a word fisherman used of nets that needed to be sewn back together. God is sewing us together to walk in our humanity to do His will.
 - i. God has a purpose for you, but He doesn’t leave you alone to do it. He is empowering you with the Holy Spirit and equipping you to fulfill your purpose.
 - ii. How has God personally equipped you to fulfill your purpose?
 - iii. Jesus supplied all that we need to live upward, inward, outward lives in every sphere of life (Family, Work, School, etc).

Close your time together by praying through Hebrews 13:20-21. This is a powerful benediction. Many letters in the NT close by praying over those reading the letter. Take the time to pray this benediction over the members of your group.