



STAND ALONE: RESTING IN THE SHEPHERD'S CARE

June 2, 2019

Pastor Randy Remington

BIBLICAL TEXT(S)

"We're not just visiting the Scriptures, we're making our home there. We're letting the Word abide in us, as we abide in it."

-Pastor Randy

TEXT(S):

"The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.

You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." (Psalm 23 NIV)

"We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all." (Isaiah 53:6)

"When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd." (Matthew 9:36)

"I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength." (Philippians 4:10-13)

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." (John 10:11)

For this is what the Sovereign Lord says: "I myself will search for my sheep and look after them. As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness... I myself will tend my sheep and have them lie down, declares the Sovereign Lord. I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice." (Ezekiel 34:11-12, 15-16)

MESSAGE SUMMARY

Psalm 23 is one of the most (if not the most) well-known passages of Scripture in our culture. It's often read at funerals and imprinted on decorative items. But what is the message of Psalm 23? Though we are like sheep, God is our shepherd, making sure that we have everything we need.

The psalm begins with a very powerful statement, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I lack nothing." (NIV). What does it mean to lack nothing? This idea is sprinkled throughout Scripture. No matter what is going on around us, we can be content because we have a God who is not small and stingy (as humans often are), but who is always there to care for us. He will give us what we need. Therefore we can fully trust in him to take care of us.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you lead your group through a progression of

LEAN IN

These are icebreaker/warm up questions, mostly just to get the group talking and start the flow of conversation. Choose one question and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.

1. What is your first or clearest memory of Psalm 23?
 2. What one word would you use to describe a sheep?
- cont.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS, CONT.

engagement with the Bible passage and the speaker's message, helping them understand and apply the teaching.

3. What example or story stood out to you in Sunday's sermon?
Why was it significant to you?
4. What was your high/low for this past week (or since our group last met)?
What was the best thing that happened and the worst thing that happened?

LOOK DOWN

These are questions on the passage and observations about what's been read.

Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max

1. What do you notice about the pronouns in Psalm 23? Do you think there is anything significant about the fact that the psalm is written in the first person (I, me) or that it refers to God in the third person (he) in parts and second person (you) in other places?
2. What are the different metaphors that are used in this Psalm to describe God's care?
3. How do the passages below relate to Psalm 23? How are they similar or different? What additional information about God's character and/or humanity do they give:
 - Isaiah 53:6
 - Matthew 9:36
 - John 10:11
 - Ezekiel 34:11-12, 15-16
4. How does Paul describe contentment in Philippians 4:10-13?
How do you think this is related to Psalm 23?
5. How do you think the story of the Rich Young Ruler (Matthew 19) is related to Psalm 23?

LOOK OUT

These questions help connect the world of the Bible to today.

Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max

1. In Psalm 23, David uses the metaphor of a shepherd and a sheep to describe God's care for him. What are some people or things that people look to today to take care of them?
2. In what ways are people similar to sheep? How have you seen people act in a similar manner? Maybe do a Google search to find out more about sheep to help you answer this one.
3. What do you think a person that was "without want" would look like in today's world? What would drive them (if anything)? What would their daily life look like?
4. How have you seen people (either that you know or in the world at large) be driven by what they don't have or what they lack?
5. Do you know anyone who is living in contentment according to Paul's definition of it in Philippians 4:10-13? Tell us about them.

LOOK IN

These are questions that help you consider personal application.

Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max

1. Which line/metaphor in Psalm 23 is most meaningful to you in your current season of life?
2. What or who do you most look at to take care of you, apart from God? What person or thing can most easily sneak into that shepherd role?
3. How good are you at letting God supply what you lack? Have you seen progress in this area over your life? In what ways do you think you still need to grow?
4. How are you driven by lack in your own life? Is what you lack a motivator for you? Why or why not?
5. What would it look like for you to live a life of contentment as described in Philippians 4:10-13?

LIVE IT OUT

These action steps help apply this week's message to day to day life.

Choose one question and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.

1. What is one small thing you could do this week to change your motivation from what you lack to what God has called you to? How can your group pray for you this week as you do this?
2. Pastor Randy encouraged us to memorize Psalm 23 if we don't yet have it memorized. What can you do this week to help you commit this passage to memory?
3. How can you become more content in your life? What's one thing you can do this week to foster an attitude of contentment?

NOTE: On the following page you will find a set of sermon notes created by Charissa Burns, an artist who calls B4 home. We include them purely for your enjoyment and encouragement, courtesy of Charissa. You can follow her on the 'Gram @charissaburnsstudio