



1 | Psalm 23:1-3

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

In Christ, I have all I Need

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Call to Worship:

Psalm 28

¹ To you, O Lord, I call...

² Hear the voice of my pleas for mercy, when I cry to you for help, when I lift up my hands toward your most holy sanctuary.

⁶ Blessed be the Lord! For he has heard the voice of my pleas for mercy.

⁷ The Lord is my strength

and my shield; in him my heart trusts, and I am helped; my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him.

⁸ The Lord is the strength of his people; he is the saving refuge of his anointed.

⁹ Oh, save your people and bless your heritage! Be their shepherd and carry them forever.

Announcements

1. **Services:** I want to remind you that due to the national emergency in our country, we are canceling all services outside of the Sunday 10:30am worship service until the end of March. We appreciate everyone looking out for each other and encouraging each other during this time.
2. **Offering:** You can give over Zelle through your bank with no fees. You can also give by sending a check to Living Hope, 6N171 Gary Avenue, Roselle, IL 60172.

Prayer: Father in heaven, thank you that you are in control of all things.

Pray for the shut ins and those in convalescent homes.

Pray for the McFarlands on their way to the States today from Uganda.

Pray for our Government, military, and those in leadership over us.

Pray for our families, neighbors, those in need for the Gospel to shine like never before.

Pray for our church to be mobilized and empathetic to one another and to the outside world, meeting needs, and the greatest need, which is to tell them about Christ.

Pray for you our great God to be exalted!

Introduction

Open your Bibles to **Psalm 23**. The title of our message today is “All I Need.”

We are living in unique and unprecedented days where our government and magistrates have encouraged us to be socially distant from one another for a time. This broadcast is of course not the same thing as church. It's far from it. We need the physical presence of believers in our lives. We need the means of grace like singing together as one; listening together to the Word read and preached, and corporate prayer.

Let's be real: this is not church the way God designed it, but it is a unique time of fasting from our normal gatherings. I know it is making us long for the time when we can meet together again!

The point of today's message is that in Jesus we have all we need! We lack nothing if we know him! It's right here in the meaning of the name David presents to us: Jehovah Roi: the Lord is my Shepherd. In a time of great crisis in our country, we need to understand that as believers, we have an unlimited supply of grace from the Lord!

Context: Remember David was a shepherd boy. He knew a lot about taking care of vulnerable sheep. He slept with them, fed them, and led them. David says: I have a perfect Shepherd: the Lord!

Meaning of LORD: God's name "The LORD" Yahweh: He is the I Am! The is always there for you. Jesus is Yahweh, the one who never changes:

"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Heb 13:8)!

Meaning of Shepherd: Here he is called The LORD my Shepherd! The Title Roi, means the One Who Sees Where I AM – but it's common term that we know is "Shepherd". He is always eternally the Shepherd of those who trust in him, looking after us.

History of Shepherding: Shepherding is one of the earliest human occupations. Abel, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob Moses and David were all shepherds. It was the shepherd's responsibility to count each animal to assure that none were lost or gone astray. Also, he protected the sheep and when he turned in for the night; he often would go into a cave, covering it with brush at its entrance and then lay himself down to sleep at the entrance of the cave. He wanted to be assured that none of the sheep would wander out on its own, or that predators would enter the cave. He was willing to give up his life for the sheep. If you know Christ, then you can confidently say, "The Lord is my Shepherd."

Let's read Psalm 23 together.

Psalm 23 — “A PSALM OF DAVID. 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.”

The first idea we see is the Lord as our Shepherd cares for all our needs!

1. OUR SHEPHERD CARES FOR OUR **OUTWARD NEEDS** (23:1)

SHEEP NEED A SHEPHERD

Sheep can be dumb: “According to scientists, sheep have gotten a bad reputation for being...less than brilliant. In fact, it appears that sheep actually are fairly intelligent creatures. They only seem stupid because they are afraid of just about everything.”

Sheep are defenseless against predators and fairly good at getting lost. “It’s little wonder that their sense of vulnerability sometimes leads to panic and wooly-brained behavior.”

We are a lot like sheep. It is so comforting to know that the Lord is our Shepherd. He’s the One who looks out for us. We sure do need Someone to look out for us!

THE SHEPHERD PROVIDES FOR THE SHEEP

No Lack in Jesus. In verse 1, we come to an important truth: our contentment and needs are all met in Jesus. “The LORD is my Shepherd, I shall not want!” (vs. 1). In Yahweh Roi, I have all my needs fulfilled: materially, physically, emotionally and most important, spiritually. The New Testament says it another way:

God has “blessed us in Christ with **every spiritual blessing** in the heavenly places” (Eph 1:3).

Having this assurance that Yahweh Roi (the Lord, our Shepherd) has provided for us so completely, we should then **be content**.

THE SHEPHERD KNOWS THE SHEEP

Knows Everything About Us. We as God’s sheep belong to him as our Shepherd, and He knows everything about us. He knows our different characteristics. He knows our parents and grandparents. He knows our sisters, brothers and cousins.

Jesus said, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me” (Jn 10:27).

Shepherd Practices in Bible Times.

Sleep with the Sheep. In Bible times, the Shepherd would actually sleep with the sheep. The shepherd knew all about the cold nights and the hot days when pesky insects embedded themselves in their wool. He understands their joys their sorrows, their gladness and loneliness.

The Shepherd counts and cares for the sheep. He looks after them and makes sure they are not lost. He defends them from

wild animals. Our good Shepherd makes His sheep His number one responsibility. Isn't it comforting that the Lord...

- Knows the terrain of our lives. Guides our steps, prepares good works (Eph 2:10).
- He sees beyond the difficult hills to the water holes.
- He leads us to drink from still waters.
- He discerns the difference between healthy and poisonous grass.
- He knows the scratches and sores of His sheep, and tends to their wounds.
- He understands our fears and their deepest longings.
- And He cares for them to the point that **He lays down His life** for them!

Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (Jn 10:11).

Everything We Need is In Christ. Everything we need as Christians is found in Jehovah-Roi. I'm glad if you have a good job, but ultimately what you need is not in your job. I'm glad if you have a strong family structure. But your ultimate help is not in your family. You might be married. Husbands will never shepherd their wives perfectly. God is the perfect good shepherd. He loves us, and all we need is in Him.

STAY CLOSE TO THE SHEPHERD

A sheep has one main responsibility: stay close to the shepherd. It is not necessary for us to know the terrain; the sheep were not expected to know the map of Judea. They did not have to know where they would be grazing tomorrow. Their responsibility was to stay close to the shepherd. Can you say,

“The Lord is my shepherd?” Then you can continue, “I shall not want.” Are you staying close to the Shepherd?

2. OUR SHEPHERD CARES FOR OUR **INWARD NEEDS** (23:2)

A PLACE OF PEACE

Sheep need a place of peace to be able to eat. “He makes me lie down in green pastures” (vs. 2a). The green pastures are for the sheep to feed on. But sheep can’t feed if they are upset. We understand that don’t we? For us, His sheep, **we find those green pastures in His Word.** We read and ‘chew’ His Word. God’s Word is vital for the spiritual life, health and well-being of His sheep. As sheep we long for good food. Babies love milk. Sheep love grass. Christians love the sincere milk of the Word!

FREE FROM ALL FEAR

Difficult for Sheep to Lie Down. Philip Keller says it is difficult to get sheep to lie down unless they are **free of all fear**. They can be so easily disturbed that even a stray rabbit bounding from behind a bush can cause a flock to stampede. When one sheep jumps, the others follow without even investigating the commotion.

Sheep have virtually no defense strategy. All they can do is run when danger comes. And because they are not fast runners, a stray dog can kill hundreds of sheep in a single night. They are in greater danger moment by moment than they even realize.

Nothing so quiets a sheep as the presence of the shepherd. As long as they hear his voice they can eat to their hearts content and then lie down and rest. The shepherd communicates peace by the tone of his commands and the surety of his past record of protecting his sheep.

FREE FROM HUNGER

To be contented, the sheep must be not only free from fear, but **free from hunger**. There are reasons why David wrote, “He makes me lie down in green pastures” (vs. 2a). You don’t have to tell sheep to love grass. You don’t have to tell a baby to love milk. You don’t have to tell a true Christian to love the Word. It’s the new spiritual nature of the Christian to desire the “sincere milk of the Word”.

And yet, when we are not seeing God as our Shepherd, we have a hard time reading from God’s Word. As we approach the Word, we need to see that we are safe and secure in Christ.

“There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Rom 8:1).

THE SHEPHERD’S WORK

For the sheep to get a really good meal, the Shepherd has a lot of work to do. These pastures are the product of hard work. The shepherd clears the rough, rocky soil. He tears out bushes, roots and stumps. Sometimes he even plows the soil, seeds it, and irrigates. If the sheep are to enjoy green pastures amid the brown, barren hills, the shepherd has much work to do. A good shepherd will provide rich grass so that the flock can fill up quickly, then retire to rest and ruminate.

Christ has done the work! His death provides a way of safety for us.

We are “accepted in the Beloved One” (Eph 1:6b).

If we are repentant believers, trusting in Christ, we can say, “Where sin abounds, grace much more abounds” (Rom 5:20). There is no condemnation, only welcome! And He has provided the food of His Word, and the Spirit to apply it to our hearts.

He works to clear away the rocks of unbelief; He tears out the stumps of bitterness; He takes away the bushes of self-will. Then He sows the seeds of the Word of God. His work is watered by the Holy Spirit. He makes a place for us. He provides a place of inner peace in the Spirit and through the Blood of Jesus.

THE STILL WATERS OF PEACE

Still Waters are Vital. “He leads me beside still waters” (vs. 2b). Sheep must have calm water if they are to be healthy and survive. They won’t drink from a fast moving current where they could fall into the water and drown. They need still waters. If they come to a rushing stream the shepherd will use stones to build a quiet area, so that they drink beside “still waters.”

Sheep May Drink Polluted Water. When the sheep are thirsty, they may set out to find water on their own. They might drink at any polluted pot-hole, where they might pick up internal parasites or disease germs. In fact, even as the shepherd is leading them to a clear mountain stream, some stubborn sheep will stop to drink from small, dirty muddy pools beside the trail. Sheep need to stay near the Shepherd who knows where we should drink!

Safe Watering Place. Sheep will not lie down peacefully unless they have a safe drinking place. Only the shepherd knows where the best drinking places are. And it is to these watering holes that he leads his flock. Without adequate water, there is weakness and dehydration. If they drink from the wrong places there will be disease.

Applications

- (1) Time with God. Make sure you are making time to get alone with God, so that you might drink beside still, quiet, undistracted waters. You need this daily or you will get sick spiritually. Maybe the Lord has slowed us down so

that we might hear his voice and drink from the still waters he bring us to.

- (2) Redeem the Time. Ephesians tells us to redeem the time. This slow down ought not be a time to waste time but redeem the time in God's green pastures and still waters.

3. OUR SHEPHERD RESTORES US (23:3A)

HE RESTORES YOUR SOUL

If the sheep lose track of the Shepherd, they lose hope. That's why verse 3 is so important: "He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake." Have you lost sight of the shepherd? That's when our souls need restoring.

We are especially vulnerable to lose our sight of God when we experience the great reversals of life.

- When a doctor tells us that we have an incurable disease.
- When a friend hurts us.
- When we lose a job or have financial crunches
- When we feel defeated in marriage
- When carefully laid plans come unraveled.

Prone to Wander. When we feel too weak to pray, David says of the Good Shepherd, "He restores my soul." That word *restore* means to "bring back to one's former position." Some sheep need to be turned around. Sheep have a habit of getting themselves lost.

- Often a sheep becomes interested in one clump of grass—then another and then another. Soon it is far from the flock and the shepherd.
- Sometimes sheep follow paths that are made by thieves wanting to lure them away.

- Sometimes they follow wind-swept paths that lead nowhere. The sheep need to be brought back to the fold.

The Story of Robert Robinson

Robert Robinson, who once stayed close to the Good Shepherd, began wandering spiritually and morally. In his travels he met a Christian woman who encouraged him with the words of a new hymn she had just learned:

*Come Thou fount of every blessing
Tune my heart to sing Thy praise
Streams of mercy, never ceasing
Call for songs of loudest praise
Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God;
He, to rescue me from danger,
Interposed His precious blood;*

Robinson wept when he heard those words, and had to admit that he had authored those words many years earlier. God used his own song as a means of restoration.

Listen to the next verse.

*O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be!
Let Thy goodness, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to Thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, O take and seal it,
Seal it for Thy courts above.*

Are you wandering from Christ in any area of your life? David said in **Psalm 119:67**, “Before I was afflicted I went

astray, But now I keep Your Word". Four verses later he added, "It is good for me that I was afflicted, That I may learn Your statutes" (v 71).

Shepherd Breaks the Sheep's Leg

If a sheep develops a habit of going astray, the shepherd will break its leg, make a splint and then carry the cripple close to his heart. The sheep must wait for the shepherd to carry it across the streams and the rough terrain. After the leg has healed, the lesson has been learned.

Today I can assure you in the words of Richard Sibbes who said,
"There is more mercy in Christ than sin in us."

There is enough grace to cover the sin of breaking any one of God's commandments. Today the Good Shepherd wants to bless you. He gave His life for you. If you find Him prompting you to get closer to Him, be obedient. Listen to his voice. Follow Him.

He may have brought you to this slow down in our nation simply because He wants you to draw near to Him, and he to you.

4. OUR SHEPHERD LEADS US (23:3B)

Verse 3, "*He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake*".

Sheep need the shepherd to lead them, otherwise they will go astray. The shepherd knows where the flock will thrive and where the feeding is poor. Whenever the gate is opened to a fresh pasture, even the old ewes kick up their heels and leap with delight.

LEADS US TO BEST, NOT EASIEST PATHS

The shepherd leads us in the best paths of righteousness, not necessarily the **easiest** ones (Jas 1:2-3). Sheep are notoriously creatures of habit. They love their comfort zone. But this is a dangerous behavior. Sheep need a shepherd to move them to new places to graze. Well-worn grazing spots become infested with parasites of all kinds. If they persist in grazing on old polluted ground, it will be to their detriment. God uses trials in our lives to take us out of our comfort zone. When we are in difficulty, we draw near to the shepherd.

God as our shepherd leads us through trials “in paths of righteousness”. When we are overwhelmed, we must seek to simply do as the shepherd commands. We move to fresh ground through each fresh act of obedience.

God leads us to all kinds of life experiences that we would almost never choose for ourselves. But God knows what is best! And **we follow Him to fresh ground in obedience!**

Thank you, God! God moves us through various experiences in life – high mountains and deep valleys. We need to say “Thank you, God” wherever we are in life.

James 1:2-3, “Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, ³ for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.”

You might say, “Why?”

- Why the coronavirus? Why a statewide quarantine?
- Why my health?
- Why do I have to live where it’s cold?
- Some days you might say: why this marriage? Why this church? Why this job?

Principle: Where ever God leads you, serve Him in the paths of righteousness.

LEADS US PERSONALLY

Listen to His Voice. Since Jesus is personally leading His sheep through the Holy Spirit, I'm not free to choose my **own** way (Jn 10:27; 1-14; Isa 53:6; Pro 14:12). Like a dead fish, sheep left to themselves tend to follow the path of least resistance if they are without a shepherd. But our Shepherd calls after His sheep to keep them from danger.

Jesus said in **John 10:27** — “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”

Jesus is personally interested in leading you. He speaking to you through his Word, through other Christians, through your own conscience. Are you listening to the voice of your Good Shepherd? Are you allowing Him to **lead you in the paths of righteousness for His Name's sake?**

Be Intentional in Following Jesus. We must be intentional in following the shepherd! Just as sheep blindly follow the sheep in front of him, even if it's over a cliff, we'll go astray!

Isaiah 53:6, “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

To go my “own way” means to carry out my own wishes, even though my heart, which is “**desperately wicked**” (**Jer. 17:9**), often leads me astray. Often my heart leads me to not listen to my family or my church.

We often cling to habits that will ruin our lives. Our way often seems right!

Proverbs 14:12 (ESV) — “There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.”

As Christ’s sheep, Jesus calls us out of our way and into His way. Consider **John 10:1-15**.

Exclusivity of Christ, the only Way

John 10:1-2, “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, **that man is a thief and a robber.** 2 But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.”

Christ Calls His Sheep

John 10:3-5, “To him the gatekeeper opens. **The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.** 4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

Beware of Hired Hands

John 10:5-15, “5 **A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.**”6 This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. 7 So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. 8 All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. 9 I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. 10 The **thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy.** I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. 11 I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 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. 14 I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, 15 just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.”

Christ’s sheep follow Him. “**A stranger they will not follow**” (Jn. 10:5). This does not mean sheep do not err. They do, they get into “fender-benders”. They sometimes go astray. But they do not have a practice of rebellion against the shepherd. True sheep trust the good shepherd. “**A stranger they will not follow**” (Jn. 10:5). They may stumble after a stranger, but they eventually turn back to the shepherd.

OUR SHEPHERD LEADS US WITH COMPASSION

The Good Shepherd will never lead us except where He **Himself** has been (Heb 4:15-16; 1 Cor 10:13). The Shepherd knows all that we will go through because He’s been there already.

Are we expected to endure rejection? He was rejected by His peers, His friends, and indeed, for a moment, God Himself. Does He want us to face poverty? He has done that too. And then death, not a natural death, but a violent death, based on false accusations—that’s what He endured.

Hebrews 4:15–16, “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

Paths that are a surprise to the sheep are never a surprise to the shepherd. Life is easier when we remember that the shepherd never forsakes his sheep. Through sickness and despair, in valleys and deserts, the shepherd is there.

OUR SHEPHERD LEADS US FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE

The Shepherd's **reputation** is at stake, vs. 3, "*He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake*".

Remember that the reputation of the shepherd is at stake. He leads us in righteous paths, "for His name's sake." We have been purchased at high cost; the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit will not abandon us. This Shepherd will never be accused of being unable to care for those entrusted to Him.

When the shepherd comes back at night to count the sheep, he may count each one, calling each by name. When he discovers that one is still out in the wild he leaves the flock in the care of a trusted servant and trudges over the route that he and the flock traveled that day. He calls out to the sheep in the darkness. His name is at stake. He will seek after His sheep.

If we are "cast down" he sees us on our backs, beating the air, and He restores us back to the fold.

Conclusion: This is what brings us hope. We not dwell here forever. One day God will wipe away all tears, and we will dwell with Him forever! Next week we'll cover verses 4-6, but let's read them together right now.

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.”