



April 21, 2024 - Sunday Sermon Study Guide

Lead Pastor Brian Bales -The Power of a Name: *Shepherd*- Psalm 23

A Psalm of David.

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 will follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Psalm 23 (ESV)

A Life Application Study Guide

James 1:22-25 tells us to put into practice what we are discovering in God's word. In the ancient Middle East sheep were symbols of wealth.

Commentary

"It (Psalm 23) has charmed more griefs to rest than all the philosophy of the world. It has remanded to their dungeon more felon thoughts, more black doubts, more thieving sorrows, than there are sands on the sea-shore. It has comforted the noble host of the poor. It has sung courage to the army of the disappointed. It has poured balm and consolation into the heart of the sick, of captives in dungeons, of widows in their pinching griefs, of orphans in their loneliness. Dying soldiers have died easier as it was read to them; ghastly hospitals have been illuminated; it has visited the prisoner, and broken his chains, and, like Peter's angel, led him forth in imagination, and sung him back to his home again. It has made the dying Christian slave freer than his master, and consoled those whom, dying, he left behind mourning, not so much that he was gone, as because they were left behind, and could not go, too." (Henry Ward Beecher, cited in Charles Spurgeon)

ii. *"The sweetest word of the whole is that monosyllable, 'My.' He does not say, 'The Lord is the shepherd of the world at large, and leadeth forth the multitude as his flock,' but 'The Lord is my shepherd;' if he be a Shepherd to no one else, he is a Shepherd to me; he cares for me, watches over me, and preserves me." (Spurgeon)*

a. *He restores my soul: The tender care of the shepherd described in the previous verse had its intended effect. David's soul was restored by the figurative green pastures and still waters the shepherd brought him to.*

i. *Restores has the idea of the rescue of a lost one. "It may picture the straying sheep brought back." (Kidner)*

ii. *"In Hebrew the words 'restores my soul' can mean 'brings me to repentance' (or conversion)." (Boice)*

iii. *"'He restoreth my soul.' He restores it to its original purity, that was now grown foul and black with sin; for also, what good were it to have 'green' pastures and a black soul!" (Baker, cited in Spurgeon)*

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. If fear is an invitation to feel or experience something, do you accept that invitation or decline it like you would an invitation to a bad party?

- How many times in a day do you find yourself feeling fearful of something or someone?
- What name (s) do you have for the word *fear* as it manifests in your day-to-day living?
- David in Psalm 23 says that he will not fear but we can only understand fear when we have experienced it first-hand. How is David understanding the role of a shepherd in this passage and writing from a very personal perspective?

