

PSALM 23

He Guides Me Along

Sermon-Based Study Guide
Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church
Psalm 23.3 | July 12, 2020

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I. Introduction to this Study

Our summer series in Psalm 23 continues as we reflect on what it means to be *guided by the Good Shepherd along the right paths for his name's sake...* He leads me in the paths of righteousness for his own name's sake. Thank you, Jesus!

Interesting fact: Dr. Kenneth Bailey writes, *"The clear assumption, (affirmed by the Classical Armenian translation [of Psalm 23]) is that I was lost while straying in the paths of unrighteousness and the good shepherd brings me back to the right paths and leads me on."*

Wow! Let us be grateful for the saving love of Jesus in our lives, as we continue to reflect together on the wondrous ways the Good Shepherd cares for our deepest needs!

II. Connecting with One Another

When have you experienced joy in meeting a need for someone?

What would you list as your most basic 3-5 needs in life?

What has been the most precious thing that you have lost, only to have found it again?

Which of the needs identified in this Psalm are you particularly aware of God meeting in your life at this time? What is it like for you to experience God's care in this way?

III. Study the Text

a. Read **Isaiah 53.6**. Why do we need a Shepherd? And how has this Shepherd guided you in your life and faith journey? Reflect on those days you took your own paths...

b. Have you ever thought about Psalm 23 this way? **God as Guide; His people as needy pilgrims**

c. Verse 3 ends: ***"For his own name's sake..."*** Read **Ezekiel 36.20-32**.

What did the nations say about God?

What motivated God to restore Israel?

Discuss, reflecting on Psalm 23.3: The shepherd searches for the lost sheep out of loyalty to his own integrity. It is for "his own name's sake." Therefore, my worth as a sheep, be it little or great, has nothing to do with his determination to (find and) restore me. [Ken Bailey]

d. Read **John 10.1-21**

How do sheep respond to the Shepherd?

Who are the "thieves and robbers"?

How does Jesus identify himself with the "good shepherd"? (vv.11-15)

Who are the "other sheep" he must bring in also?

What final claim does Jesus make in verses 17-18?

e. What was the turning point for you of hearing "God's voice" and responding?

How do you discern his voice from all the voices that vie for your attention?



- f. How does it make you feel to think of God caring for you as the Good Shepherd?
- g. Reflect on these words from Max Lucado, *“The path of righteousness is a narrow, winding trail up a steep hill. At the top of a hill is a cross.”*

Jesus called Himself the Good Shepherd. The Shepherd who lays down His life for His sheep. Explore these Scriptures – and their context - that illustrate this truth: Psalm 23.1; Psalm 79.13; Psalm 100.3; Ezekiel 34.11-16; Luke 15.4; Matthew 9.36; Luke 12.32; Matthew 26.31; Hebrews 13.20.

IV. Pray

- a. Pray for a new openness for the Lord's leading/guiding presence in your life. How can others in your group be supporting you in prayer?
- b. Ask God to open His flock's heart and hands towards His leading in their life - for His glory and the benefit of others.
- c. Who is the lost sheep that comes to mind right now, that needs to experience the caring presence of the Good Shepherd...?

