

## STATEMENTS OF FAITH: "More than Adequate, Part 2"

### INTRODUCTION

- **Key Idea:** In Psalm 23, David describes a sense of **adequacy** – "I shall not want" (v.1); "I will fear no evil" (v.4)
- His adequacy for life has been rooted in a **relationship with the LORD as His shepherd.**

Last message:

1. The Shepherd **Stills** His sheep (v.2): "He leads me besides still waters."
2. The Shepherd **Saves** His sheep (v.3): "He restores my soul."

### THE SHEPHERD STEERS HIS SHEEP (PSALM 23:3)

- **Verse 3** – "He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake."
  - The LORD both brings us back and leads us forward.
  - The **paths** spoken of in verse 3 describe "well-worn ruts" that weren't always easy to find.

Notice that the shepherd doesn't drive the sheep. He leads the sheep. Sometimes an Eastern shepherd would pull some fruit out of the bushes or trees and would feed the flock as he led the flock. This is a beautiful picture of the LORD's shepherding care of His people.

- **Christians follow the voice of the shepherd as it is found in the word of God.**  
2 Timothy 3:15-17, Psalm 119:18, 24, 98, 104

### THE SHEPHERD SAFEGUARDS HIS SHEEP (PSALM 23:4)

- The shepherd **protects the sheep** in perilously threatening environments.
- What comforts the sheep in the midst of the valley is the **presence of the shepherd.**
- Verse 4 – The Hebrew grammar shifts from the third person ("*he*") to the second person ("*you*").

The shepherd was like a Western cowboy in that he would fight off lions and bears in order to protect the flock. The rod was an offensive weapon used to beat animals to death or to throw out an approaching predator. **The shepherd was ready to go to war for his sheep.**

- "The sheep are safer in the valley with the shepherd than on the mountain without the shepherd."

"I am still in the valley but thank God I am walking through it, not wallowing in it." (Vance Havner)

### THE SHEPHERD SERVES HIS SHEEP (PSALM 23:5)

"Depth and strength underline the simplicity of this psalm. Its peace is not escape; its contentment is not complacency: There is a readiness to face deep darkness and imminent attack, and the climax reveals a love which homes toward no material good but to the Lord Himself." (Derek Kidner)

- **Verse 5** – "You prepare a table before me": God prepares the path on the destination He is leading us to.

"Paul, I want to tell you that I've never deplaned or stepped on foreign soil, but I have found that God got there first." (Missionary to Paul Jackson, head of Evangelical Baptist Missions)

### THE SHEPHERD SEEKS HIS SHEEP (PSALM 23:6)

- The shepherd **pursues** his sheep – the same word is used of Pharaoh pursuing the Israelites for harm (Exodus 14:8-9). Here the word is used of the LORD **pursuing His people for good.**

# Sermon Application Questions

April 19, 2020

## PERSONAL RESPONSES

1 Max Lucado has written this:

“Out of the lions’ den for Daniel, the prison for Peter, the whale’s belly for Jonah, Goliath’s shadow for David, the storm for the disciples, disease for the lepers, doubt for Thomas, the grave for Lazarus, and the shackles for Paul. God gets us through stuff. *Through* the Red Sea onto dry ground (Ex. 14:22), *through* the wilderness (Deut. 29:5), *through* the valley of the shadow of death (Ps. 23:4), and *through* the deep sea (Ps. 77:19). *Through* is a favorite word of God’s:

When you pass *through* the waters, I will be with you;  
And *through* the rivers, they shall not overflow you.  
When you walk *through* the fire, you shall not be burned,  
Nor shall the flame scorch you. (Isa. 43:2)”

How does this perspective inform how you view your current circumstances?

How does this perspective equip you to give hope to others?

2 After Vance Havner lost his wife after thirty-six years of marriage, he wrote about his experience in a book called Though I Walk Through the Valley. He said:

“I’m still in the valley, but thank God I’m walking through it, not wallowing in it.”

What is the difference between **walking** in the valley and **wallowing** in it?

What are some lessons that God has taught you through the valleys of life?

## DIGGING DEEPER

1 Take some time and reflect on some of the key passages related to this week’s sermon. Ask the Lord for help in making application of these truths to your life.

### **Deuteronomy 4:7**

For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is to us, whenever we call upon him?

### **Psalms 28:9**

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

### **Psalms 80:1**

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock. You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth.

### **Isaiah 40:11**

He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

### **John 10:10-11**

I came that they might have life and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

Read **Psalm 23:6**.

Pastor Philip noted that the same word (“*pursue*”) is used to describe both Pharaoh’s pursuit of Israel for harm and the LORD’s pursuit of His people for good.

2

Reflect on how the LORD’s **goodness** (“*giving us what we don’t deserve*”) and His **mercy** (“*withholding what we do deserve*”) has followed you during the days of your life.

What are some expressions of His goodness and mercy in your life?

## PERSONAL APPLICATION

A missionary once told Paul Jackson the following statement:

*“I have never deplaned or stepped onto foreign soil but I have found that God got there first.”*

1

When God leads His sheep, He prepares the path on the destination He is leading us to. As Pastor Philip reminded us: “Every step you walk in life, you are walking in His footprints.”

Many Christians are worried about issues which pertain to tomorrow. How should the truth of the LORD’s leading change the way we view the future?

Pastor Philip taught us that “***Christians follow the voice of the shepherd as it is found in the word of God.***”

2 Timothy 3:16 teaches us that the Scripture is profitable for:

2

- **Teaching** – what is right
- **Reproof** – what is not right
- **Correction** – how to get right
- **Training in righteousness** – how to stay right

Steve Farrar lives his life out of a “red leather chair and a black leather Bible” every day of his life.

What is your daily commitment to feed your soul on the truth of Scripture? How will you hear the voice of the good shepherd this week?