

# Rest In The Shepherd

November 5-11, 2023



## **MAIN POINT**

When the Lord is our shepherd, he leads us in to perpetual rest for the restoration of our souls. We receive the righteousness of Christ as a free gift that he extends to us for the glory of His name.

## **HEAD, HEART AND LIFE CHANGE**

- To believe that all promises of rest apart from the Lord are ultimately empty.
- To feel a tangible sense of rest from the chaos of life.
- To repent of whatever false forms of rest we are chasing, and pursue only the promise of rest extended by the Lord.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Think back over your week.

**When did you feel the most rested?**

**What made that moment restful for you?**

Rest is important. It's even commanded in the Bible. We started off this study talking about how God is our shepherd who provides for our needs. Today's study will continue to look at that idea as Matt Chandler talks about how the shepherd leads us into rest.

**READ [PSALM 23:1-6](#).**

Show Session 2: Psalm 23:2 (7 minutes).

## **DISCUSSION**

While God is sovereign, all-knowing, and all-powerful, he is also a shepherd who cares for his sheep. When we belong to his flock, we enjoy his tender protection. And the ultimate goal is to find all that we long for in him. Because Jesus is God, we see this attribute of God expressed through the earthly life of our Savior. He is the good shepherd and his sheep follow his voice. But that brings us to an important question we have to consider: Where is Jesus leading us?

**Take a minute to reflect back on what you learned from session one. Over the past week, have you identified any ways in which you find yourself in want?  
Where are you struggling to agree with David in saying, "I shall not want"?**

**How have you seen the Lord provide for you over the past week?  
How have you followed his voice?**

Over the next four weeks, we're going to consider where our good shepherd is leading us as we walk with him by faith. This week, we're going to take a look at one of the specific destinations—rest.

**READ [PSALM 23:2](#).**

**What are some images that come to mind when you think about rest?  
What does rest look like for you?**

**What grade would you give your ability to rest at this stage of your life? Why?**

As Matt pointed out in the session, God invites us to follow him out of drought and weariness and in to spaces of rest. It's a perpetual invitation because our need for rest ebbs and flows throughout life, but it will always remain a need this side of glory.

**Where do you find yourself facing weariness? What causes that exhaustion?**

**What are some ways that you have sought rest outside of the Lord as a response to your exhaustion, either today or at some point in the past?**

The primary way God invites us in to rest is through his Son, Jesus Christ. Outside of him, there is no true rest because we do not have peace with God. Beneath the surface, it is our separation from God that fuels our feelings of unrest. Being able to breathe out requires a true commitment to Jesus Christ.

Show Session 3: Psalm 23:3 (7 minutes).

## **DISCUSSION**

So far, we've studied some pretty spectacular truths about God as well as what we receive by following him. When the Lord is our shepherd, we lack nothing. He leads us into green pastures, beside still waters, and restores our souls. But why? What is the grand goal behind the kindness he extends to us? That's the topic of our session today.

**READ [PSALM 23:3](#).**

The final half of verse 3 introduces us to one additional benefit of knowing him that we haven't talked about before—he leads us in paths of righteousness.

## **What is righteousness? How would you define it according to your understanding of Scripture?**

One of the things that the Bible makes very clear is that we cannot make ourselves righteous apart from God's grace. As Matt pointed out in the session, the Israelites were a prime example of this. In the book of Exodus alone, God miraculously leads his people out of centuries of slavery in Egypt, allows them to cross the Red Sea on dry land, and provides them with manna from the sky to eat only to hear them respond by pining for the meat they enjoyed in Egypt. It didn't take long for them to forget their need for God and it doesn't take long for us today.

**How has the Lord led you in righteousness?**

**How has your life changed as a result of coming to know Christ?**

Now, there is a difference between external righteousness and the kind of righteousness that we're talking about in this session. Anyone can maintain a level of good behavior for a time, but apart from a heart transformed by God we will always run out of fuel.

**Describe a time when you tried to live a moral life apart from God.**

**What effect did it have on you? In what ways did it shape what you thought of as "good"?**

**Where are you forgetting your need for God today?**

**Where do you need to surrender to his care as the fuel for your righteousness?**

## **LAST WORD**

Everyone needs rest. The world offers us many places to look for it, but it can never deliver on the rest our souls long for. When the Lord is our shepherd, he leads us to the places of peace we need, though they may not always look like the ones we want. But he does so in order to restore us.

Whether you find yourself in a time of rest or in need of an elusive state of peace, look to the Lord. Allow him to lead you into green pastures and guide you alongside still waters. Trust him to take you where you need to go for the restoration of your soul.

If the Lord is your shepherd, he has made you righteous not based on your own merit, but based on the perfect record of Christ's obedience on your behalf. Stop trying to earn God's acceptance and begin living out of the acceptance you already have through his Son. That's the difference between a right and wrong understanding of righteousness. And it has the potential to change everything.

## **APPLICATION**

If you are currently in a season of enjoying rest in the Lord, look for someone in your life who is struggling and make an intentional effort to encourage them with the truths you learned from this session.

Identify a need somewhere in your day-to-day routine (workplace, neighborhood, school, etc.) and make an intentional effort to serve that need to make much of the name of the Lord.

## **PRAY**

Spend at least five minutes in prayer each day this week specifically confessing to the Lord the places where you have found yourself in need of rest as a result of this session. And, if the Lord revealed to you any ways that you have misunderstood the righteousness he freely gives, confess that to him throughout this next week. Ask that he would free you from false belief in order to walk in the truth of his Word.