



## The Good Shepherd

**PSALM 23 | KYLE KENNEDY**

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Our most earnest prayer and all the things that we seek you for, all the things that it is right to seek you for, that our most earnest desire would be like David's, one thing have I desired of the Lord, one thing will I seek after that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord. Would you be with us this morning? Would you be with Kyle as he preaches from Psalm 23? Would we be encouraged this morning? Would our faith be bolstered? Would you be glorified? Would you be glorified as our Good Shepherd? We ask in Jesus' name, Amen. You may be seated.

Well, thank you to the praise team. Normally, I have some input on what song we'll sing in the set, what Scripture we'll read. I'm so thankful this week I didn't have any input.

That was a wonderful way to set our hearts for today's message and an encouraging way for us to sing before the Lord. This morning, by way of introduction, I want to welcome you into 2026. It's a privilege to preach to you.

The privilege is yours as well. This will be the best sermon you've heard from this pulpit all year. It'll be the best sermon that I've preached all year, and together we'll get to enjoy this moment until next week when Jake is back, and I'll have the dubious distinction of being the second best.

Ushering in a new year brings in all sorts of reflection. It's a natural breaking point. We look back at what occurred in the last year, and you may be looking back at 2025 and maybe looking at your goals.

Maybe you wrote them down. Maybe you didn't. At least you considered them.

And maybe you accomplished all that you wanted to accomplish. You lost the weight you wanted to lose. You made a career move you wanted to make.

You made the fantasy football playoff for the second year in a row. You built a barn and filled it with 40,000 chickens. You remained completely defeated in an indoor soccer league, not winning a single game or really coming close to doing so.

Whatever it is you aim to do, as you look at the year in review, you would look back and see some success. You would enjoy the sensation of what you've accomplished through your labor. Yet for others, last year was marked with difficulty.

You look back and see what could be an utter failure. You didn't lose the weight, but you gained the weight. You didn't make a job move, but you struggled job issues.

You had relational problems. You had health problems. You had financial troubles.

Your car broke down. You look back at 2025, and if you're being honest, you wouldn't give it a five-star review. Maybe no one ushered in the new year more eagerly than you did.

It was a struggle. But the new year is a two-sided coin, isn't it? We look back at the year past, and then we look forward to the year in the future, and we set new goals. Some of you, it's refreshing last year's goals that you didn't fulfill.

I've had the same goals for multiple years. It's easy to remember them, but you at least think about it. And there's nothing wrong with reviewing what's happened or look forward to what we can accomplish.

Those things can be good. And yet, so often we lose sight of what is happening in our life and the circumstances of both the last year and the year to come. No matter where your heart is today, whether joyful from last year's experience or feeling beat down and dreading the year to come, I hope that Psalm 23 will be an encouragement to you.

Whether experiencing a time of plenty or time of want, so often our tendency can be to look inward to ourselves. To give ourselves a pat on the back for the things that we've accomplished or to turn within for some sort of inner strength that we could face the task at hand. We would withdraw from the outside world.

We would turn away from the Scriptures, from prayer, from fellowship, even from God Himself to find answers in another place. When things get going tough, we can trust ourselves. Whatever circumstance you find yourself in, I hope that today's passage will help realign our thinking from a biblical perspective as we start this year to set our compass to true north, as you will.

There are many passages we could look at, but I wanted to pick something that we could get through this morning, and I want you to turn with me to Psalm 23. If turning to the Psalms is causing some restlessness in your heart, it means you were here last week for the speed run through Psalm 119. You have a little PTSD.

I'm hoping this week I could help you. I didn't take on the longest chapter in the Bible. This is the 10th shortest.

It's going to be an easy work through for us today. It's just six verses. I can tell you I approached Psalm 23 in my study expecting that I had a good grasp of this Psalm, and you might feel the same way today.

It's a very familiar Psalm. You probably know, if not all of it, at least some of it. And from time to time, it's good that we pick up these diamonds and give them a good polish, that we can see their luster again.

I can tell you that the depth of my study revealed my lack of understanding of what Psalm 23 is teaching us. There are truths in here that are essential to our living rightly, and this passage is brilliant in its theology and application of wisdom. As Spurgeon referred to this as the pearl of the Psalms, I also have come to appreciate it more dearly from my study.

I pray that today you would leave here with the richness of its understanding, with the benefit of its truth. Let's begin by reading Psalm 23 together. It's titled, Yahweh is my shepherd, a Psalm of David.

Yahweh is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside quiet waters.

He restores my soul. He guides me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil for you are with me.

Your rod and your staff, they comfort me. Prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You have anointed my head with oil.

My cup overflows. Surely goodness and loving kindness will pursue me all the days of my life. I will dwell in the house of Yahweh forever.

The psalm starts introducing David as the author. It's not really debated, although I did google if it's debated. There are some people that debate it, but I would propose to you, being as it's written here, we're going to accept this is written by David.

Many of you are aware of David's life. We studied 1 Samuel a few years ago. We went through that study and that was a fruitful study.

We saw much of the life of David, but to refresh our memories, I just want to remind you of some of David's life. If you remember, as a young man, he was a shepherd and he tended to his father's sheep. David defeated Goliath and won many battles for Israel.

In his success, Saul would pursue his life, wanting to take it from him. David had a remarkable testimony of waiting on God's timing. He doesn't seek Saul's life, but he waits on the Lord's timing to make him king.

He would suffer hardship for many of those years, even after becoming king. When he had it all, David has a life of difficulty. Some of it's of his own doing.

He commits adultery. He murders an innocent man. He loses a child.

He sees a child rebel against him. He sees the opportunity to build the temple of the Lord, move on, and be passed on to his son Solomon. But David's life wasn't one of ease and comfort.

He experienced great difficulty, often with his life endangered for most of his days. And when you read the Psalms of David, they're rife with emotion and with just the sentiment of a man who's leaning towards God and relying on the Lord. He desired to know God intimately, so much so that he's named a man after God's own heart.

The timing of the writing of Psalm 23 is one of debate. I can't tell you whether he wrote that early in his life, and it became an anthem which he would hold to, to secure him in his faith throughout difficulty. But I do believe David likely wrote this later in life.

It's to the praise of a God that as he looks back on his life, he sees the Lord's gentle hand. He's seeing the faithfulness of the Lord through his highs and through his lows. And in all of that, he pens this pearl of wisdom for us.

It's an intimate psalm from a humble man to his God. It is an encouragement to us. This isn't with everyone that we read of.

It's a stark contrast to Nebuchadnezzar and Israel, who at times both failed to see the Lord's goodness and kindness to them. But let us look now at the reflection of David, and in our hearts, align ourselves with Psalm 23 as we enter the new year. I have three simple points today.

I'll try and remind you of what they are. The first point is the shepherd. The second point is the pasture.

And the third point is the care. The shepherd, the pasture, and the care. Let's start with the shepherd.

David introduces Yahweh. This is important to start here. It's God's covenantal name, and it's where he will begin and end.

If you're in the LSB, it'll say Yahweh. In other translations, it'll likely say Lord. It's a word that's used 7,000 times about in the Old Testament to refer to God.

And it refers to God's eternal and unchanging nature. David's recognizing right out of the gate the divine nature of God as the foundation for his psalm, and it's critical that we understand who the psalm hinges upon, and it's Yahweh. The psalm isn't actually focused on us.

It's not primarily focused on David. It's meant to teach us about Yahweh. From this psalm, we're to learn more about God.

If you remember in Exodus 3, the Lord introduced Himself to Moses in this way. When Moses asked what He shall say the Lord's name is, and God says, I am who I am, and tell them I am sent to you. He's the Yahweh, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob has sent me to you.

This is my name forever, and this is my memorial name from generation to generation. We begin with Yahweh God the Creator, the Holy One of Israel, who has rescued Israel by great miracles, who brought them into the promised land, who defeated their enemies before them, and Yahweh is the focus of this psalm. Look at David's claim though.

Yahweh is my shepherd. His personal use of language. He doesn't say Yahweh is the shepherd of Israel.

Yahweh is my shepherd. Yahweh is our shepherd. Yahweh can be your shepherd.

This is a personal psalm. Yahweh is my shepherd. He holds to a personal intimate relationship with Yahweh as the one who would guide and lead him, and David was familiar with what shepherding entailed.

Remember as a young boy he was a shepherd of his father's flock. He knew that he must care for the sheep and lead them. He must take them to food.

If you remember, sheep is a humbling analogy for us. They need great care. They're not very ambitious animals.

I was even driving in today, and I noticed they're just kind of standing in the same spot all the time. I know they move, but I don't even know why. There's food where they're at.

I think one just wanders a little bit, and the other ones are like, well, we'll follow that one. He probably knows where he's going. No one knows where they're going.

They just meander about the field. This is the comparison for us. We need care.

We're unable to care for ourselves, and therefore a shepherd is necessary. I've learned though that it could be worse. God could have compared us to chickens, who I think might be the dumbest animal on the planet.

I can't confirm that. It's not biblical, but it's just one man's opinion after experiencing a lot of chickens recently. But the shepherd's job was to protect the sheep, and the shepherd's job was to ensure the sheep received appropriate care and provision to survive.

What's remarkable is David is saying this. I dare claim none of us in here were more capable than David was, or are more capable. He was an ambitious young man.

He was a king. He fought giants. He overthrew kingdoms for God.

He was a very valiant warrior. He was very intelligent, and he led Israel through many difficulties. We look at all that he accomplished.

The last person I would think needs to come under the care of a shepherd is David, and yet David is saying, I need God. I need Yahweh to shepherd me. David humbly claims Yahweh is his personal shepherd.

The question for you today is, God your shepherd, are you living in a circumstance where you've become self-sufficient? Are you haughty in your own success, or wallowing in self-pity? If so, the psalm begins by calling us to repent of our pride. To make David's confession that Yahweh is his personal shepherd your own confession. That Yahweh would be your personal shepherd.

If we think differently, we're destined to fail in whatever we set out to do. We must begin with this humble confession, and then live our lives in submission to it. David makes the confession that Yahweh is his shepherd, and now he's going to lead us into the benefits.

The next several verses in second part of verse 1 are going to talk about the pasture that the shepherd leads his sheep to. David's going to lead us through the benefits if you're unconvinced or struggling with God as your personal shepherd and caretaker. I pray this would be a benefit to us as we walk through it.

His next proclamation is, Yahweh is my shepherd, I shall not want. I think a better understanding is, I lack nothing. Under the tender care of the good shepherd, David lacked nothing in his life.

His personal confession of the shepherd is followed by a personal confession of the sufficiency of the provision the shepherd provides. Lord, because you are my shepherd, I lack nothing. There's nothing that you have left out for me.

There's nothing that's been unfulfilled in my life. You haven't been stingy. And I think sometimes we think God's being stingy with us.

We think we're missing some good thing. And David puts that thought to rest here. John Calvin says it this way, the heavenly shepherd had omitted nothing which might contribute to make him live happily under his care.

The heavenly shepherd had omitted nothing which might contribute to make him live happily under his care. David's confessing in all circumstances in his life, he was never lacking. There was never something that God had failed to provide him.

The shepherd had been faithful to fulfill his duties. My question for you is in whatever circumstances you are in now, have been in or will be in, do you see that the good shepherd is providing all that you need? He's caring for you in ways that you may not see or even imagine or sometimes confess. Do you yearn for more provision or different circumstances? And I know I do.

I know that I can look at my circumstances in life with a sense of pessimism, like really Lord, this is all you're providing right now. I can treat life like I've opened a model and as I'm building it, there's a missing piece that would have been critical to completing the model or the puzzle. And there's nothing more frustrating than building a puzzle only to find in the end it's missing a piece.

And I think sometimes we live our lives treating the Lord as if that's what he's done to us. Some critical detail would be missed. And yet this isn't the case.

So you remember in Matthew 6, he tells us that we are not to be concerned about tomorrow or what we'll wear, what we'll eat. He knows we need those things and he provides them to us, but that we're to seek him first. The good shepherd knows your needs and he graciously supplies all that you need.

The problem isn't the Lord's provision. The problem then becomes our expectations of him. I recently heard somebody say that joy is your current circumstances minus your expectations.

As I was thinking of this passage, I was thinking how often the Lord graciously provides to me and yet my expectations robs me of seeing him provide for me in grand ways. This may blind you to see how God is shepherding you and because you begin to follow your own desires and presume of God and then lose sight of what he's doing in your life. Paul had learned this lesson.

If you remember, he wrote to Timothy that he ought to be content with food and covering. And then he warns him in verse 9, why should he be content with those things? Because those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. We must root out these foolish and harmful desires in our life that we wouldn't fall into their snare.

Paul had learned this well in his own life. He wrote again to the Philippians that he'd learned the secret of being content in whatever circumstances to get along in humble means and to live in abundance and that he could do all things through the Lord who was strengthening him in those moments. Not only did David learn to trust in Lauren's provision, Paul did as well and I submit to you that you can too.

David's confession here is not out of our reach. We believe the Lord provides all your needs this very day, in the years past, in the year to come. Do you trust that he will provide for your needs tomorrow? David moves on from telling us how of his personal declaration that he has all that he needs to now proclaiming to us what that looks like.

So what does the Lord's provision look like in our life? He says, he makes me lie down in green pastures. And I want you to look at the beginning of the next four lines here. It's he makes, he leads, he restores, he guides.

The Lord is doing all of this for David. He's led at first to makes me lie down in green pastures. The idea here was that as the shepherd would move the sheep from place to place, he would need to take them someplace where they could feed.

And the idea of the green pasture here is that as the sheep would arrive there, they wouldn't have to hunt for food or they wouldn't have to bite closely to the ground because the grass was short and withered. But this is a lush pasture that is green that the sheep can go and lie and rest and find comfort in and feed as they see fit. They're not led to an area where they then must go find their own food.

They're not led to an area where there would be a limitation, but the provision is bountiful and provided for him. He's not finding this green pasture on his own, but the Lord is leading him here. This is the destination that the Lord has in mind as he leads his sheep.

Additionally, he leads me beside quiet waters. And if you remember, sheep aren't smart animals and they're not very capable, so therefore rushing water presents a problem. If they end up in the water, bye-bye sheep.

No more sheep. He's going downriver. His sheep friends can't rescue him.

They're a round, plump, unathletic animal. The idea of the quiet waters was that this would be a slowly flowing or still water that they could easily go and partake of it. That it would quench their thirst.

It's not brackish. It's not your broken well. It's not your filtered city water.

This is pure water that the sheep can easily come to without peril and take from its bountiful supply. He continues that these green pastures, these quiet waters have a result. He restores my soul.

This provision strengthens the sheep. The food and the water in the lush field is an area where the sheep is able to thrive. They're well-rested.

They're well-cared for. I think we're familiar with this. We call it hangery in our house.

And well into my 20s, maybe 30s, I don't know that it's happened since I've been in my 40s, but maybe, my mom would randomly bring me a sandwich. And for years I didn't know why. And one day I asked her, mom why do you just bring me a sandwich? And she would say, well you're just really unsettled.

And I know that if you just eat something, you'll be happier. Hence the phrase that we have fat and happy. I know that food in my belly restores my strength.

Something cool to drink restores my physical strength. Here he says it's restoring his soul. The provision would be a revival of strength for the sheep.

Maybe after a difficult journey. Maybe after moving from place to place. But the provision, the bountiful supply, results in a refreshing of strength.

This is where the shepherd is taking them. Now how do they get there? Well your scriptures say, he guides me in the paths of righteousness. And while a moral implication may be present here, I think the better understanding is that he leads me down right paths.

Why do I think that? Well the shepherd takes the sheep from place to place. His goal is to get them to green pastures with quiet waters that their soul may be restored. How does he do that? He knows the path to get there.

He knows the way. Sometimes I think we question how the Lord is taking us here, don't we? We kind of look at him like he's MapQuest. Or Google Maps that can lead you astray.

Or maybe you're not Google Maps, you're Apple Maps. Or I don't know what Android has, but it probably has some sort of map that's not as good as the other maps. David's confessing that not only is the Lord leading and providing for him to comfort and strengthen him, but that ultimately the Lord knows the right path to lead him to that destination.

He's not going to follow his own path to get there. He's not going to find his own path to find comfort and lush and fertile ground, but that the Lord is leading him to that destination by his own hand. Yahweh is leading him there to that place.

The circumstances in his life are divinely directed though, so that David will be led to a green pasture by still waters and be strengthened. Who takes him there? The Lord's own hand. You remember we sing of this, all things must work together good for me.

That's from Romans 8.28. We know that for all those who love God, all things work together for what good according to his purpose. Do you understand that in your life, the path that you are on, God has divinely chosen to provide for you and maybe provide for you in ways that you don't yet understand and maybe won't understand this side of glory. But the destination is sure.

You can be absolutely certain, as David was, that as God was working for his good and choosing his path, so he is doing the same for you. But why does God do these things? How can we be sure that this path, this destination is so sure? He ends verse 3 saying that he does this for his name's sake. If you remember, God is consumed with his glory.

His glory would not be profaned among the nations. In this case, the shepherd is leading the sheep down these paths. It must result in coming to a bountiful supply in the appropriate destination.

Why? Because the reputation of the shepherd was staked upon this. You weren't a good shepherd if that didn't happen. Think, if you had your own sheep and the shepherd kept taking them out to dirt fields by rushing water, you're going to find what? A new shepherd.

That's not a good shepherd. The shepherd here, David is confessing that his name is staked upon his ability to do what he says he can do. God won't fail in providing for you.

He won't fail in leading you to these pastures by these waters. He won't fail in refreshing your strength. He won't fail in taking you down the right path.

Why? Because God is your shepherd and he cannot fail in doing that. Otherwise, he wouldn't be Yahweh. He wouldn't be God.

He wouldn't be the Lord that the Scriptures declare to us. Or some of the ways he does this for us now. Well, he sends Christ to be our Savior.

He sends the Spirit to dwell within you. He gives you his word that you might better know him and understand his direction for your life. He gives us the church that we would have fellowship with one another.

He gives us prayer that we could bring our petitions before him. In so many ways, God is making provision for you in your life here and now. Beyond that, has Christ not ascended into heaven to prepare a place for us? This is the first three verses of this Psalm and David has graciously declared who his shepherd is and what this provision looks like.

And that would be enough. But I think the second half of this Psalm is where David gets real with us. The second half of the Psalm begins a transition and I want you to understand as we enter verse 4 that the same loving God, the same gracious God who he's referring to in verses 1 through 3 is the same God in verses 4, 5, and 6. A God who knows the needs of the sheep, who leads them to lush pastures and still waters, who always picks the correct path and stakes his very reputation on his ability to do so.

He's the same God who's going to be leading in verse 4. Look with me there. The shepherd leads us down right paths. David talks about that path, even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death.

The word here I think better describes darkness than death, although it could refer to death. Often it just refers to the absence of light. I don't think the idea here is necessarily facing imminent death, but walking through a dark valley.

It's a place of peril and danger for the sheep. It's filled with predators. It's filled with dark places that would cause fear in the heart of the sheep.

In fact, the sheep would not choose to enter these valleys on their own, being such a timid animal. And maybe you've been walking through one of these valleys. Maybe you've been struggling difficulty in your life, and it's easy for us to lose focus in the struggle of who's leading us through this valley.

Yet David's able to make a remarkable claim in the second half of this verse that I fear no evil. And there's a transition here. There's a transition in verses 1-3.

He's talking about God in the third person. He, He, He. Look at verse 4. Why doesn't David fear? For you are with me.

He's gone from talking about God now to speaking directly with Him. Why doesn't David fear? David's reminded of who is guiding him. He knows this is the right path.

Even though it leads through darkness, it's been chosen by the Good Shepherd for him to walk through. He's not here by chance. He didn't take a wrong turn.

God's not taking a shortcut to save time or taking the sheep somewhere recklessly. Yahweh Himself led him here, and I want you to notice it's not the place for Him to lie down. It's the place for Him to pass through, to walk.

The darkness, the dark valley is transitory in nature. He's being shepherded by Yahweh as He walks down this path, but isn't going to stay there. I don't know how long this section or path will be in your life.

I don't know how many valleys the Lord has planned for your life. None of us do. What we need to know is that it's God Himself who is guiding us through that valley.

God Himself is shepherding you in those difficult moments. He's leading you through the darkness, and you need to know that He has your best interest in mind. He has the best outcome for you in mind.

In fact, He chose this path because it was the only way to get to the destination. It was the only way to take you to a lush pasture, to take you by quiet waters, and yes, to strengthen your soul. And in moments, we begin to feel alone.

And while David says he fears no evil because God is with him, look at the end of verse 4. Your rod and your staff, they comfort me. David proclaims, I believe, that he ought not fear. Yet in the Lord's kindness, he knows our weakness.

And David acknowledges that he had difficulty in these times, and yet in those moments of darkness, he felt the guiding presence of the Lord. He found those little touches of the rod and the staff to be a comfort to him. It was the way that a shepherd could physically contact the sheep to guide them.

It was a reminder of God's presence. I know for some of you who may be the more frantic sheep, the rod and the staff can feel more like a correction. For those who walk more closely with the Lord, it may feel like a guiding comfort.

Some of you may feel like the UPS man being shepherded back to his truck by an angry dog. But that's not the imagery here of the shepherd. The imagery here is the guiding presence of the Lord through the valley.

And it's not mystical, but it's faith that these are ordained circumstances in your life, leading you somewhere for your benefit. This promise is renewed that the Lord is with us in Matthew 28. If you remember, the Lord promises he's with us even to the end of the age.

I think this passage can be understood that in your darkest hour, when all seems lost, when you see no way out, and there's no clear path ahead, that God himself will reach out in the darkness to help guide you and comfort you and strengthen you. God himself will lead you out of the valley that you see no exit sign. And these things are for a purpose.

Remember in 1 Peter, it tells us that even for a short time, these afflictions may be necessary. They're necessary to draw you into the shepherd. That in those moments of weakness, as Paul says, his weakness would be found in the strength of the Lord, that he would be strengthened, that he would be able to do all things.

The passage through this valley is intended to culminate in arriving at the green pasture. But do we struggle with these dark paths that the Lord has lead us down? Do we have difficulty in those moments? I think that we do. I think that we can lose sight of what the Lord is doing in our life.

John Calvin again writes it this way, and certainly the reason we are so terrified when it pleases God to exercise us with the cross is because every man that he may sleep soundly and undisturbed wraps himself up in carnal security. This is a good observation that Calvin makes here, and I'd submit that we need to consider this. If we're honest, we would choose the easy paths.

We wouldn't take the dark valleys. And my fear for us is that we would choose to break fellowship with the shepherd if it means going into the dark valley that we could hold on to some carnal security. We would actually leave the comfort and care of the shepherd to seek our own way.

David tells us he fixes his eyes on the staff of the shepherd, and that's the remedy for the fear that grips him. He would gladly enter this area. He could be in the comfort and care of the shepherd knowing where he's leading him.

The last point here is the care of the shepherd in verses 5 and 6. David transitions a little bit from his metaphor of the sheep and shepherd and moves on to the imagery of a banquet, but I want us to follow this because we've seen the provision of the lust pasture we're meant to lie in beside the still waters, and that's starkly contrasted to the valley of the shadow of death. But he wants you to know that the Lord is still providing in those difficult moments. Look at what he says, you prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.

You have anointed my head with oil. My cup overflows. What's David teaching us? He's confessing that even in difficult times, the Lord has continued to provide all that he needs, and he does so lavishly.

Look at the language here. Before the presence of my enemy, the Lord provides him a meal, and in that meal, he anoints his head with oil. This would be something you would do for a guest to provide them refreshment as they came in from the road, kind of helping them clean up.

That's coupled with both the refreshment of the meal and the oil, but also the cup. David's saying he has been provided for as an honored guest, and it's not based upon something he's done. He's saying this is the Lord's provision for him.

This is the best service ever. His cup never empties. His plate is never empty.

It just continues to be refreshed as he enjoys the provision. The question is, do you know how much the Lord loves you? How much he provides for you and cares for you, even in your difficulty? And I think we lose sight of that. I think we do.

David's reminder here is that the Lord continues to pour his grace upon him. And when we lose sight of this, I think that our hearts grow dim in seeing the Lord's shepherding care for us. Our hearts grow dim in the moments when they're meant to shine the brightest.

God loves to pour his grace out upon you. He pours it out here like a fire hose. He backs it up with a dump truck.

He leaves nothing unturned that in every moment of your life you would have more than an abundance. Do we recognize that? How so? Well, closing in verse 6, David says this, Surely goodness and loving kindness will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of Yahweh forever. That idea of pursue is one of someone hunting down their prey.

It normally has a negative connotation to it. But it's a rigorous pursuit. Except in the end of this pursuit, the Lord's aim is to lavish his goodness and loving kindness upon David.

David's not going to outrun the Lord's goodness or loving kindness, and neither can you. David's confessing this as a certainty. He says, Surely the Lord's goodness and loving kindness will pursue me all the days of my life.

No matter what may come in my life, no matter what holds what is held for me in the future, no matter what path the Lord has, as much as he's shepherding me down that path, his goodness and loving kindness are pursuing me like a vandal. He will not fall short. David closes this psalm by reiterating, I think where he started, and I will dwell in the house of Yahweh forever.

And there can be near and far references here. I think this is better understood that he will commune in the house of God. He will stay near God in his fellowship as God being his shepherd all the days of his life.

David will look no other place. Why? Because he's recognizing that he's lacked nothing in any moment of his life. Is this true of you? As I was reading this, I realized how easily my own heart can become unsettled.

That I can look from year to year and begin to kind of gauge God's performance and his provision in my life. And it's something I just needed to repent of. God is unchanging.

His provision and love and care for me is unchanging. As David says, it pursues me. His unchanging nature does not ebb and flow with your circumstances.

And yet so often that's how we can think. I just spilled my communion. That'll be interesting here in a few minutes.

Now it's like I'm bleeding on my notes. You can't see this, but because it's red grape juice and I've touched it. If anyone has a napkin or a hanky.

David's psalm is a reminder of the faithfulness of God to bring his promises to pass. As Ian referenced earlier in Revelation 21, it says that he'll wipe every tear away from their eyes. There'll no longer be death or mourning or crying or pain.

The first things have passed away. Peter says that for a little while we'll be distressed that we're to receive an incorruptible inheritance. An incorruptible inheritance.

These truths are a sweet reminder for us, are they not? My prayer for you today is I don't know all the circumstances of your life. And I don't know how difficult the journey has been. I don't know how beat down your soul may be today.

And I don't know how high you may be flying in your own work. What I want you to draw from Psalm 23 today is that I know the shepherd who's leading you. I know his faithfulness and his desire for goodness and loving kindness in your life.

That where he is leading you is to take you places that you absolutely need to go. Through valleys you absolutely need to be in. And as difficult as they are, God's promise is sure that on the other side of whatever you're experiencing are green pastures and quiet waters.

And if not in this life for you, certainly in the life to come. That is true for all of us. Would you pray with me? God in heaven, we thank you for this day.

Lord, we confess that too easily we become skittish. We begin to lose focus. We begin to doubt you and question your goodness in our lives.

We begin to look at our lives and wonder if we just could have more like Israel who you provided for in the wilderness. Lord, you kept them safe and fed and well nourished day by day. Each day renewing their provision and yet they grumbled.

Let us see the heart of David, Lord. Let us be thankful for your provision in our life. Let us seek to follow you as our shepherd, to claim you as our shepherd, and that wherever you would take us by whatever means you would do so and whatever provision you provide, Lord, we could look to you with thankfulness knowing.

Knowing with absolute certainty as David says that you're pursuing us with your loving kindness, that you are lavishing your grace upon us, and that you are faithful to keep us and protect us because your name, your reputation as our shepherd is based upon your ability to do so. We know that you do not fail. We know, Lord, that you have closed the mouths of lions.

You have quenched the sting of fire. You have conquered death and overcome our sin. By many mighty works and great miracles, you've done impossible things for us.

Let us praise your name as our shepherd and our God. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.