

The Good Shepherd

Proclamation Wednesday Gathering; Psalm 23:1-6; Week of Sunday, July 22, 2018; Steve Thiel

Theme - David's description of the Lord as his shepherd is ultimately fulfilled in the perfect life and substitutionary death of Jesus, who willingly laid down His life to rescue our souls from sin and death and lead us in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

I. The Good Shepherd – Read Psalm 23:1-6

- A. What are the roles and responsibilities of a shepherd? What would be the characteristics of a bad shepherd? What would be the characteristics of a good shepherd?
- B. As you think about sheep, how would you describe them? In verses 1-3, what does David say God does as his shepherd? In light of what sheep are like, why are these promises so glorious? Why is it so significant that God leads him in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake?
- C. In verse 4, why does David fear no evil? What are the purposes of the rod and staff?
- D. God brings a celebratory feast before David amidst the presence of his enemies (v.5). How can we have peace and joy in God while there are enemies, distractions, and trials in our lives?
- E. In verse 6, who defines what is good? Since God promises, "*that goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life*", how does that help us rightly understand His discipline and guidance? How does "*dwelling in the house of the Lord forever*" encourage you?

II. The Good Shepherd Predicted – Read Ezekiel 34:1-16

- A. Have you ever had a bad shepherd (leader) in your life? If you had to summarize why they were a bad leader in one word, what would it be? What summarizes a good shepherd?
- B. In Ezekiel 34:1-5, the shepherds of Israel have done a terrible job of taking care of God's flock. How would you summarize the description that we've been given of them there?
- C. In Ezekiel 34:11-16, who does God say will be the shepherd of His sheep. According to these verses, what will this shepherd do? Why is this such an encouragement to His sheep?

III. The Good Shepherd Proclaimed – Read John 10:1-18

- A. What does Jesus promise to do that makes Him the Good Shepherd? How is this contrasted with the thief, the robber, and the bad shepherds (i.e. scribes and Pharisees) of His day?
- B. In what areas of your life are you struggling with listening and following the Good Shepherd? How would you like to grow in joyfully and consistently obeying His commands?