

Sheepish 3

PSALM 23

What if your pain has a purpose? In this week's message from Psalm 23:4-5, we explored how God meets us in our deepest valleys ... not just to comfort us, but to use us for the Kingdom and His glory.

Psalm 23:4-5 (NKJV) *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. ⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.*

One of God's primary purposes for allowing suffering into our lives is to bring salvation to the world.

Naaman the Faith of Psalm 23 (2 Kings 5)

So, What?

1. God uses your pain to bring _____ to Jesus.

2. God uses your pain to bring _____ to Jesus.

a. This little girl's suffering became the means of Naaman's _____.

b. Suffering servants are at the _____ of God's plan.

Scripture References (In order of use): Genesis 45:5-8, 50:19-21; Psalm 27:13
Reference Works: Love Without Lack (Dallas Willard); Be Exultant (Warren W. Wiersbe); Psalms (John Day); Psalms, Volume 1 (Albert Barnes); Psalms: Prayers of the Heart (Eugene H. Peterson); The Psalms, Volume 1—Rejoice, the Lord is King (James Johnston)

Discussion Questions

1. Before diving into the sermon content, how would you personally describe your gut reaction when you hear the phrase "God uses suffering for good purposes"? Is it comforting, frustrating, confusing, or something else? Why?
2. Read **Psalm 23:1-6**. Is there anything from the sermon you would like to discuss?
3. Patrick suggests that God sometimes places a "spot" in our lives to wake us up to a deeper need. What kinds of "spots" did he mention, and can you think of others? Have you ever experienced one of those in your own life?
4. "Naaman's entire journey was a lesson in humility, and true conversion requires humility." Do you agree? What does humility look like in the process of coming to faith, or returning to faith after drifting?
5. The unnamed servant girl suffered because of Naaman's sin, and yet she responded with compassion and forgiveness rather than bitterness. How would you respond if the person who caused your suffering got sick? What does your honest answer reveal about where you are spiritually?
6. The sermon draws a direct parallel between the servant girl and Jesus ... both suffered not for their own sin but for the sin of others, both forgave rather than retaliated, and both became the means by which others received healing and salvation. How does seeing that parallel change or deepen the way you understand what Jesus did for you?
7. Read **Colossians 1:24**. What do you think Paul means, and how does it connect to what we see in the servant girl's story?
8. Eric Liddell is remembered by most people for what the movie "Chariots of Fire" depicts, but his greatest chapter came later -- in a Japanese internment camp, where he gave up his freedom and his life for others. What does a life like Liddell's stir up in you?

Daily Devotions

Day 1: The Valley Is Not the End

Reading: Psalm 23:4-5

David did not write Psalm 23 from a palace balcony. He wrote it from the wilderness, from years of running, hiding, and wondering if God had forgotten him. Yet he wrote with stunning confidence. The valley of the shadow of death was real, but so was the Shepherd walking through it with him. Notice that the cup does not merely fill — it runs over. God's generosity is not rationed according to how difficult your circumstances are. In fact, the overflow often comes precisely in the middle of the hardship. The table is set in the presence of enemies, not after they are gone. Whatever valley surrounds you today, the Shepherd has not left the path. His rod and staff are not decorations — they are active, working on your behalf.

Day 2: Pain That Wakes Us Up

Reading: 2 Kings 5:1-14 —

Naaman had everything a person could want — rank, reputation, and the respect of kings. Then one small spot changed everything. It is remarkable how God uses the things that strip us of our self-sufficiency to draw us toward the only One who is truly sufficient. Naaman's leprosy was not the problem; it was the invitation. The real problem was that he did not know the living God. His disease became the door. The same pattern repeats throughout Scripture and throughout human experience. The question is not only what you are going through, but what God may be saying through it. Naaman almost missed his healing because the method offended his pride. Humility is not weakness — it is the posture through which grace enters.

Day 3: The Forgotten Hero

Reading: 2 Kings 5:2-3

She has no name in the text. She has no power, no freedom, and no apparent future. She was taken from her home by the very man she now serves. And yet, when she sees Naaman's suffering, she does not celebrate. She speaks. This unnamed girl is one of the most extraordinary figures in all of Scripture. Her suffering, caused by Naaman's own military campaigns, became the very instrument God used to lead him to salvation. She had forgiven what most could not, and in doing so she became a vessel of grace. You may feel unnamed, overlooked, or powerless in your current circumstances. But God has never once overlooked a willing heart. Your position in the story may be smaller than you hoped, but your faithfulness in it may be larger than you know.

Day 4: The Suffering Servant and the Greater Story

Reading: Isaiah 53:4-5

The unnamed servant girl foreshadows something far greater. Like her, Jesus suffered not because of anything He had done but because of what others had done. Like her, His suffering was caused by the very people He came to save. And like her, He did not respond with bitterness or vengeance — He responded with forgiveness and compassion. Isaiah's words, describe with breathtaking precision what Jesus would willingly endure. He was pierced for rebellion that was not His own. He was crushed for sin He never committed. And through those wounds, healing became available to every person who would humbly receive it. The cross is not a tragedy with a silver lining. It is the deliberate, love-driven plan of a God who uses suffering to accomplish salvation. And our response should be worship and obedience.

Day 5: Your Wounds, His Witnesses

Reading: Colossians 1:24

Eric Liddell gave his freedom to a pregnant woman and was later killed for staying with the people he loved. The unnamed servant girl pointed her captor to God. Joseph endured slavery and imprisonment so that nations could be fed and his family could be saved. Paul rejoiced in suffering because he understood that it was not wasted — it was woven into something eternal. This is the pattern God returns to again and again: **suffering servants at the center of His redemptive plan.** The sermon asked a hard and honest question worth sitting with today — are we willing to voluntarily embrace wounds so that others might come to know Jesus? Your cup runs over. That overflow is not meant to pool at your feet. It is meant to spill into the lives of people around you who are still thirsty. The valley is not the end. It is often where the most important work begins.

Deacons on Call

Cleve Bearden and Marc Traweek

Weekly Events

- **Worship:** Sundays at 9:45 AM
- **Small Groups:** Sundays at 11 AM
- **Deep Dive:** Wednesdays at Noon and 6:45 PM
- **First Kids:** Wednesdays at 5:30
- **First Youth:** Wednesdays MS at 5:30, HS at 6:45

Welcome

WE'RE SO GLAD YOU ARE HERE!

TODAY'S MESSAGE

Sheepish 3

PSALM 23

Verses we all need to Memorize

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. **PROVERBS 3:5-6 NIV**

August 30, 2026