

JESUS IS...

Jesus Is...My Shepherd – Message 3

Warm-up

If you are at the zoo, what animal do you enjoy watching most and why?

Overview

We are in the third week of the *Jesus Is...* message series. Over the last two weeks, we've explored the characteristics of Jesus as our *Teacher* and our *Best Friend*. Today, we learn what it means that Jesus Is... *My Shepherd*.

Word & Application

There are several metaphors in Scripture that describe our relationship with Jesus. For those who follow Jesus, the Bible refers to us like family, fellowship, the body, and a flock. In this lesson, we discover the relationship between us, the flock, and Jesus, the Shepherd.

- **Read Psalm 95:6-7, John 10:10-11, and Psalm 79:13.**

The word *pastor* and *shepherd* use the same word in the New Testament. It comes from the Greek word *poimen*. Share how Jesus has been both Pastor and Shepherd to you. In what ways are believers like sheep?

Let's take a look at Psalm 23, a popular passage written by King David and well-known in today's secular and Christian world. Although commonly cited at funeral services, Psalm 23 gives a beautiful description of Jesus as our Shepherd.

- **Read Psalm 23:1-6**

What stands out most to you in this passage? Explain. What circumstances are you facing to which you can apply these verses?

As we continue to meditate on Psalm 23:1-6, there are **Six Attributes of Our Shepherd** that are depicted.

Six Attributes of Our Shepherd

1. **The Shepherd provides.**

Read Psalm 23:1, Philippians 4:19, and Psalm 34:9-10

Even through difficult and challenging times, the Chief Shepherd meets our needs. God's name, Jehovah Jireh, describes our God as our *Provider*, and *the God who "sees to it."* Describe a time when the Shepherd provided a very real need for you or someone you know.

2. **The Shepherd restores.**

Read Psalm 23:2-3, Revelation 17:7, and Isaiah 41:10

What makes it difficult for us to be still and rest in God? What happens when we don't regularly read God's Word and spend time in His presence?

3. **The Shepherd leads.**

Read Psalm 23:3, John 10:3-5, and Psalm 51:10.

In order for our Shepherd to lead us, we have to recognize His voice. Practically speaking, how can we begin to recognize the voice of God in our lives?

4. **The Shepherd strengthens.**

Read Psalm 23:4 and Isaiah 41:10.

Jesus invites us to approach Him in our weakness so that He can strengthen us. We are to rely on Him rather than our own efforts. What's the difference between operating in your own strength versus walking in the power God gives us?

5. **The Shepherd defends.**

Read Psalm 23:4-5, Acts 18:9-10, and Psalm 138:7.

With the rod, our God Shepherd defends and protects us against our enemies, and with the staff, He comforts us. Do you find it easy or difficult to trust God with your battles? Explain. Give examples from the Bible when God fought battles on behalf of His people.

6. **The Shepherd blesses.**

Read Psalm 23:6 and Psalm 16:11

Imagine the Good Shepherd chasing you down and overtaking you in order to bless you. How does that change or reinforce your view of God's goodness?

The key to experiencing all characteristics of the Shepherd is to develop a deeper relationship with Him. As you get to *know* Jesus intimately, He will become the Shepherd of your soul.

Life Challenge

This week, identify which of the Six Attributes of the Shepherd has played a lesser or non-existent role in your relationship with Jesus. Meditate on the Scripture provided above or that you find on your own and ask the God to help you to see Him in all of His characteristics. Get to *know* Him.

Prayer

Jesus, thank You for showing me that You meet every need I have. You are the Shepherd of my soul and I want to know You more. Lord, continue to reveal Yourself to me that I may fall more in love with You and tell others of Your goodness. Pray for the specific needs of the group.