

GOD'S PRESENCE

WHAT WE'RE LEARNING IN THIS SERIES:

1. We are like sheep and therefore unable to provide for ourselves, protect ourselves, or save ourselves.



2. God is like a shepherd who knows us individually, loves us perfectly, and cares for our every need.

Verses 2 and 3 of Psalm 23 . . .

Explain the events of a sheep's typical day and the presence of a caring, loving shepherd.

LET'S START IN THE AFTERNOON

"The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures..." - Psalm 23:1,2

- A good shepherd makes his sheep lie down.
- The green pastures aren't for eating.
- The green pastures are perfect for comfort and peace.
- When a sheep lies down in the afternoon, it chews its cud. If it does not take time to do this, the sheep will become ill.
- If a sheep constantly eats and fails to chew his cud he will not properly digest his food or get the full value of the nutrients.

Lesson: Some Christians want to constantly feed and often fail to "process" what they've learned, therefore losing the value.

THE DAY CONTINUES IN THE LATE AFTERNOON

"He leads me beside quiet waters..." - Psalm 23:2

- A good shepherd moves the sheep to a place of refreshment.
 - The waters are still or quiet.
 - The sheep will not drink from moving water.
 - The sheep cannot swim.
- The waters are cool.

Lesson: Our lives cannot be only work and study. There must be times of refreshment, of joy. Missing these moments will make a believer unhappy and joyless.

THE DAY CONCLUDES WITH AN EVENING OF REST

"He restores my soul."

- Psalm 23:3

- A good shepherd will place the sheep in a safe environment to rest.

Two views here:

- One suggests this is talking of the good sleep in a secure pen.
- The other says the good sleep is because of the relationship.
- Sheep will hold their place in line throughout the day. But once each day, each sheep will get out of line and visit its master.
- The shepherd will pet the sheep, call it by name, and whisper to it. The sheep, reassured of its relationship with the shepherd, will return to its place.

Lesson: All of us need some time each day with our Shepherd.

THE NEXT DAY BEGINS WITH WALKING AND GRAZING

"He guides me in paths of righteousness..."

- Psalm 23:3

- A good shepherd will start the new day by having a plan and leading his sheep along paths of "righteousness".
- The paths are "right" because the shepherd is leading.
- The sheep will eat their fill. *(The food is processed later.)*

Lesson: There is a time to receive and to take nourishment.

Don't fail in this part of the process by always giving.

IN ALL OF THE DAY'S EVENTS, THE SHEPHERD'S NAME IS AT STAKE

"...for His name's sake."

- Psalm 23:3

- When people in David's day saw sheep that were healthy, contented, clean and thick with wool, the shepherd got the credit.

Lesson: Our attitudes & actions should cause people to praise God.

"In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in Heaven."

- Matthew 5:16

Consider: There are Four Steps to Spiritual Health	
1. <u>Receiving</u> (learning) <i>Without it there is constant working and weariness.</i>	3. <u>Refreshing</u> (rejoicing) <i>Without it there is gloom and negativity.</i>
2. <u>Resolving</u> (applying) <i>Without it there is intellect but inconsistency.</i>	4. <u>Renewing</u> (visiting) <i>Without it there is worry and wandering away.</i>

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