

Satisfied & Secure in the Shepherd

Intro

- This Psalm is not a celebration of self-competence or self-sufficiency.
- Need is the *prerequisite* for a life that brings glory to God.

Psalm 23:5-6

The Shepherd satisfies us in unlikely times (v. 5)

God is the Host at the Feast

- This is a feast—and God is the host. God sets the table. We are the guests who have come empty handed.
- We do not serve God; God serves us.

“The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, 25 nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.” (Acts 17:24-25)

Psalm 50:8-15

“The [Psalm] then turns to the right use of sacrifices, focusing on the sacrifice of thanksgiving and vows (50:14). These were both kinds of peace offerings (Lev. 7:11-12, 16), which was the only kind of sacrifice in which the worshiper ate some of the sacrificial animal; its primary function was to eat a meal, in company with the sacrificer’s family and the needy, with God as the host.” –*ESV Study Bible* on Psalm 50

- In Scripture, to glorify God is not to bring to Him something He lacked, but to receive from Him what only He can give.

“The God of the Bible is the kind of God whose greatest delight comes not from making demands but from meeting needs. ... God is always the giver. We are always the getters!”
–**Sam Storms**, *Pleasures Evermore: The Life-Changing Power of Enjoying God*, 60, 64

- “My cup overflows.” Are you aware of this?

Feasting as Warfare

➤ *The Lion, the Witch, & the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis

“God has a celebration meal with us not after we finally get out of the dark valley but in the middle of it, in the presence of our enemies. He wants us to rejoice in him in the midst of our troubles. Is our shepherd out of touch with reality? Hardly. Jesus is the only shepherd who knows what it is like to be a sheep (John 10:11).”
–**Timothy & Kathy Keller**, *Songs of Jesus*, 41

- In the midst of disturbing times and a world that opposes us, let us feast. Let us out-rejoice the world around us!

The Shepherd pursues us all the way to eternity (v. 6)

The Hound of Heaven

- “Steadfast love” = God’s determination to show us kindness—not based on anything in us.

“David says it’s as if Yahweh has His two special agents He sends out, *tov* [goodness] and *hesed* [faithful love], and these agents are in pursuit of David, seeking to overtake him, waylay him, and dog his tracks ‘all the days of his life.’ But who needs to fear such beloved denizens?” –**Dale Ralph Davis**, *Slogging Along in the Paths of Righteousness*, 171

➤ *Pursued and pulled over by the police officer*

- Even when we were running from Him, God hounded us down to bless us. And His love races after us all the days of our lives.

The LORD of the House

- God will take you all the way home...
- Why do we want to live in the house of the LORD?

*"One thing have I asked of the LORD,
that 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
and to inquire in his temple." (Psalm 27:4)*

"Now one can look back over the journey. The grassy pastures may be the normal place, the valley of the shadows the fearful place, in front of the enemies the dangerous place, and the house of Yahweh the abiding place. And Christ leads us in—and to—they all. And so now you must go back to the beginning. What position have you taken? Only if Yahweh-Jesus is your Shepherd can you say, 'I will never lack anything—in ordinary times, in fearful times, in dangerous times, or at the last time.'"
-Dale Ralph Davis, *Slogging Along in the Paths of Righteousness*, 173

*"For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd,
and he will guide them to springs of living water,
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." (Rev. 7:17)*

Discussion Guide

- What from our study of Psalm 23 has stood out the most to you?

- Evan made the point that God is most glorified not when we bring our *contribution*, but when we bring our *need*. How are you more aware of what God expects from you than with what he desires to provide for you? In what ways do your thinking and approach to God need to be adjusted?

- What “troubles and enemies” of life are you encountering? What does it look like for you to feast in joy in the midst of this? Would you describe your current demeanor in life as *joy*?

- Throughout your life, how has God’s steadfast love pursued you and “overtaken” you? How does this picture help you right now?