Bible Center

take 5

5 MINUTES / 5 DAYS

May 15-19, 2017
Lee Walker, *Executive Pastor*

5 Words, 5 Days: Psalm 23:1a

MONDAY — THE Lord Is My Shepherd

Here's the plan. Let's read Psalm 23 everyday this week. And let's focus on the first five words of the Psalm, *The Lord is my Shepherd.* We'll emphasize one word each day. Okay? Some of my thoughts here were inspired by an interesting devotional book titled, *The Joshua Principle,* by O. S. Hawkins. Here we go.

Psalm 23 is one of the best known poetic expressions in all the world, especially the English speaking world. The language is beautiful, and the truth powerful and profound. *THE Lord is my shepherd.* To believe in the God of the Bible requires an understanding that He stands alone. He is not one among many, or even a few. There is no other God. As Hawkins points out, you can speak of Beethoven and I can speak of Handel. You can speak of Washington and I can speak of Napoleon. But you cannot speak of another God. Not really. There is no other.

Take note... The God we worship is the one and only.

TUESDAY — The LORD Is My Shepherd

Can't you imagine how this thought came to David, the author of Psalm 23? Way before he was king, he was a shepherd. As a young teen, he spent long, isolated days and nights on hillside pastures, tending his sheep. Perhaps on one night, maybe as dusk turned to dark, he looked out over his animals thinking about the responsibility he had. He knew the sheep could not survive without him. They couldn't find food and water; couldn't defend themselves; couldn't even flee an enemy without him. Then he looked to the sky, with stars beginning to show themselves. And the thought strikes him... you know, *The LORD is my shepherd.*

Take note... The creator—God—is the one who cares for us.

WEDNESDAY — The Lord IS My Shepherd

Simple truths are often the most profound. *The Lord IS my shepherd.* It is so meaningful that David did not say the Lord "was" my shepherd and did not say the Lord "will be" my shepherd. *The Lord IS (and for always be) my shepherd.* God's immediate presence in our lives makes all the difference. We don't have to make appointments with God; we don't have to wait on His availability; we don't have to get in line. He is never preoccupied, He is never too busy, He never forgets, and He never makes a mistake. The Lord is your shepherd and mine... all the time, and all at the same time.

Take note... God cares for us in an eternal present tense.

THURSDAY — The Lord Is MY Shepherd

What a difference if David had said, "The Lord is a shepherd." The metaphor would be stated, but what a difference! David's metaphor was not simply trying to find an illustration to explain God's actions. This was a personal observation about a personal fact of life. *The Lord is MY shepherd.* And, miraculously and gloriously, He can be your shepherd, and everyone else's with no diminishing of the divine function. Have you ever experienced empathy for a friend or relative who had a sick or injured child? But compare that experience to when your own child was ill or hurt. It's different. Each believer is God's child and His shepherding is personal, loving, and intentional.

Take note... Though there are many Christians, God's care for us is as complete as if there were only one: You.

FRIDAY — The Lord Is My SHEPHERD

As the Lord chooses language to help us (finite, limited, still learning) to understand God (infinite, unlimited, all knowing), certain words and phrases tend to click. Surely the word "shepherd" is one of those. We get it. A shepherd is a protector. Sheep are some of the most helpless animals in all of creation. Protectors are important to their very existence. Also, a shepherd is a leader. A shepherd does not "drive" a flock (as cowboys drive a herd of cattle). A shepherd leads the flock. They gladly, and instinctively, follow having learned the shepherd takes them to green pastures and still waters. We are not able to comprehend all there is to know about God, but we can understand, *The Lord is my SHEPHERD.*

Take note... Jesus chose the same metaphor when describing Himself: He is the good shepherd.

Glorifying God by producing more maturing followers of Jesus.