



SERMON PREP SERIES · EXPOSITORY OUTLINE

The Lord Is My Shepherd

Because the Lord is our Shepherd, we can trust Him to provide for us, guide us, protect us, and ultimately bring us safely into His presence.

Text	Type	Points
Psalm 23	Expository	3

INTRODUCTION

One Shepherd, Sufficient For Every Circumstance

David uses the picture of a shepherd to describe his relationship with God. A shepherd provides for his sheep, leads them, protects them, and remains with them in times of danger — David declares that God does the same for His people. This expository outline simply follows the psalm's own three movements.

I. The Shepherd Provides For Us

*Psalm 23:1–2***A. The Shepherd belongs to us.** *“The LORD is my Shepherd.”*

David describes a personal relationship — not “a shepherd,” but “my shepherd.”

B. The Shepherd meets our needs. *“I shall not want.”*

Our security ultimately rests in God's care rather than our circumstances.

C. The Shepherd gives us rest. *“He makes me lie down in green pastures.”*

God knows when we need rest, and provides spiritual nourishment for His people.

D. The Shepherd refreshes us. *“He leads me beside quiet waters.”*

His care brings peace in the midst of life's demands.

→ *The Shepherd does more than provide a place for us to rest; He also knows where we need to go. When we are uncertain about the way forward, we can trust Him to lead us.*

NOTICE

Sheep depend entirely on the shepherd for their necessities — they don't provide for themselves.

II. The Shepherd Guides & Restores Us

Psalms 23:3–4

A. The Shepherd restores our souls. *“He restores my soul.”*

Life can leave us weary and depleted — God restores what has become weak, and His grace brings renewal.

B. The Shepherd guides our steps. *“He leads me in paths of righteousness.”*

God does not simply give us strength; He gives us direction we can trust, even when we cannot see the entire path.

C. The Shepherd is with us in the valley. *“Though I walk through the valley...”*

Following God does not mean we escape hardship. Notice: David *walks through* the valley — it’s a place we pass through, not where we remain.

WORD STUDY

“Valley of the shadow of death” (Hebrew *tsalmaveth*) pictures deep darkness or dread — not only death as an event.

D. The Shepherd’s presence removes fear. *“I will fear no evil, for you are with me.”*

David’s confidence rests on the presence of God, not the absence of danger.

E. The Shepherd protects us. *“Your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”*

The shepherd’s tools represent his authority, protection, and guidance.

→ *The Shepherd has provided for us in the peaceful places and remained with us in the difficult places. But His care does not end in the valley — He ultimately brings His people into a place of blessing and fellowship with Him.*

III. The Shepherd Blesses & Keeps Us

Psalms 23:5–6

A. The Shepherd prepares a table for us. *“You prepare a table before me.”*

God provides for His people even in the presence of opposition.

DON’T MISS

David says God prepares this table “in the presence of my enemies” — the blessing isn’t the absence of opposition, it’s provision in the middle of it.

B. The Shepherd honors us. *“You anoint my head with oil.”*

Oil was associated with hospitality and honor — David pictures himself as a welcomed guest.

C. The Shepherd fills our lives with abundance. *“My cup overflows.”*

God’s greatest blessings are found in His presence, grace, and mercy — not merely material things.

D. The Shepherd pursues us with goodness and mercy. *“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me.”*

David looks back and sees God’s faithfulness accompanying him throughout life.

E. The Shepherd gives us an eternal home. *“I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.”*

The psalm ends in confidence — the Shepherd’s care extends beyond this present life.

CONCLUSION

One Shepherd Meets Every Need

Psalm 23 shows us one Shepherd who meets every need of His sheep — and the psalm's own arc says it best: it opens with "The LORD is my shepherd" and closes with "I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever."

- **He provides** — when we are in need — He guides when we are uncertain.
- **He restores** — when we are weary — He protects when we are afraid.
- **He remains** — with us in the valley — He blesses us along the journey.
- **He promises** — His presence forever.

PREACHING NOTE *Let the psalm's own shape be your outline: provision (vv.1–2), guidance through hardship (vv.3–4), blessing and hope (vv.5–6). Resist adding a fourth point — the text doesn't need one.*

CLOSING CHALLENGE

If the Lord is truly your Shepherd, are you trusting Him to provide for you, guide you, protect you, and keep you — even when the path leads through a valley?