

SERIES: **GOD IS GOOD- God's goodness to me, in Psalm 23**

TEXT: **Psalm 23:2**

God is good- all the time; all the time- God is good; God is great- He gives us chocolate cake!

-Read Psalm 23:1-6-

*DISCLAIMER- This passage is all about who God is towards His sheep (believers) and who we are in relation to Him
Its not about anyone else- if you're not a believer/ Christian, my prayer is you would look at the way God
cares for His own and would consider giving your life to Him/ becoming one of His sheep

Psalm 23: 2 He lets me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters.

Lately its been difficult to put my older girls to bed- they don't want to go to sleep-
but I know they NEED the rest and the routine is for their GOOD.-
Plus, all they want to eat is candy- they have candy hidden throughout the house! Won't eat dinner.

aren't we the same way when God desires that we pause rest, and enjoy Him that we replenish our souls/
minds/ bodies?

In our fast paced world it's good that we slow down-

I'm gonna echo what John Mark Comer said several times today in his book T.R.E.O.H.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT- Hurry is violence on the soul

And we feel it, you've felt it! Not just deep in the soul- our minds, our bodies, our emotions

Hustle mentality/ screens demanding our attention in every room of the house or even in our pockets-
Most of our ideas of rest and refreshment is scrolling, binge watching, replying to texts and IM's
We don't know how to slow down, how to rest, how to be replenished

This is a tough one for me- one area that I want to correct-

John Mark Comer's explains (TREOH) that although he was leading a mega church at the time, his busy work
schedule was actually diminishing his relationship with God and he was on the brink of a breakdown.

I've been there! (Martha Vs Mary)

If that can happen to pastors, who's work revolves around ministry, it can happen to anyone.

As last week, I'd like to make some direct *observations* from the verse
and then pull from that an *implication* we must wrestle with-

1 The Shepherd is personal with me

Psalm 23:2 He lets me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters.

Difference Rancher Vs Shepherd? The rancher drives the cattle, the shepherd leads them & they follow

Steve Lawson- "you don't need to pray that God would lead you, He *does* lead; you need to pray that you would follow"

Christianity is a relationship **with** God rather than a religion **to** God

Wherever God leads me will ultimately be good for me, because I know God is good to me

On this side of eternity, we will experience drought and weariness-

God knows this, and so He leads us- He knows what pasture you need today- he knows where to guide you

He leads- *but prone to wonder Lord I feel it prone to leave the God I love*

Our souls long for a personal God- not an impersonal cosmic force, that doesn't satisfy-

Stephen King- "The girl who loved Tom Gordon"- 9 year old Trisha McFarland gets lost in the woods-

She had asked her father a month before if he believed in God, he said he believed in the SUBAUDIBLE INSENSATE FORCE. After 9 days of being lost sacred, bug bitten, sick from drinking bad water and eating poisonous berries, cut and scrapped up, a subaudible force isn't cutting it to give her hope and she senses THERE HAS TO BE SOMETHING MORE- she remembers her baseball hero, Red sox closer, Tom "Flash" Gordon- when he wins, he points to the sky giving credit to a personal God who revealed himself in Jesus Christ- so after 9 long day she prays to the God of Tom Gordon, not her father's subaudible force. She needs a God who is really there, one you can point to if you get a save.

God has a personal touch with His sheep because He knows them....but that doesn't mean the sheep always understand what's going on in the journey-

Loggerhead turtle- huge sea turtles- one got confused after laying eggs and started off deeper into the dunes and away from the sea- a ranger flipped the turtle over on its back, chained it up and dragged it back to the beach before releasing it and the turtle going back into the sea.

Turtle must've been wondering "whats going on!"

God will lead us to where we need, but that doesn't mean we will understand when he is doing so, but we can understand that wherever it is, it's gonna be good!

2 The Shepherd *settles* my restless soul

Psalm 23:2 He lets me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters.

Lets me/ makes me- the idea is He settles me down

Last week I said they have no defense- they actually have one- sort of; they RUN

To lie down and rest is to give up the one thing that gives them a sense of safety/ security

Rest doesn't come easy-

This idea is counter cultural for us – even in the religious world- deities demand more from you not lead you to lie down!

Have you ever thought about God in this way?

The sheep can rest and rest assured because the shepherd cares for them and watches over them

But they have to keep Him in view, if they don't they have no rest

Psalm 4:8 I will both lie down and sleep in peace, for You alone, LORD, make me live in safety.

There are blessings that are only available in the rhythms of rest

Rest is important. It's even commanded in the Bible.

God is good, so good that He hasn't demanded you do *more*, but that you rest so that you do *well*

1 Too many of us live hurried

Left to our own, we don't rest; we don't really know how to rest

2 Others of us live with a false sense of rest

J.M.C.- *"Healthy busyness is when we have a lot to do but not "too much." The unhealthy type of busyness is when there's too much to do and not enough time to do it."*

What keeps us from rest? Worry- of money, health, future, etc.

Philippians 4:6-7 NLT Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. ⁷ Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

God invites us to follow him out of drought and weariness and in to spaces of rest.

3 The Shepherd holistically *nourishes* me, continually

Psalm 23:2 He lets me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters.

The Negev, the area in Israel where most sheep flocks reside, most of the year looks dry- the shepherd has to keep the sheep moving so they can find these patches of dry grass to feed on, enough to sustain them; but for about 3 months of the year the landscape changes and the dry arid ground turns lush thick green with grass

"I want God to use me"

I get the sentiment, ive said it, I believe it- but theres a danger that we shift to understanding our relationship with God as employee/employer instead of father and sons/daughters

He will use us yes, but he will nurture us first

Pastures/ waters- both plural

In our life he will continually bring us back to a place of rest and replenishment

Each day I have the choice between God's good nourishment or delicious trash

He feeds us- are you being nurtured of those things God uses to nourish our souls: scripture, prayer, fasting, fellowshiping (community), confession, repentance, worship, etc.

Or are you full on other things?

He leads us to pastures to graze, but our bellies are fat with Netflix, youtube, social media, gossip, bitterness, etc

Everyone needs rest/ replenishment. The world offers us many places to look for it, but it can never deliver on the rest our souls long for.

When the Lord is our shepherd, he leads us to the places of peace we need, though they may not always look like the ones we want.

We've spoken about this several times before- He *will not* settle for a false peace or a false rest

"Ultimately, nothing in this life, apart from God, can satisfy our desires. Tragically, we continue to chase after our desires ad infinitum. The result? A chronic state of restlessness or, worse, angst, anger, anxiety, disillusionment, depression—all of which lead to a life of hurry, a life of busyness, overload, shopping, materialism, careerism, a life of more...which in turn makes us even more restless. And the cycle spirals out of control." JMC

MAIN TAKEAWAY- Life may be persistently exhausting, but,
God is perpetually inviting me to rest & replenishment

"Here's my point: the solution to an overbusy life is not more time. It's to slow down and simplify our lives around what really matters."— John Mark Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*

CHALLENGE- If you are feeling drained- cultivate simplicity (cut out the fluff- you have to go to work, not do OT?)
If you are rested & replenished- encourage someone who isn't

Whats your immediate next step in following Jesus? Surrender/ baptism/

If you are currently in a season of enjoying rest in the Lord, look for someone in your life who is struggling and make an intentional effort to encourage them

Don't feel guilty if life is good right now- He's led you here, enjoy it, enjoy Him- feed up cause if you keep reading by v4 youre gonna wish you had enjoyed verse 2

How can we manage our daily activities in a way that makes space for loving God and loving others.

BULPEN-

-Practice patience and trust His timing

-In which areas of your life are you typically in a hurry?- schedule, family, spiritual disciplines

-Sheep are mentioned more than 500 times in the Bible—more than any other animal

-True rest begins with the peace we receive through faith in Jesus Christ. But that doesn't change the fact that we still live in a world that is frenetically busy. Our to-do lists are never finished. There's always more work to be done and, if the finish line is our target for rest, then we will never truly reach it. Rest happens through surrender to Jesus Christ in the midst of the to-do lists, trusting that he is enough.

-His rest is the peace our hearts most desperately crave.

-He knows what you need, your body, your mind,

-Some are trying to do their job, and God's

-“an easy life isn't an option; an easy yoke is.” JMC

-Don't rely on your relationships, retirement, etc. rely on the Shepherd

Here's a sign you need to slow down- you feel guilty when you take a day off or time for yourself

Psalm 131 only 3 verses “I have calmed & quieted my soul”

Psalm 46:10 “be still” (stop striving/fighting)

Beneath the surface, it is our separation from God that fuels our feelings of unrest.

Repent of whatever false forms of rest/replenishment we are chasing, and pursue only the promise of rest extended by the Lord.