

Living Faith @

May, 2022



Psalm 23

¹The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.

²He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;

³he restores my soul.

He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.

⁴Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;

for you are with me;
your rod and your staff —
they comfort me.

⁵You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

⁶Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD
my whole life long.

When I was growing up, my family raised a small flock of sheep. It was just a hobby, and we only ever had 15 or so ewes (female sheep) and 1 ram (male sheep) at a time. But it meant that my siblings and I grew up getting to know sheep and helping to take care of lambs. My dad did all the shearing, but when lambs needed to be bottle fed, my siblings and I got to help! (This led to some pretty adorable photos, if I do say so myself!)

—Pastor Kristen Rod

The Bible talks a lot about sheep.

Psalm 23 compares God to a shepherd who takes care of the sheep.

In the gospels of Matthew and Luke, Jesus tells the parable of the lost sheep, where a farmer has 100 sheep and loses one, and he leaves the 99 to go search for the lost sheep, because God will stop at nothing to find us when we are lost.

In the gospel of John, chapter 10, Jesus talks about how he is the Good Shepherd, who lays down his life for his sheep. He also talks about how his sheep know his voice, and when he calls to them, they follow him.

Every year, in the 4th Sunday in the season of Easter, the gospel reading comes from John 10, and we hear Jesus talk about how he is the Good Shepherd. This is one of my favorite days of the year, because I get to talk about the sheep I had growing up!

Children love animals. This means that there are lots of great ways to help kids make connections with the shepherd imagery in the Bible!



* Sheep and lamb stuffed animals are widely available. You

can give some to the children in your family and tell them about how we are like sheep and Jesus is our Good Shepherd. You could even hide one in your house and have the children look for it, just like the Good Shepherd leaves the 99 to look for the lost sheep.

*You can do crafts where you draw a sheep on a piece of paper or cardstock and then have your child glue cotton balls to the sheep drawing, to symbolize the woolly coat of the sheep. You could even draw or paint other images from Psalm 23 in the background, like a field of green grass and a pool of still water.

*You can visit a farm or a petting zoo, and talk about how Jesus takes care of us just like the farmers and zookeepers take care of the sheep.

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