

Our Good Shepherd Fully Gratifies Us!

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Date: 02 January 2022

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[0:00] If you would please take your Bibles and go to the book of Psalm, the Psalms, and go to chapter 23, Psalm 23.

If you need a black Bible, if you need a Bible, there's a black Bible in the chair in front of you and find page 401, 401, on that black Bible in the chair in front of you.

401. Pray that this will be an encouragement to you. Psalm 23. 401, Psalm 23.

Psalm 23, page 401 in the black Bible, I'll read and then we'll dive in and jump in. Psalm 23. Psalm 23. Psalm 23. Psalm 23. Yahweh is my shepherd. I have no lack.

He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside quiet waters. He renews my soul. He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His namesake.

[1:17] Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil for You are with me. Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.

Even though in my head with oil, my cup overflows. Surely goodness and loving kindness will follow me all the days of my life. I will dwell in the house of Yahweh forever.

There's nothing like sweets to gratify your sweet tooth during the Christmas time and New Year's.

There's nothing like Priscilla's baklava. I don't know why it's doing that. Priscilla's baklava.

Baklava. Oh, hey. Nothing like Priscilla's baklava. Just went out. Oh, wait.

[2:25] It's back on. I don't know. That's weird. There was a fight in my house over the last piece of her baklava. I also like the, I can't eat it.

Well, I shouldn't eat it. You know the little fudge squares? People make the fudge. I do think it's rather demonic that you put nuts in that. So don't do that.

That's just of Satan and sinful and wrong. So please don't put nuts in the fudge. You can repent of that later. But fudge, I mean, those fudge squares are wonderful.

Shouldn't eat them. I pay for it later. Yes, I know. But it's like heavenly. Peanut butter balls. Oh, wonderful. I'll say this for Michael Matthews.

Christmas cheesecake. That's for you, Michael. Amen. You're having a religious experience. We see that hand. Yes, we'll see another verse of just as I am. Okay. You can come forward for prayer, brother. It's hard not to gain weight over the holidays.

[3:28] Because it's hard not to allow ourselves to be gratified. I need to be gratified. You know, it makes sense when Jesus compared believing in him.

We're going to take of the Lord's Supper this morning. He compared believing in him with eating and drinking. It makes sense when you think about it. Because what do you feel after a good meal and then you add a yummy dessert to that?

Oh, you're like, oh, I'm so stuffed. I feel so satisfied. I'm gratified. Yeah. I mean, it makes sense why he connects that together.

Believing and trusting in Jesus is like being satisfied with such good food. He equates that. And you assimilate that into your body.

You're like, oh, that's just so wonderful. I just feel so satisfied. That's the idea. That's why it's even connected with the Lord's Supper. Partaking of the bread and the juice.

[4:29] It definitely doesn't fill you up in that sense. But the idea is to gratify you. To satisfy you. To satiate this passion for Christ.

That's what it's meant to do. It's the idea. And that's the idea of Psalm 23. It's not just something you read when someone passes away.

Because what is Psalm 23 about? It's about our good shepherd fully gratifies us. Our good shepherd fully gratifies us.

If you struggle with using the word gratify, I understand. Maybe you want to use the word satisfy. I use that on purpose. It's a more shocking word. When you think of gratification, you think of almost in a sexual context.

In the drug world. So that's why using a purpose. People gratify themselves with sex.

[5 : 34] They gratify themselves with drugs. Whereas God wants us to gratify ourselves with himself. You will find that he really gratifies you.

And satisfies you. Our good shepherd fully gratifies us. Giving us good gifts to fill us up. And bring us such satisfaction.

And appropriate message as we begin this new year. Amid the happenings. And the events of this new year. Will we find our gratification in Christ and in his gifts?

Yes. If you feast at the banquet table of this psalm, you will not go away hungry. It's a masterpiece of praise.

And it testifies to God's abundant grace and goodness towards his people. It's quite possible that David wrote this looking back over his life.

[6 : 47] I mean, if there's anyone who knew about this, it's David. David. When was the last time you were being chased to be killed?

When was the last time that happened to you? When was the last time that your own son runs you out of town? And steals your throne?

David understood this. He understood the pain and suffering. Some of its consequences for his own stupidity. And he understood that. And he still wrote this and found his satisfaction in the good shepherd.

Our good shepherd fully gratifies us. We have everything in the Lord Jesus who is our good shepherd. That's why we read John 10. He'll satisfy your soul.

I mean, notice how the psalm begins. A psalm of David. Yahweh, the God of Exodus 3, is my, notice the deep, personal, close relationship, my shepherd.

[8 : 07] David knew about shepherding too. He does what he was before he became a king. He was a shepherd. Shepherds would live with sheep 24 hours a day with total devotion in good weather and bad weather when it's 20 degrees outside or 120 degrees outside.

He would assume full responsibility for their needs, for their safety, risking his own life. He was their everything. Their constant protector. Putting himself in danger.

So, Yahweh, uniformly and graciously loves, provides, guides, and protects all those who are his, us, his people, those for whom Christ died.

You have that confidence. We are now under the pastoral care of Yahweh God. Jesus is our good shepherd who laid down his life for us as sheep.

Yahweh is my shepherd. Notice, I shall not want. I lack nothing. Sheep lack everything.

[9 : 32] Notice the irony, the contrast. I lack nothing, but sheep lacked everything. They were totally helpless, defenseless, for lack of better terms, stupid.

They could not care for themselves. Sheep are dumb, foolish animals who need a shepherd to take care of them.

Ouch. I mean, when you think about that, that's you. I'm sorry to say.

That's me. That's all of us. We are sheep. Dumb, foolish animals who need a shepherd to take care of us.

The one who is the great God, the possessor of all things, who alone is all sufficient, inexhaustible, and unchanging, has all things. He lacks nothing, but we lack everything.

[10 : 35] That's why we need him. So in him, I lack nothing. He is the shepherd to you. He cares for you.

He watches over you. He preserves you. He died for you. In the midst of famine, disaster, uncertainty, weakness, and hardships, even death, that will take place for some of us this year, we lack nothing in our great shepherd.

Do we truly believe this? What if we lose our home, our retirement, our cars, our family, our children, our grandchildren, you name it, your business?

Can we say, blessed be the Lord, for he is my shepherd, do we find our satisfaction, our shepherd, in him alone? True happiness lies in being counted as one of the Lord's sheep with him as the one who is our perfect, gentle, good shepherd.

And he is a shepherd to those who know they need him and his protection because they know they are weak, poor, insignificant, and destitute without him.

[12:09] I mean, that's the heart of the response to the gospel. When you think about the gospel, the justice and the righteousness and the wrath of God and how we should be condemned and yet God showed his love by sending Jesus who lived, died, and rose on behalf of sinners.

The response is, I am destitute without you. I am helpless. I am lost. I am condemned. I repent. I trust you. That's what we say.

That's the heart of the gospel. And are you here and not a Christian and do you need to respond to the gospel? Do you need to trust Christ and say, Jesus, I depend on you. I'm a sinner and I need you to save me.

He'll save you. He'll be your good shepherd. I mean, that's the heart of the gospel, this response. I know I'm weak. I know I'm poor. I know I'm insignificant.

I know I'm destitute. I know I don't deserve this, so please save me. I'm lost without you. And he is the head, the senior pastor of this church.

[13:28] He always has been and always will be. He's leading us. He's guiding us. He's protecting us. He's breaking us. He's molding us. He's shaping his church. And he does this not by some mystical experience or revelation, not by good feelings, but solely by his perfect word.

And as the body partakes of his word, the Bible. So let's go to the word and eat. Go to the word and find your satisfaction from the truth of God's word because he's the word.

As life happens, may you drink deeply of God's word. Did it go out? Look at you. You're on top of it. So Jesus is the shepherd who gratifies us.

I have no lack. And now what he does, excuse me, from verse two to verse six, he begins to unpack for us eight gratifying gifts from the good shepherd.

Gratifying gifts from the good shepherd. Aaron's gonna get that back online, so we'll take a moment. Thanks, homie.

[15:01] Jesus is a good shepherd who gratifies us. Here's eight gratifying gifts from our good shepherd. Number one, he gives us his rest. Look at verse two.

He makes me lie down in green pastures. A shepherd leads the sheep from one spot to another where a bite of nice grass is available for rest and enjoyment, and there's plenty.

And sheep are fearful animals, easily frightened. They'll lie down and rest. They will not lie down and rest when they're spooked. So after Jesus comes in as our good shepherd, he gives us his rest.

We can rest in Christ. Number two, he gives us his peace. The end of verse two, he leads me beside quiet waters, literally waters of rest, places of safety where the water supply is sufficient. An oasis, a luxuriant spot in the desert. Sheep, they'd be afraid of fast running water. So the shepherd, he would pick up stones to dam up a small spot for them to drink.

[16:13] He gives us his rest. He gives us his peace. We abide in him and drink of his grace by means of his word. We find our rest and our peace from his word. His word is sweet and full, bringing us rest in peace.

Dive in. Drink deeply. So he gives us his rest, number one. Number two, he gives us his peace. Number three, he gives us his renewal.

He gives us renewal or restoration. He restores my soul, which he renews us. That's the idea. He brings us to the point of repentance, even conversion. He gives us renewal.

He gives us renewal. He renews us with strength and brings us to the point of repentance as we indulge in his wonderful word.

Let the word of God satisfy you. Let the word of God richly be supplied to you. He gives us his rest.

[17:18] He gives us his peace. He gives us his renewal. Number four, he gives us his guidance. Again, verse three, he guides me in the paths of righteousness for his namesake.

Remember, the shepherd was putting himself in danger from any enemies or predators that would come against the sheep. And sheep, they lacked a sense of direction and guidance.

They become easy lost. But a shepherd guides and protects his sheep. And notice, in the paths of righteousness, as shepherds would lead sheep, so also our good shepherd leads us in the paths of righteousness, which is the path of his word.

The paths of righteousness are found in the paths of his word. If Jesus is guiding you from his perfect word, you will never go wrong. You have surety. You have certainty.

You have confidence. And notice, the reason why he does this, for his namesake. For the sake of his own name.

[18:34] In other words, he does this for his own glory, not primarily for us. He does this for himself because the reputation of his own character is at stake.

If God was not faithful to his people, it's because God is not faithful to himself. God will first be faithful to himself, which is why he's going to be faithful to you.

He cannot go back on his word, else he's not God anymore. So he will always be faithful to himself, which is why he'll be faithful to you. The honor of his own glory for himself is at stake.

So he does this, this faithfulness, he does it to magnify his merciful, gracious, generous, loving. He wants to glorify that, to show that he's merciful, to show that he's gracious.

You don't deserve it. That's the point. We never will. And he's generous. He loves to give.

[19:48] He's loving. That's to God who's our shepherd. Calvin says this, quote, his choosing us to be his sheep and his performing towards us all the offices of a shepherd is a blessing which proceeds entirely from his free and sovereign goodness.

He just freely and sovereignly showed his goodness to you. You didn't deserve it. It's his peace, his guidance.

His rest. Notice number four, excuse me, number five. He gives us his comfort from verse four. He gives us his comfort. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil. Shadow or the shade of death, of terror. Sheep were reluctant to pass through dark spots dark spots from the sun going down.

They were timid creatures. It meant hostile circumstances for them as far as their thinking was concerned. So here is this shadow coming upon them but he gives us his comfort.

[21:12] We can lean notice on our shepherd as we go through the shadows. God never says we're not going to have shadows. God never says we're not going to have the shade of death.

That's not going to happen. it will take place. There will be shadows. But notice he says I will fear no evil.

Why? For you're with me. Fear is produced by the anticipation of evil but the shepherd's presence gives the sheep the reassurance as he guides and guards them.

Fear with me. I mean here's David saying this and if David's saying this towards the end of his life he's saying this and then we go forward into the future when Jesus gives his promise to his disciples in Matthew 28 verse 20 and lo I'm with you always even to the end of the age.

Oh my goodness what more do you want? If David sends dad and here's Jesus promising us this the confidence oh Christian that God is with you.

[22:38] Though I walk through the valley and I can't see the way I know you're with me. The shepherd's protecting sheep in their moments of greatest danger.

One writer said this the darker the shadow the closer is our Lord. The darker the shadow that will come upon you possibly this coming new year the closer will be your Lord.

So in having our God we have all that we can crave. I notice I will not fear you're with me and then he says your rod and your staff they comfort me.

Here's the comfort you're with me I've comfort your rod and your staff they bring me comfort. Rod it was actually a club it was used to defend the flock from wild animals lions tigers and bears oh my and for counting and guiding and protecting the sheep and the staff you know familiar with that the staff was a crook bent or hooked at one end it was used to pry sheep from thickets pull them aside pull branches aside to pull the sheep out of holes because they would fall into the hole look at that led them along narrow paths they would drive off snakes with this crook with the staff this was the function of the club or the rod and the staff they comfort me and the idea of this word comfort is a person breathing deeply as a physical display of his or her feelings oh yeah like that the feeling the sense of security which brings you great joy it's what the

Lord gives from his word and when the church body when they speak the word into your life it should bring us such comfort yes the rod may be used to discipline you or to rescue you either way any kind of evil that we face suffering heartache difficulty pain or even death that may come this year we have his comfort because he's our good shepherd he's going to shepherd this church which is why I need you I need you to pray for me as the under shepherd to give leadership as I follow God's word directing you to his word this coming new year so you'll follow our senior pastor Jesus rest peace guidance comfort

[25:43] I'm missing one number six he gives us his provision verse five the sixth gift is his provision you see that in verse five you prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies he's supplying food and sustenance it's that what the shepherd provides for his sheep because he loves his sheep he loves his people and he will continue to provide for us amid the hostile people who come upon us the hostiles that come upon you he'll still provide the sustenance will be there and notice again verse five you have anointed my head with oil metaphorically speaks of wealth abundance prosperity it speaks of the Lord's welcome plus shepherds would carry a flask of oil to anoint scratched sheep who sought food among thorns and thistles and it was a custom of a loving host to provide oil for his guests the head for his guests to refresh him after his travel so here it's the idea of this anointing my head with oil the idea is to give help and also to honor that's what he gives to his sheep our good shepherd and he says last part of verse five my cup overflows here's his provision to help us to honor us to provide for us here's the

Lord's lavish provision so much fully gratified it's this excess is flowing over this pictures God's abundant supply of divine grace in our lives to strengthen and sustain us in dangerous circumstances and if the sheep become overly tired the shepherd would use his drinking vessel to refresh the sheep so the hunger and thirst of the sheep is adequately and abundantly supplied by their shepherd for us his sheep that's how he takes care of us one writer says this quote God is the infinite source of all that believers need to live victoriously in difficult circumstances in difficult situations so true and don't think David was blinded by his riches he knew

David knew that God had graciously provided for him and he looked to Yahweh to continue his generous provision knowing that it may not always overflow know this there may be times of trial but God always provides though the path may be lonely he will always provide we can depend on Jesus two more number seven he gives us his goodness and love verse six surely or only goodness and chesed will follow me all the days of my life God's goodness thank you father for your goodness and as chesed that covenant keeping faithful steadfast love that's the love here follows us in black days or bright days in days of feasting or days of fasting in dreary days or delightful days in stormy raining days where it's freezing cold and in days where it's really warm it feels real good he supplies and loves

I mean what's the greatest display of God's goodness to you what's the greatest display of his chesed the covenant love Jesus at the cross the greatest display of that what a great good loving generous God that we praise and worship and David didn't depend on the outward things no David depended he depended on the very characteristics of God himself his goodness and his love I mean here's David towards the end of his life here all that David has promised the king and all this stuff when it comes down to he's like you know it's not about the stuff that I got is about your goodness and your chesed will follow me he depended on the very characteristics of God himself which leads us to the last one you get a glimpse of it already from verse 4 you're with me and he sums it up here in verse 6 the end of verse 6 and I'll dwell in the house of Yahweh forever he gives us himself he gives us himself

I shall dwell he gives us himself I shall dwell actual communion with the living God the great shepherd it wasn't so much about receiving the shepherd's benefits in the life in this life it was about having the shepherd himself for David I get him Calvin once again he says quote to live to God is in his estimation of so great importance that he valued all the comforts of the flesh only in proportion as they served to enable him to live to God I get him I get Yahweh I get relationship at the end of the day isn't that really what it's all about and do we value do we value the comforts or benefits of life in proportion that they serve to enable us to live our lives for the glory of God here David he was so sure death would just usher him into the very presence of God he wasn't afraid of that why should we be and this is the climax of the psalm here's the climax of all these blessings real true fellowship with the one true

[32:52] God he's your reward along with the benefit of his love for you he's your reward Christ gives us everything we could ever need he gets glory and we get joy because we get him that's why Paul says to live is Christ the dies gain so come oh dear Christian come come to your shepherd to fully gratify you which the idea in my mind will be perfect is that we're celebrating the Lord's Supper because it's a renewal once again of your relationship with your shepherd you remind yourself of gospel truth you remind yourself that you're not worthy you're examining your heart

Lord I am a sinner and yet thank you that you've forgiven me because of what Jesus has done in his body and shedding his blood and then it's a reminder that I'm taking this in he satisfies me and

I'm assimilating him into my body that it's all about you working through me and what are you going to do through me as your servant here I am I'm your sheep you're my shepherd perfect perfect to emphasize to you what we've seen in Psalm 23 and if you're here you're not a Christian this is not for you to partake if you're here and you're a follower of Christ you say well hey I'm not a member of this church look if you come from a church of like faith and practice and we would prefer you're baptized by immersion but if you come from a church of like faith and practice partake this with us as a reminder of the gospel to you you can fill your mind with truth fill your mind with the promises of God and from his word here in

Psalm 23 and the fulfillment of that that we see in Jesus our good shepherd laid down his life for his sheep would you pray with me good shepherd as we begin to prepare our hearts and to fill our minds with truth encourage us now we know we're not worthy our sin is ever before you so we come with open hearts we hold nothing back our sin is ever before us and yet so is your forgiveness so as we remember how unworthy we are this may we remember that you've brought us to yourself and now we're one of your children sons and daughters who've been reconciled to you who've been forgiven and adopted you love us you're our shepherd

Jesus may we take you in may this be a symbol of us taking you in that you would be lord of our lives a symbol of forgiveness that we have because you've died on the cross and a reminder that you will come again to bring your sheep home where we will dwell in the house of Yahweh forever so if you would please take this time next minute to fill your mind with gospel truth with humility and yet with joy with brokenness and with happiness for who

Jesus is and what he's done for you do that now please listen PM listen to the other man or bars

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