

Goodness and Mercy

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 02 July 2023

Preacher: Rev Donald M Macleod

[0 : 00] Good evening.

Good evening.

Good evening. to cover that service. By next week I'll be able to say which minister will be here for pastoral emergencies but of course the elders are always first contact in case there is any emergency.

Let's continue our public worship of God. We can sing to his praise from the Scottish Psalter, the Scottish Psalter and Psalm 84 on page 338 of the Blue Psalm book. Psalm 84 on page 338.

We can sing verses 1 down to verse 6 of the Psalm. Psalm 84 verses 1 down to verse 6. How lovely is thy dwelling place, O Lord of hosts to me. The tabernacles of thy grace, how pleasant Lord they be. My thirsty soul longs vehemently, ye fainth thy courts to see.

[1 : 59] My very heart and flesh cry out, O living God, for thee. Let's sing these verses to God's praise. Amen. The tabernacles of thy grace, O Lord of hosts to me. My precious soul longs vehemently, give thanks to God's voice to me. My precious heart and flesh cry out, O living God, for thee.

Behold the spiral, find the light, and I swear to rest.

The swath of all so far herself, that purchased it and missed.

In thy own alters, which she saved, the young was born, ye bling.

O glad, almighty Lord of hosts, who art my all and King.

[3 : 58] Bless the wind, thy house that dwell, they ever give thee grace.

Bless the wind, your strength of God, in which I try thy ways.

Who has to die, O because, the end of the day of hells.

Also, the rain that forever can, the boost with water kills.

Let's join together in prayer. Let's pray. Lord of God, as we gather together once more this evening, we thank you for the day you have given us.

[5 : 09] This day of rest, this day where you've given us the chance to have time to think about who you are and the great wonders you have done.

This day of rest you have given to your people to think about the kindness and the care and the love you show towards us.

We thank you for our time, even this morning, gathered together around your word, around your praises as brothers and sisters. Thank you once more for the same privilege we have just now.

Lord, help us, we ask never to take for granted the privilege it is to worship as brothers and sisters. Never take for granted the privilege it is to come together around your word.

To come together lifting up our voices in praise. Knowing that you see and you hear and you know the hearts. You know our intentions. As we come perhaps nervous as to our singing quality.

[6 : 09] As we come perhaps nervous as to our singing ability. And Lord, we confess that many of us here perhaps have that worry from time to time. We give you praise that you are the God who sees and who knows the heart.

That yes, you take joy as your word tells us in sung worship. Yes, you take joy as your word tells us in your people praising your name. But you are not a God who is fooled.

You are not a God who is shown to be unknowing. That you know the intentions of those who worship you. You know our hearts. You know why it is we are here this evening.

We do thank you for the privilege of being here this evening. Gathering as a family. Not gathering here out of vain tradition.

Not gathering here to tick off a box for the week. Not gathering here because it is what we have always done in this place. Not gathering here because of any holiness of this building.

[7 : 08] It is a building of bricks and stone. But gathering here as a church family. As brothers and sisters. And those of us here tonight who know and who love Jesus.

We know that before the throne just now we are truly equally brothers and sisters. Preachers and elders and congregation. Those of us who know and who love Jesus that together we are one person, one body.

And together we are one family. Worshipping our one saviour. Help us to have our minds focused on him this evening. We prayed this morning for all the pain and worry which distracts us away from him.

We pray this evening for the sin which distracts us so often away from him. The things which can be helped. The distractions which come straight from us.

Lord we ask you to keep these things from us this evening. The distracting thoughts. The sinful thoughts. We know how quickly our minds wander.

[8 : 17] At even this point, even this moment, Lord we know our minds wander so easily onto so many worldly things. But we ask that for ourselves for this evening.

You'd help us to listen clearly to your word. We ask your word would speak to our hearts this evening. Those of us who come this evening with hearts having been washed and made new by the blood of Jesus.

Lord we ask that you would help us to leave this place having grown not just in knowledge but having grown in love for you. Having grown in understanding what it is to know and to be known by.

To be loved by the God who created and sustains all things. To leave this place having grown in our love and understanding of our great shepherd.

The only truly good shepherd. We pray this evening for those here who as of yet don't know the good shepherd for themselves. But as they listen to the word.

[9 : 19] It would not just be another half hour or 40 minutes of patience for them. But they would truly listen to your word this evening. Those who are here this evening to keep a loved one happy.

Those here this evening out of tradition. Those who are here this evening out of many years of coming to this place. But who as of yet have not truly listened.

Who as of yet have not heard what the gospel is saying to them. Who as of yet have not listened to you. As you call them one more time to listen.

To trust. To abandon themselves and to follow you. We ask that this evening perhaps. Will be the time your word speaks to them. We give you praise Lord that for all our work.

For all our effort. For all our many prayers we pour perhaps into this congregation and community. We give you praise that you are the one who changes lives. You are the one who transforms hearts of stone to hearts of flesh.

[10 : 28] But we acknowledge that you do that by making use of means. And that we as your people. That we are often the means you have chosen to use. But we ask you would use us well in our homes in this place.

Help us to be faithful witnesses to our parents. Our spouses. Our siblings. Our children. Help us to be living stones.

To be living witnesses. Help us in all that we say and do to reflect who our saviour truly is. Forgive us for the times our lifestyles and our lives and our words and even our thoughts.

Don't correlate to the saviour we claim to follow and love. For the times when the way we act and the way we think and the words we even say.

Show us to be something other than ones who have been saved and purchased by the precious blood of Jesus. Forgive us for the times we live inconsistent lives.

[11 : 32] Forgive us for our sins Lord we ask as your people once more this evening. Forgive us Lord for sins which have distracted from the gospel. The sins of history perhaps.

Which have pushed some away from even coming near this place. Lord we ask you bring them back to yourself and bring them back to this place. We pray this evening for any of your people who are feeling far away from you.

Who are feeling as if Lord the doors of heaven have been shut up against them. We ask that you would show them that you have not changed and you have not moved.

Lord that you are the same as the God they first came to know perhaps as many years ago. We ask you bring them back to a comfortable place with you.

Lord we ask that it would be the case even this evening.

[12 : 45] You would make yourself known to your people here. Make yourself known to those who are searching after you. We ask for encouragement this week. As we begin this new week.

Seeking to serve you in a world which hates you. Seeking to serve you in an atmosphere. In an age where the gospel is hated where you are hated.

We ask for strength and for wisdom. We also ask Lord that you would be with us. We give you praise that this is nothing new. That your people have always served you in an age where you are hated.

That our saviour himself told us the very same thing. That he was hated and despised. Therefore we will be too. We ask Lord that the world despises us.

That we despise us for the gospel and not for our own actions. Not for our own failures, our own sins. That we would be despised simply for the gospel and for loving our saviour.

[13 : 43] And that reason alone. We do pray for our nation. We pray for our island. We pray for those who rule over us in government. We pray for those ruling over us locally.

Lord in the council. We pray Lord for those who rule over us in Holyrood and in Westminster. Lord we ask for days of guidance ahead and days of leading.

Lord we ask Lord we would see our nation blessed. Even though we know that we do not deserve it. We ask especially just now for your people in leadership.

In the council and in Holyrood and in Westminster. Those of the number there who are yours and who love you. And who are seeking to serve you across the parties.

They are seeking to do what they can. To do their jobs well at the same time. While seeking to obediently follow you. We ask for them. You be with them.

[14 : 39] And you would guide them. You draw alongside them. And we know they are serving a difficult job. One that is often so complicated. With so many answers seeming to have no right way forward.

We ask you be with them. And comfort them. And show them how they should serve you well. I give you praise Lord for your restraining hand. That things are not as bad as they could be.

We see that and we know that. As we look back to history. We see there have been worse times than this. Indeed many worse years than this. Indeed we see in history. And even in your scripture.

We see that the brothers and sisters before us. They often served in times. So much darker. So much more evil than our own.

But as times begin to change for ourselves. We see the evil encroaching. Lord help us to learn from your word. Help us to learn from these brothers and sisters. Who went before us. Who were faithful.

[15 : 42] Even when the situation provided for great bravery. Lord we ask that we be brave. When it comes to it. Until these days of darkness truly come.

Lord help us to serve you well. In this day of small things we find ourselves in. We pray once more for our own community here. We pray Lord for the salvation of. Of the many here in Tulsa.

Those with some church connection. Those with zero church connection. Lord help us Lord. We ask to be witnesses. Help us to be salt and light in this place.

Help us to go out and about. And to become truly part of this community. That we would be known as those who love Jesus. But also be known as those who love one another.

Lord. And with that also those who love the community. You have placed us in. Help us to truly love this place. To show that love to those who are our neighbours and our friends.

[16 : 41] Help us Lord. We ask as your people to be in constant prayer. For this community. We would see days of refreshing. And days of renewal. Lord we know we pray a prayer that is beyond our efforts.

But that's why we come to you. We would ask Lord. We would see the salvation of this village. We would see and hear once more. Of many coming to know and coming to love you.

We know Lord that's a work that you alone will do. Help us to be patient and to eagerly await that day. Until that day comes. Help us to serve you faithfully. In the day you have placed us in.

Help us Lord to expect these great things from you. Not to limit your saving power to our own experience. Lord we know that there are many here this evening.

Who are once so far away from you. Who are once such unlikely Christians. But yet they find themselves here this evening. Praising their name alongside. Praising your name alongside their brothers and sisters.

[17 : 47] In these days of small things. Help us to be faithful servants. Help us to cling on to the promises you give us. Help us to be faithful in home and private.

Help us to be faithful in public and places of work. In our village. As we go about our day to day business. Help us to serve you. Help us to honour you. In all we seek to do.

I sing all these things. In Jesus precious name. And for his sake. Amen. Let's read.

The final chapter. Of scripture. Revelation chapter 22. Revelation chapter 22.

Revelation chapter 22. Revelation chapter 22. Revelation chapter 22. Revelation chapter 22. Let's hear the word of God.

[18 : 57] Amen. Then the angel showed me the river. Of the water of life. Bright as crystal. Flowing from the throne of God. And of the Lamb.

Through the middle of the street. Of the city. Also on either side of river. The tree of life. With its twelve kinds of fruit. Yielding its fruit each month.

The leaves of the tree. Were for the healing. Of the nations. No longer will there be anything accursed. But the throne of God. And of the Lamb will be in it. And his servants will worship him.

They will see his face. And his name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun.

For the Lord God will be their light. And they will reign forever and ever. And he said to me. These words are trustworthy and true.

[19 : 55] And the Lord. The God of the spirits of the prophets. Has sent his angel. To show his servants. What must soon take place. And behold I am coming soon.

Blessed is the one who keeps the words. Of the prophecy of this book. I John. Am the one who heard. And saw these things. And when I heard and saw them.

I fell down to worship. At the feet of the angel. Who showed them to me. But he said to me. You must not do that. I am a fellow servant with you. And your brothers the prophets.

And those who keep the words of this book. Worship God. And he said to me. Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book. For the time is near.

Let the evil doers still do evil. And the filthy still be filthy. And the righteous still do right. And the holy still be holy. Behold I am coming soon.

[20 : 54] Bringing my recompense with me. To repay each one for what he has done. I am the alpha and the omega. The first and the last. The beginning and the end.

Blessed are those who wash their robes. So that they may have a right to the tree of life. That they may enter the city by the gates. Outside are the dogs and sorcerers.

The sexually immoral. And murderers and idolaters. And everyone who loves and practices falsehood. I Jesus have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches.

I am the root and the descendant of David. The bright morning star. The spirit and the bride say come. And let the one who hears say come.

And let the one who is thirsty come. Let the one who desires take the water of life without price. I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book.

[21 : 56] If anyone adds to them. God will add to him the plagues described in this book. And if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy. God will take away his share in the tree of life.

In the holy city which are described in this book. He who testifies to these things says. Surely I am coming soon. Amen. Come Lord Jesus.

The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen. Amen. We give praise to God once more for his holy and his perfect word.

We can turn back to the singing we had in Psalm 84. Scottish Psalter Psalm 84. We can sing the rest of the Psalm. Verses 7 down to verse 12.

Psalm 84. Verses 7 to verse 12. On page 339. Psalm 84 verse 7. So they from strength and we did go.

[22 : 56] Still forward unto strength. Until in Zion they appear. Before the Lord. At length. Verses 7 to 12. To God's praise. Moses.

hæz watin' Still for what can't you stand Until the Zion may appear Before the Lord have made Lord God of hosts, my great and dear Lord, take us to get here Sing for the shield of condemn Is of light anointed here

O good, like our song, dear And deserve, like our God Will not smear, like our God The help of the day And then with hope no good wrong then

Thou shalt find me to live O well thy heart the Lord of all At my history there For my heart sure confess On thee alone God bless Just as we did in the morning we can turn back to a book of Psalms And Psalm 23 We shall come to an end of our short series looking at this Psalm

Psalm 23 We shall read the whole Psalm together The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want He makes me lie down in green pastures He leads me beside still waters He restores my soul He leads me in paths of righteousness For his name's sake Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will 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 You anoint my head with oil My cup overflows Surely goodness and mercy Shall follow me all the days of my life And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord Forever So this morning we dealt with verse 5 And this evening we find ourselves in the final

[27 : 28] Verse Of our study I summarised in the morning The previous week So we won't go back through that just now But just to summarise in a sentence Of course we said in the morning Today our previous week This is a summary of Christian experience We sang just now in Psalm 84 And we sang Psalm 84 Because Psalm 84 Is quite the same in some senses To Psalm 23 In that both Psalms Are a summary Of a Christian's walk In Psalm 84 You see the journey Of what it is to be a Christian From good days And bad days Times of joy And times of blessing But all the way through Psalm 84 And we covered this before together Before the vacancy Was still empty We covered Luke to Psalm 84 And we saw that There's the theme The trend

Of getting To the final Place of God And here we find In Psalm 23 It's no different As we come to the end of the Psalm We do see This final resting place With God Of course Throughout the Old Testament Throughout the whole Old Testament We see that Israel's story Is one continuous story Of looking for rest Both physical and spiritual rest Of either longing for that rest Or finding the rest And then sinning Pretty horrendously at times Most usually sinning In awful ways And losing the peace Losing the rest And having to wonder again Till they find that rest Once more We say we look forward In a few weeks time To starting a series In the judges

And the whole account Of the judges Is just disaster After disaster Horrendous sin After horrendous sin And there is no promise There is no There is no hint Of rest And the people Just want a break They just want rest And that is Israel's story Throughout the whole Of the Old Testament Pursuing rest Getting the rest Sinning And losing that peace Losing that rest And here we come To our final verse This evening We see as David Wrote this psalm He is looking forward To a final resting place As he calls it In the house Of the Lord And that is Our theme this evening Our theme this evening Is the great promises That God gives Towards his people So this morning

This afternoon We saw the good shepherd Becoming the perfect host As he hosted us Around his dining table As he fed us As he watered us As he gave us a feast As he anointed our heads With oil And this evening We see in the final verse That he isn't just A one time host No He invites us now Into his home Forever Time Without End So we look together Very briefly this evening At verse 6 Just four General points First of all We can see The assurance He gives us Then His mercy His pursuing And his home Assurance Mercy Pursuing And home First of all Assurance

Surely Surely Goodness And mercy Shall follow me All the days Of my life It's quite handy Since we moved To these Bibles Now We can see Actually Footnotes For us You don't have to Take my word anymore For my Perhaps Questionable Greek translations You can be Backed up By the footnotes Verse 6 See the way Six There we say Surely If you go down To the bottom Of the page It says Or only Surely Surely Surely Goodness And mercy Shall follow me Perhaps Surely Might feel A bit Uncertain But it's not An uncertain Term It literally Means Only Only Goodness And mercy But surely Is used There Because In the context It's written In the Hebrew The word Only Doesn't Doesn't Doesn't Quite Capture The The Certainty Of it But it's a real

[32 : 32] Certainty As David Writes The good Glorious News Here And David Says Surely Not in a Questioning Sense But in a Certain Sense If it be Very Literal I am Beyond Certain I am Beyond Sure My goodness And mercy Shall Follow me The summary Of the Whole Psalm We could Say Is found In this Final Verse Of this First word Of hope In this Final Verse I am Convinced Surely I am Certain That only Goodness And mercy Will follow Me And so On and so On The truth Is And it Doesn't Take a Minister To come And tell Us The truth Is And we All Know It That There Is No Certainty We live In a World With Zero

Certainty The Psalm Itself Shows Us That We Sell Us Last Week In Verse Four We Live In a World Where In a Second And we All know This Ourselves In Our Own Lives In A Second In An Hour In A Week In A Month Everything Can Just Be Turned Upside Down That One Phone Call That One Turn The Road That One Appointment That One Job Situation Whatever Story Might Be And Everything You Once Knew Has Now Changed Or Everything You Once Knew Is Completely Gone Close Friends Change Family Members Change Family Relationships Change Friendships Change People We Once Were Still Close To Are Now

Perhaps Not Close To Life Happens Death Takes Place Separation Takes Place And So On We Know We Live In A World Where There Is No Certainty There Is No Assurance Of Things Being Unchanging With Jesus As Our Good Shepherd The Christians Here This Evening We Can Be Sure Of Many Things And We Don't Say That As Some Sunday Based Motivational Speaker From A Pulpit We Say That Because It's Biblically True And We Don't Say That In Theological Theories We Say It To Brothers And Sisters You Know This Yourselves That In A Life Of Uncertainty In A World Where Nothing Is

Sure Where Nothing Is Certain Where Nothing Is Set But In Jesus And In Jesus Alone As Christians We Can Say Yes With Him Things Are Certain Things Are Sure In Him We Can Be Confident In Him In Jesus In Him Alone We Have Full Assurance With Him Alone We Can Be Certain As To Our Current Situation And Our Future Hope It's Important We Grasp Even This Short Word As We Begin To Look At This Verse For The Christians Here This Evening Despite Whatever Our Week Has Been Or Our Week Might Be Ahead Of Us And We Don't Say That Lightly You Know We Really Don't Life Can Be Hard But Whatever May Be Taking Place Or Might Take Place We

Come This Evening And The Christians Here At This Moment Whatever Many Hundreds Of Things We Are Unsure About We Are Sure The Good Shepherd Has Taken Us This Far We Are Sure That The Good Shepherd Has Fed Us And Watered Us And Kept Us And Led Us And Shown His Love To Us We Are Sure At This Very Moment In Time That We Have Been Known And Loved From Before Time And Creation Itself That Is Certainties The Christians Here Have And Going Forward We'll See In A Second We Have Certain Certain Certain Certainties Of Our Future Now We Have No Certainty As To What Will Take Place With Our Family Or Our Lives Our Lives That Is Not For To Know But There Are Certain Certain Certainties That We Can Be Sure About As To God's Care For Us His Keeping Of Us And

[37 : 35] Our Eventual Home With Him We'll See That More In A Second Truth Is That Only Christians Here This Evening Who Can Say That We Are Certain Or Sure Of Anything In Life But We Are Sure That We Worship An Unchanging God Who Is The Solid Rock Of Our Salvation Of Our Faith Who Does Not Change Who Will Never Change We Have A Saviour Who Is The Same What Yesterday Today And Forever More We Have A Full Assurance What Do We Have Full Assurance Of Of Of Goodness And Mercy Brothers And Sisters We This Evening Because We Worship And Follow The Good Shepherd If We Know Him If We Love Him We Have Full Eternal Assurance Of

The Goodness And Mercy Of Our Good Shepherd The Goodness And Mercy Of Yahweh His Goodness The Goodness Of Our Good Shepherd The Word Goodness Here It's The All Encompassing All Encompassing Summary Word Of All The Good That God Does And Thinks Towards And Thinks About And Cares For His People It's The Broadest Word Is Used Here To Take In All The Goodness Of God Towards His People And How Wide Is God's Goodness Towards His People How Much Does God Love His People We've Asked The Same Question Before Well

The Father Loves His People As Much As What As Much As He Loves The Son Why Because He Loves His People In The Son We Covered It Before In The High Priestly Prayer Where Jesus Himself Tells Us That Where Jesus Himself Tells Us That We Are Loved As He Is Loved All His People All The People Of God Brothers And Sisters From The Youngest Christian Here This Evening In Terms Of Your Faith To The Old Christian Here This Evening In Terms Of Your Faith You Have Full Access To The Full Goodness Of God All His Mercy All His Goodness All His Love The Goodness Of Our

God The Steadfast Love Of Our God Goodness Goodness Goodness Is All All All The Kindness He Shows Towards Us All The Love He Shows Towards Us In Terms Of The Daily Activities Then We Have The Other Word Here The Mercy The Christians This Evening We Can Be Sure Of His Mercy Towards Us The Word Used There And It's Time For Your Hebrew Lesson Again I said Before It's Only Fair I Have To Three Or Four Years Of Hebrew So The congregation Has to A few Minutes Of It The Word There Is Chesed Chesed Love Again Thankfully the footnote Is there Translated Roughly As Steadfast Love The Chesed Mercy Of God Is The Unfailing Unfaltering Eternal Never Ending Mercy Of God Towards His People Despite Their Waywardness And Their Sin Despite

The Nuisance We Are Despite The Embarrassment We Times Must Well Be Despite The Shame We Bring Despite Our Backslidings And Our Absolute Messing Up Of The Things We Say And Think And Do For Those Who The Lord Has Set His Love On He Sets His Chesed Love On His Steadfast Unaltering Unfaltering Unfailing Love That is The Love The Mercy Which Follows The Lord's People The Chesed Love This Is The Covenant Keeping Keeping Love Of God We Said In Verse One A few Weeks Ago That This Is Yahweh Who Is Speaking Yahweh Is My Shepherd Of Of Of Yahweh The Covenant Name Of God God The Covenant Miami

[42 : 41] That God Kind of So axed towards his people. Dear brothers and sisters, this evening, if you know and love the Good Shepherd for yourself, if you can say that he is yours and you are his, then you can know for certain just now. You can know for certain and be able to say for certain, regard us how you feel.

Regardless how you feel this day and this week, it's not about feelings, it's about biblical truth. You can say for certain, if you know him, if you love him, then he has set both his goodness and his steadfast love, his steadfast mercy onto you.

And here we see mercy and love, it's interchangeable here. Why? Why is that word so interchangeable again and again throughout Scripture? Because God's love and his mercy towards his people.

He shows his love towards us and his ongoing mercy towards us. God has no need to have a people for himself. The Greek gods, and indeed the Roman gods also to a certain extent, but the Greek gods especially, they needed people. They really needed people.

They needed the worshiper people to keep them going. God doesn't need that. He is Yahweh, eternal, needing nothing and no one. God chooses to keep and have a people for himself. And in doing that, he chooses in his love to show mercy and goodness and love to that people.

[44 : 51] This is the theme of this whole psalm. As a good shepherd leads his people, he leads us in goodness and mercy. And that goodness and mercy, what? It follows us. It follows us, it says here, all the days of our life. The glorious image here, that for all of life's journey, we said this is a psalm of journey. For all of life's journeys, for all the days we will travel, for all the places we will go physically and mentally and spiritually, all the journeys we will take physically and mentally and spiritually. For those who know God, who love God, this chesed love, this steadfast love and mercy, this goodness, it will follow us all the days of our life.

Our minds perhaps go back to Psalm 139, that whole psalm which reminds us, there's nowhere we can go. Physically, nowhere we can go, height nor depth. Spiritually, nowhere we can go, height nor depth.

To escape, to somehow be too far away from the grasp. And in this context, the loving hold of a good shepherd.

Once he takes you into his home. Once you've experienced verse 5 as we heard today. Once you've dined with the king. He will never let you go. He will never stop walking alongside and before, and at times behind those who are his.

The good shepherd is the one who pursues, as it were, his people with love and mercy all the days of our life. We've covered this before next door in Premier Rings, but brothers and sisters, we have a God who, as we are, has planned out the days.

[47 : 17] As planned out the hours and the days. And when you find yourself at times, and we know there will be times, and you find yourself, and it is no sin to think in times of distress and in times of worry.

We follow the example of Job and of a psalmist, of David himself. When times of distress and pain and worry and darkness hit, and you find yourself questioning.

Not questioning God's goodness, not questioning God, but questioning, is he still truly with you? Is he still truly alongside me?

I once felt him. I once understood that presence, but now he feels gone. Verses like this verse assure us, there is nothing left out here all the days of our life.

God is with his people in his full mercy, his full goodness. Yes, enemy and danger pursue us.

[48 : 28] Yes, we are attacked at times on all sides. Brothers and sisters, he is there. There are times as sheep you will decide to go and see the grass is greener, perhaps, as I were, on the other side of the fence.

You'll get stuck in the fence and make a mess of things. There are times as sheep, as Christians, as brothers and sisters, there are times as sheep we will go and get ourselves stuck, perhaps back in the same bogs we used to get stuck in.

And yet, his mercy and his goodness still follows us. And of course, we know that's never an excuse to sin.

And the true Christian doesn't take that as an excuse to sin. The true Christian takes that as a groundbreaking, earth-shattering reminder that we have a God who is merciful to us in ways we do not deserve him to be.

He is eternally merciful to us. Because he gives love from an eternally deep source. Yahweh is my shepherd.

- [49 : 45] Because Yahweh, the covenant-keeping God, is my shepherd, we can know for certain. Because he never sleeps nor slumbers. Because he never gets tired.
- Because he has eternal, we could say, energy. As the shepherd to shepherd his sheep. Even the best of crofters eventually gets sick of his sheep.
- Even the best of crofters eventually gets a bit tired of his sheep. Not so of a good shepherd. He eternally shows his eternal love and goodness and mercy towards us.
- Our love is not chesed. Our love is not steadfast. Our love towards him to our shame is not chesed.
- Our love towards him is not steadfast. It changes. It changes. We are so distracted by our own lives, our own sin, our own problems and so on and so on.
- [50 : 54] It grows warm. It grows cold. It grows far. It grows close. We know ourselves how it works. God's love for us is not like that. It is consistent.
- It is there as he pursues where his people are at all times with love and goodness and mercy. And what is the final promise of this glorious, beautiful psalm?
- I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever. I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.
- That is the end of this pursuing. The Lord, all the days of your life, dear brother, dear sister, all the days of our lives, the Lord is with us in his love and his mercy.
- And that follows us to the final day of our life. It follows us then into eternity where we will find ourselves living in his presence.
- [52 : 06] And we covered this in a different aspect, of course, a few weeks ago next door in a prayer meeting. As we discussed the reality of glory, looking, of course, in our series of gardens throughout Scripture.
- And we saw and we read in Revelation chapter 22 today. And we read there to show us and to remind us the reality of what it is that we look forward to as Christians.
- Not some airy, fairy, floating in the sky reality. That's not right. That's not biblical. That does a disservice to God's beautiful plan for his people.
- The hope of a Christian is a life never-ending. An eternal life spent in the presence of our good shepherd.
- Who invites us in to dwell with him. To a place he has gone to prepare for us. And because he has gone to prepare that place for us.
- [53 : 08] We have the sure hope he will come one day soon. Take us home to be with him in that place. I will dwell.
- There is no leaving this place. And the wording, the grammar of the word dwell there. It's an ongoing reality. It's a sense of a permanence.
- I will keep on dwelling. To be very literal. I will keep on dwelling. In the house of God. This is the hope of a Christian.
- Through all the days on the valley. Through all the enemy at the gate. Through all the pain and suffering. And long days.
- And hard days of his life. The hope of a Christian is found there. In the final verse of Psalm 23. And again. The question is obvious.
- [54 : 09] But it has to be asked. And I assure you once more. There is no joy. There is genuinely no joy. In asking this question. Because I know the answer.
- Where do you find your hope? Or indeed. Reward the question. What hope.
- My friends. Do you actually have? See. Through all the rubbish in life. Let's speak plainly. Through all life's rubbish. All the grimness in life.

Through all the misery and pain in life. Through all the days. You'd rather just not have to have experienced in life. But Krishna can say. Yeah. That was rubbish.

That was a horrible day. A horrible week. A horrible month or year. But do you know what? I will dwell with him. Forever.

[55 : 10] That hope is only available. To those of us here. This evening. Who know the good shepherd. If as of yet. You're not following the good shepherd. You can't have that hope.

There is no way in. As we said to the boys and the girls. For the family service. Jesus alone. Is the door. There is no way in.

To the sheepfold. Apart from what? Through him. If we don't know him. If we don't serve him. And love him. This side of glory.

You will never see him. On the other side of glory. If you do. You see him only as judge. And king. You must.

Know the good shepherd for yourself. You must. You must come to know him. You must come to serve him. Come to worship him.

[56 : 08] Come to love him. And then. Once you know him. And meet him. As he truly is. You can then have the hope. The Christians here have.

And also the joy that we have. That we are pursued. By steadfast love. And mercy. All the way. Until our final place. Dwelling with him. What a joy.

That would be. That even this evening. You would know for certain. Before you close your eyes. To sleep tonight. You could say. And know in your hearts.

For certain. That your place. Is with the shepherd. In glory. There is nothing stopping you. This evening. The invite has gone out.

Once more. The shepherd. Once more. Has been clear. That he has made a way. For all. Who wish to follow him. The door. To the sheepfold.

[57 : 05] That is there. To be entered into. Just now. He has gone. To call home. Sheep. But not his. And dear friends. That is you.

The good shepherd. Is able to take. And to save. Any and all. Who come to him. You have heard it before. Countless times.

The good shepherd. Is better than any crofter. Even the best of crofters. Because the best of crofters. Are fussy. About what sheep they take. And so they should be.

The good shepherd. Takes even the most. Unlikely. Of sheep. Even the most. Battered. Worn down. Useless specimens.

Of an animal. And he takes that. And he calls it his own. He looks after it. He feeds it. And he pursues it.

[58 : 02] With love. And mercy. I won't look up. But there are some here. This evening. And I'm sure they would call themselves. At one point. The most useless. Of specimens.

Of wandering. Lost sheep. But now the Lord. Has transformed them. And they love him. Dear friends. You've heard the gospel.

Countless times. You've heard it twice today. There's no. New message. I could lock the doors. Just now. And preach through.

Every sermon. I think about. I could call Mr. McLeod. To come up. And to preach. Every sermon. He's ever preached. We can't save you. New minister. Won't save you.

You know. We hope to start running. Different Christianity. Explored. And things. And we're all good. It's all good things. But these things. Won't save you. Unless you come yourself. And trust a good shepherd.

[58 : 57] The one who tells you to come. And to believe in him. Spare heads now. A word of prayer. Lord. Thank you Lord.

For the gift. Once more of your word. We do ask for this evening. That you would. For your people. You'd comfort us. And you'd reassure us. As to the promises. We'd read this evening.

That. Through all the days of our life. We do have that. Glorious hope. That glorious promise. That what awaits us. As eternity spent. With our good shepherd.

The one who calls us home. To be with himself. And on that day. We will see him. As he truly is. The good shepherd. The one who's gone before us. To prepare a place for us.

The one who is for a moment in time. Is making constant intercession. For us. Thank you Lord. For that great privilege. That we have a. Great and glorious. High shepherd. High priest.

[59 : 52] Who is also the good shepherd. We have one. Who is. Both. The sacrifice. And also the high priest. So we have a full. Full confidence.

The work is done. It is finished. There is nothing. That anyone can do. To come and be saved. But come and cry out. For salvation. From the one.

Who has done all things. For them. We ask that. That would be the story. From even some. This evening. The ones here. This evening. We love so much. We long to come. And know Jesus. For themselves.

We ask the Lord. That would be their story. Would come. And trust in the good shepherd. Even just now. Help us. As your people. We ask to be encouraged. Encouraged. As a reminder. Of this evening. That we have a good shepherd.

Who is with us. All the days of our life. Who will pursue us. As it were. Who will never. Let us go. Help us one more time. We ask. We come to sing. Our final item of praise.

[60 : 47] To do so. With hearts and minds. Full of understanding. We ask once more. Lord. You bless the one. Who leads it. We thank you. Lord. For those. Lead the worship. We ask. We come to sing. Your praise.

We do so. Understanding Lord. That we do it. Singing to a God. Who listens to us. Asking these things. In and through. And for Jesus. In his precious name's sake.

Amen. We can conclude then. By singing. And sing psalms. And it has to be. Of course. Psalm 23. As we come to an end of our study.

Psalm 23. Sing psalms. On page 28. Page 28. The Lord is my shepherd.

No want shall I know. He makes me lie down. Where the green pastures grow. He leads me to rest. With the calm waters flow. Psalm 23.

[61 : 45] The whole psalm. To God's praise. Amen. The Lord is my shepherd.

No want shall I know. He makes me lie down. Where the green pastures grow.

He leads me to rest. Where the calm waters flow. By wandering steps.

He brings back to his way. Then, say, God's of righteousness.

May him we stay. And lest he has done his grave.

[62 : 45] Into the spring. Though I walk in death's valley. Where darkness is near.

He walks to our web plate. No evil I fear. You're all and you're soft.

Give me comfort and cheer. To the size of my enemies.

That's evil you say. The eye of rejoicing.

You pour on my head. My God. Over close hand. I'm patiently air.

[63 : 51] So surely you come. When a mercy and grace.

Will follow me. God's spring. In all of my ways.

I will dwell in the house of the Lord. All my days.

In the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the love of God the Father. And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. For you now and forevermore. Amen.