

Sunday, April 30, 2023 – Fourth Sunday of Easter - Good Shepherd Sunday

Jesus is the Good Shepherd

Psalm 23: 1-2 - The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters.

*He does not want me to have to stay in the sheepfold any longer than necessary.
He knows where the best grazing ground is. His knowledge is far superior to mine.
He brings me to places where I can quench my thirst and he remembers my fear of deep and/or fast flowing streams.*

3 – He restores my soul and guides me along right pathways for his name’s sake.

I trust him to lead me to the right and best places.

4 - Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil;
for you are with me.

*I need him to be as close to me as possible – especially during the scariest moments of my life
when I am the most helpless – at the time of my own death and the death of those closest to
me.*

4 - Your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

*When you need to correct and/or discipline me, even though it is painful, I know that it is for my
good.*

5-6 - You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

What else can we say? This Psalm says it all.

Ezekiel 34: 11-16 – I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. I will rescue them
from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. I
will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and will bring them
into their own land: I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses. I will feed
them with good pasture; they shall lie down in good grazing land. I will seek the lost, bring back
the strayed, bind up the injured, and strengthen the weak.

Luke 15: 4-5 – Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not
leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? When
he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices.

7 – Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over
ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

Luke 15 also includes the parables of the lost coin and the lost son.

Matthew 18: 12-13 – If a shepherd has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray,
does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went
astray? And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that
never went astray.

John 10: 3-4 (Gospel) - The sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice.

Jesus is the Gate for the Sheep

John 10: 7. 9-10 (Gospel) - Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. Whoever enters by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

John 14: 6 - I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Jesus is the Lamb of God

Genesis 22: 13-14 - Abraham looked up and saw a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. So Abraham called that place "The Lord will provide;" as it is said to this day, "On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided."

Exodus 12: 7, 13 - They shall take some of the blood (of the lamb without blemish) and put it on the doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you."

Leviticus 16 - Day of Atonement -

14 - He shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle it with his finger on the front of the mercy seat/covering.

21-22 - Then Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and sending it away into the wilderness by means of someone designated for the task. The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to a barren region.

34 - This shall be an everlasting statute for you, to make atonement for the people of Israel once in the year for all their sins.

Psalms 103: 12 - As far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us.

2 Corinthians 5:21 - For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Martin Luther re The Great, Happy, or Fortunate Exchange

Isaiah 53: 5 - He was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed.

6 - All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

John 1: 29 - The next day (John the Baptist) saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, "Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

I Peter 2: 24-25 (part of Second Reading) - He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.