



LOOKING UP!

By Matt Huddleston

Psalms 23 is a powerful picture of God. He cares for us and leads us. Even the image of the staff and rod illustrate help and protection for us in difficult times.

Wait, if he is so good, why do we have difficult times? If following him meant easy street, would it really be a choice? Often, the difficult times refine us and connect us better with God than the peaceful and luxurious moments. Yes, we will have difficult times, and the Good Shepherd will lead us through those moments.

(Ps. 23:1) The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.

(Ps. 23:6) ... and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Notice how this short song starts and ends. It starts and ends with a commitment. God is a Good Father, Shepherd, Lord, Giver, etc. But what does that mean until I choose him? He is my shepherd IF I let him. He will let me go if I desire to leave. He will let me go, or he will shepherd me; the choice is mine. The final line of Psalm 23 can be read as God locking us into our reward. Where do you choose to live?

Reading Psalm 23, as a projection of my choice to accept God as my shepherd, puts hope and peace into my life. It fills me with hope about what I am accepting, and it gives me peace from what I am rejecting.

I choose the Lord as my shepherd. Therefore I will lack nothing! Make the decision today to allow him to shepherd your life. Set your mind into the future and determine how you will live and act tomorrow and the day after that. I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

SERMON NOTES

Finding Faith

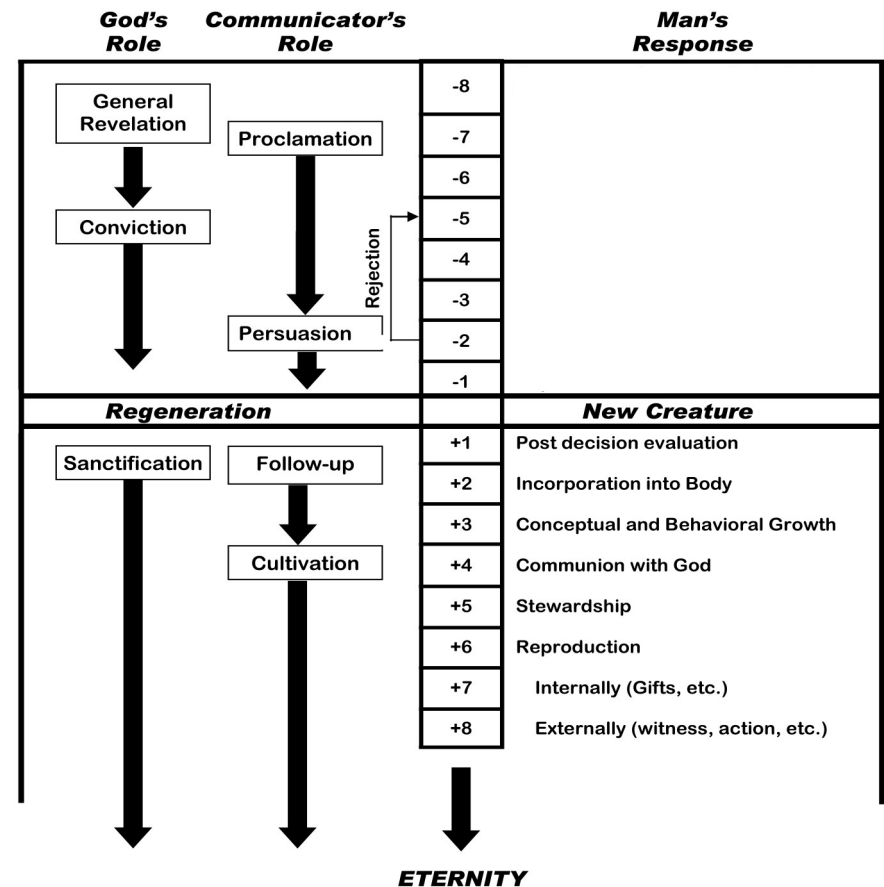
November 28



Faith Moments are:

- ◆ Crisis of _____
- ◆ Crisis of _____

Engel's Evangelism Scale



Next Week:

DEC. 5, 2021

ROM. 14:16

SPEAKING OF THE GOOD

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PERSONAL STUDY

It is rewarding to invest time each day in God's Word.

Mo Psalm 68:3

We have many reasons to be glad. Following our time of Thanksgiving last week, can you innumerate your reasons for joy? Will you choose to come rejoicing before the Lord today?

Tu Psalm 95:6-7

Don't lose sight of your highest priority as life starts to get back to regular speed. Join the millions today who call on God to be their Shepherd, acknowledging him as Creator and King.

We Ephesians 2:8-9

Give credit where credit is due. God gives grace and salvation. We cannot boast in our efforts, but we can praise him for his great gift. Spend time today praising him for his love and grace.

Th Isaiah 61:10

This week's theme is praise and thankfulness for God's redeeming love. Read this verse aloud. Rejoice as you look at your physical and spiritual self—you are dressed in garments of righteousness.

Fr Nahum 1:7

If your week has been like mine, there have been times of challenge and frustration. Share the difficult times with God, and complete each difficult scenario with, "and God, you are my refuge and help."

Sa Hebrews 10:23

Times of trial should bring us closer to God, for he is faithful. Declare your love for God today. Promise that you will draw near to him because you know he is faithful in all situations.

STUDY & DISCUSS

- Read Luke 14:15-23. Rarely will people respond the first time faithfully? Why?
 - What was your reaction when you first heard of God's invitation? What changed so you could accept God's gift?
- We must remember that we are ambassadors. Who helped you understand the greatness of God's invitation? How were their style and approach successful with you?
- Last week, you made a list of people you were praying for. Review that list. Opportunities to share our faith may come during moments of crisis (crisis of life or belief).
 - Acts 16:25-40—The jailor was in a life crisis.
 - Acts 8:26-40—The Ethiopian was questioning his belief.
 - Are any on your list going through a crisis of life or belief?
- Practice retelling the simplified gospel as you write out the three circles. Work to make your retelling personal and short.

