

FBC Today

f i y o YOUTH

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MAIN SERVICE
[Physical & Youtube]
Sundays 8:45am / 11:15am

YOUTH SERVICE
[Physical]
Sundays 9:00am

SUNDAY SCHOOL
For Ages 3 to 12
(Preschool to std 6)
Physical Classes
8:45am / 11:15am

U N L E A S H I N G T H E G O S P E L **ENGAGE | ENCOURAGE | EDIFY**

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THIS ISSUE**

ARTICLE
Jesus the Good Shepherd

PRAYER SPOTLIGHT
**NECF 40 Days Fast
and Prayer**

Jesus the Good Shepherd

In this period of uncertainty, wars, natural disasters, social problems, poor health, and financial difficulties, many of us are anxious, worried, or even depressed. Our Creator God refers to us as sheep because He knows how weak and helpless we are. Like sheep, we have no sense of direction and are prone to wander, go astray, and lose our way. Therefore all of us need a shepherd.

**NEXT
WEEK'S
SERMON**

September 22, 2024

**The Parables
of the Lost
Sheep: The Lost
in the Family**

Luke 15:4-7

Preacher

Ps Raymond Raj

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Let us first take a look at Psalm 23 to learn how blessed we are to have God as our Shepherd. After that, we will go to the Gospel of John to know Jesus Christ the Good Shepherd.

Psalm 23 is a well-known psalm that is often quoted to remind us of the goodness and faithfulness of God. From the six verses of this psalm, we will see God as the Shepherd who provides, guides, protects, and promises what is best for His sheep.

*Psalm 23:1 - The Lord is my shepherd
I lack nothing*

What an honor and privilege to proclaim that The LORD: The Almighty God, Most High God, the Great I AM is “my” shepherd. Very often when I am deeply troubled for myself, my children, grandkids, or friends and I don’t have the words to pray, I always remember and claim the promise of this powerful verse. It is comforting and very reassuring to know that our Creator God cares for us and He knows all our needs. If we call to Him and trust Him, we will not lack any good thing



Psalm 23:2 - He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside quiet waters

God our Shepherd knows that we need both physical and mental rest. He makes us rest in green pastures, a comfortable and relaxing environment. He brings us to still waters which provide peace and calmness. However, very often we get ourselves stressed up and burnt out because we are not only trying to do our job well but we think that we have to help God with His job.


Psalm 23:3 - He refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for His name’s sake.

Life throws all kinds of challenges at us resulting in fear and worry. Often we are bombarded by many voices telling us what to do and where to go. God the Shepherd knows that we need spiritual and emotional restoration. Very patiently He will give us very clear directions in His Word or through His people. He will show us the correct way to go.

Psalm 23:4 - Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

This verse assures us of God’s protection and presence especially when we are faced with danger, crises, and despair. What a comfort to know that our Shepherd is faithful and He will never leave us nor forsake us. He has a rod – a big stick/club to protect us against any ferocious animals or enemies. He also carries a staff – a long stick with a hook at the end to help any sheep that has fallen over and cannot get up (Sheep are very clumsy. If they fall over, usually they can’t get up without any help)





Psalm 23:5 – You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

This is a lovely picture of provision, security, and abundance even in the midst of danger. The sheep are able to enjoy personal care, abundant provision, and safety, not only in the absence of danger but also in the presence of their Shepherd. So when faced with all kinds of threats and difficulties, let us remember that we can have security and peace in the presence of our Shepherd.

Psalm 23:6 – Surely Your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

With God as our Shepherd, we are confident and certain of His overflowing blessing of mercy, joy, grace, and unconditional love. Our greatest blessing is to be in the presence of the LORD for eternity. What a privilege to have God as our Shepherd!

JESUS, the Good Shepherd

Now let us look at Chapter 10 of the Gospel of John. Here Jesus Christ does not simply claim to be like a shepherd or just a shepherd. He claims to be the Good Shepherd. By calling Himself good, Jesus is claiming to be the promised Messiah. He says that “there is only One who is good” and that is God. Jesus is fully God and fully Man. He lived a perfect life, died for wretched sinners like us and after three days, He rose in victory over death and sin. He is now seated at the right hand of God the Father.

John 10:11 – Jesus says “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”

Jesus, the Good Shepherd, guards, guides, and provides for His sheep perfectly, powerfully, and personally.

Isaiah 53:6 says “We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

At the Cross, we see Jesus the Sinless One willingly giving up His life to save us from God’s wrath. He died a painful death to redeem us and to reconcile us back to God the Father. When we confess our sins and accept Jesus as our Savior, our Lord, and our Master, He becomes our Good Shepherd and we become the sheep in His flock.

John 10:14 – Jesus says “I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me”

Jesus, the Good Shepherd, knows each of us by name. He knows our joys, struggles, weaknesses, and hopes. He also knows our successes and failures.

He is All-Knowing. As His sheep, we know Jesus by spending time communing with

Him in prayer and reading the Bible. This close bond between Jesus the Good Shepherd and His sheep incorporates communication, relationship, and trust.

John 10:27- Jesus says “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.”

Jesus’s sheep recognize His voice—they will not follow a stranger. In fact, His sheep run away when they hear a voice other than that of their trusted Shepherd. Intimacy with Jesus means spending time to know Him, listening for His voice, recognizing His voice, and following where He leads. We often

overcomplicate the Christian life. Jesus, however, simplifies the essence of true faith: He leads and we follow. Jesus goes ahead of us, and we walk behind Him. We train our ears to listen for His voice while we embrace His truth. We surrender our agendas or plans to His better way.

We trust that He knows more than we do.

John 10:28 - Jesus declared, “I give my sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand.”

This verse describes the hope and salvation that all believers enjoy when we put our faith in Jesus’ finished work on the Cross. Jesus, God’s Son and humanity’s Saviour meets our deepest spiritual needs and gives us eternal life. He will keep us safe in His watchful care. Goodness and lovingkindness will follow us every step of our lives now and into eternity. When we stray and get lost, Jesus comes after us.

In the parable of the lost sheep in Luke 15, the shepherd who has 100 sheep will leave the 99 and go after the lost sheep

until he finds it. I used to find it difficult to understand this parable because it is very counterintuitive. One day the Holy Spirit caused me to think “What if I were that ONE sheep that was lost?”. Would I want Jesus to come and look for me and take me back to His flock? Each of us is precious to Jesus, our Good Shepherd. He does not want any of us to go astray. When we falter, Jesus holds us up and carries us through.

Jesus’ promise of abundant life in Him does not guarantee a long and prosperous life free from sorrow, sickness, or suffering. But no adverse circumstance represents an emergency for Him. He holds every needed resource in His Almighty hands. Hope permeates situations that appear hopeless because our God is sovereign and is always at work accomplishing greater purposes than we can imagine.



For reflection, let us do a self-check. Let us take time to pause and answer each of these questions.

Do I know Jesus, the Good Shepherd, personally and intimately?

How can I be sure that I belong to the flock of Jesus?

Am I able to hear and know Jesus' voice?

Will I choose to follow obediently wherever Jesus, my Good Shepherd leads me?

Am I willing to pray for people and lead them to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ?

How is God equipping and enabling me to shepherd people entrusted to my care?

In response, let us:

Repent and confess Jesus Christ as our Savior, our Lord, and our Master. Spend time each day feeding on the Word of God and communing with God. Stay close and connected to Jesus, our Good Shepherd.

Tell Jesus that we want to be part of His flock to enjoy His provision, guidance, protection, and promises.

Pray for people and lead them to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Be willing to be a shepherd after God's own heart and provide, protect, and guide people under our care.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank you for Your Word which is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates



even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of our hearts.

Search our heart, dear Father, and remove anything thing that is not pleasing to You. Forgive us for the many times we get distracted by worldly temptations and go astray. Thank you for lovingly pursuing us and never giving up on us.

Thank you, Father, for this priceless gift of a Savior, Jesus Christ who is also our

Good Shepherd. Teach us to love Jesus, to know Him, to follow Him, to serve Him, and to make Him known.

As we stay close and connected to Jesus, may we learn to be a faithful shepherd to the different people whom You have entrusted to our care.

In Jesus' Precious Name, we pray, AMEN.



By Grace Yap

Grace is a co-leader in the Sisters in Christ Discipleship Group.



PrayerSpotlight

15 September 2024

Today's Prayers

Lord, enable us to perceive this world with an eternal perspective, live with an eternal outlook, and allow the Gospel to guide our lives and works. Make our daily lives meaningful and valuable, especially when we make the Gospel known so that we will be joyful, and not sorrowful, when we give our account before Your throne. Amen.

Pray that the Ministry of Federal Territories which oversees Kuala Lumpur, Putrajaya and Labuan, would further enhance the well-being of the communities there through social and economic development.

Pray that churches in the Federal Territories would continue to be impactful in their outreach efforts, especially for the many that are reaching out to local and overseas students.

source: 40-Days Fast & Prayer 2024

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<https://www.necf.org.my/index.cfm?&menuid=200&parentid=144>

