

Teaching Plan for July 1, 2018 -- Lesson 5  
"A Strong Shepherd," Psalm 23  
Lesson Plan by Dr. Williamson

CONNECT WITH LIFE

1. ASSIGNMENT: With your neighbor, share either: a. what brought you comfort as a child; b. what brings your child comfort; or c. what brings you comfort, even to this day.

To clarify, teacher could optionally ask or say, "In other words, when it was storming--with lightning and thunder--what brought you comfort or made you feel safe; or what brings your children comfort in times of storm?"

Possible answers: sitting on mom or dad's lap, or holding their hand; a favorite "blanket." Being in the same room as parent; going to a basement or other safe location); Other things that bring comfort are favorite scripture verses; prayer; comfort food; talking with a trusted friend; being "home"

2. SAY: Our summer study is entitled, "Rescue and Redemption." Even before the foundation of creation, God knew he would need to rescue or redeem His people and His creation. The Old Testament is full of hints or times when God rescued or redeemed His people. The ultimate redemption would come through the death and resurrection of God's son, Jesus.

3. SAY: Today's study is for ALL of us, no matter what we are wrestling with or how good life is going. It's a study of what is probably the most familiar chapter in all of the Bible, Psalm 23. Turn their in your Bibles.

GUIDE BIBLE STUDY

4. SAY: As we read these first three verses, be watching for (or thinking about) what is involved in the job of being a Shepherd. Have volunteer read vs. 1-3. ASK: What all does a Shepherd do? What does the scripture say, and add to it anything else you know about what shepherds do.

Start with what the Scripture says: List answers on board.

Answers: vs. 2 He leads the animals to green pastures for food, moisture, and rest.

Vs. 2—He leads the animals to safe drinking water

Vs.3 He guides along good paths; he allows for rest;

ASK: What are other things a shepherd does for his sheep, based on study or previous knowledge?

Answers: He protects and provides safe shelter; When one gets lost, he goes and finds it; when one is hurt, he bandages or nurses it back to health; he protects the new born lambs; he knows his sheep by sight/name, and the sheep know their shepherd's voice; when it's time for wool, the shepherd shears the sheep; The shepherd protects the sheep from dangers like predators or disease;

5. Verse 1 says that "The Lord is My Shepherd." SAY: As David was writing, he probably was thinking about how he had taken care of sheep when he was a Shepherd boy earlier in life. Have volunteers look up: John 10:11 (Jesus calls himself the good shepherd);

Hebrews 13:20 (Jesus is referred to as the GREAT shepherd);

Psalm 100:3 (We are the sheep of his pasture);

Isaiah 53:6 (All we like sheep have gone astray);

ASK: In what ways do people need a shepherd, too? And how is Jesus that "good/great shepherd" to us? Discuss. We go astray—making wrong choices--and need someone to get us back on the right path; we need or want protection at times, especially when times are hard. Sometimes we just need

“provisions,” (like food, money for house payments) and we turn to him for answers. When we are stressed, turning to Jesus through scripture and prayer often brings us answers and comfort.

6. Have volunteer read vs. 4 (maybe from several translations). ASK: What else does scripture say a shepherd does? (he walks beside us, bringing us comfort.). ASK: What are some of the dark valleys we go thru in life, where it sure is nice to know Jesus is there with us? Discuss. Any loss, especially death, or divorce, or loss of job;

SAY: point out that while a rod and staff are both instruments of protection, they also can be used for correction, or getting back on the right path. ASK: How does God get us back on the right path when we’ve strayed, or made bad choices in life? Discuss. Answers will vary.

7. Have volunteer read vs. 5-6. Point out that “hosts” in those days did a variety of things. (see article: “The Sacred Duty of Hospitality”). Hosts greeted their guests, often with a kiss; Hosts also did things like wash feet, and help their guests “freshen up” by anointing with oil; provide water; feed their guests; and provide protection to any and all guests.

#### APPLY TO LIFE

8. In what ways does the Lord provide “hospitality” to us? ; Has God ever used another Christian to give you hospitality (where you’ve been on the receiving end)? If so, how does it feel to be treated well as a guest?

9. In what ways does our church provide hospitality, especially to guests?

If you were a first time guest at FBC Lewisville, how would you want to be treated in worship?

Would you go to a Bible study group your first time? (Why or why not?)

How would you want to be treated in a Bible study group?

10. ASK: As Christ-followers, in what ways are we blessed by the Lord, even in hard times?

11. ASK: Before today, when was the last time you remember hearing or reading this Psalm? Allow several to share. Some may say a sermon; possibly at a funeral.

SAY: The Bible says in many places, including vs. 6, (and John 14) that if we make a home for Jesus in our hearts while on this earth, He will make a home for us in His heaven at our death.

ASK: How or when has that truth brought you comfort or strength in your life? Discuss.

12. Close with prayer, thanking God for his constant protect and provision in our life.