

YOU

Sermon Series: When Emotions Rise
To be used with: Session 5: Overcoming Worry
Sermon Title Possibilities: Feeling Worried
Scripture: Psalm 23:1-6

Connection with Unit Theme: To complement the small group study “*When Emotions Rise*,” this sermon explores how believers should handle feelings of worry. When we feel worried, we can remember that we are in God’s care.

Introduction: Many people are feeling worried these days. A quick glance at the news or scroll of our social media feeds offers a seemingly never-ending list of problems in the world. Disease, economic recession, natural disasters, and war dominate the headlines. These issues are in addition to the personal and family concerns that occupy our thoughts.

In Psalm 23, David, who is no stranger to worrisome circumstances himself, offers us an opportunity to refocus our attention on the Lord. We can praise God for caring for His people individually and collectively. Although this may be a familiar psalm, we should not rush through it, assuming we already know what its words have to offer. Instead, we should pause and consider the ways in which the Lord takes care of us.

1. God provides for us. (v. 1-3)

David calls God his shepherd. Having been a shepherd himself, David knows what goes into taking care of one's flock. He recognizes that God has shown him the type of concern he showed for his sheep. All of us should be able to recall circumstances where God has shepherded us. Many of our worries stem from what we do not have or what we think we do not have.

David reminds us that the shepherd provides everything each sheep needs. The Lord finds green pastures for each sheep, providing food for sustenance. He also leads each one beside quiet waters, allowing for refreshment and rest. The Lord knows that each sheep needs guidance in righteousness and provides it because it is in his nature and character to do so. His shepherding demonstrates His wisdom, concern, and power. God wants to shepherd his people. Our job is to follow his leading.

2. God protects us. (v. 4-5)

That problems will come is presumed. David discusses what will happen *when* he goes through the dark valley. This is a long way from green pastures and still waters. Nevertheless, God is here too. Because of this, David says he fears no danger here. Threats often accompany darkness, and sheep need

protection. God uses His rod and staff to guide us and guard us. David expresses comfort at the thought of God's diligent care.

God offers blessings, even in difficult circumstances. David describes God as his host, preparing a feast with David's enemies in proximity. God is not threatened by what threatens us. Knowing this should ease our worries. David declares he is anointed with oil and his cup overflows. These images signify the presence and power of God. His anointing is recognizable even in painful circumstances.

3. God preserves us. (v. 6)

Moving from the difficulties of the present, David looks toward the future. No longer is he focused on what may lurk in dark valleys. Instead, he envisions goodness and faithful love chasing him. God's blessings will follow us as long as we live. David also declares that he will always live in the house of the Lord. As a worshipper, David enjoys being in the presence of God and looks forward to being in the house of the Lord.

David's confidence is stable because it relies on God, not circumstances. Circumstances change, but God's goodness does not. Whatever may prevent us from engaging in worship, whether physical distance or psychological and spiritual distance, will not have the last word. Rather, blessings and opportunities for praise will always be present.

Conclusion: There is no need for us to worry about the circumstances we face. We can trust God to take care of all our needs since He offered Jesus on our behalf (Romans 8:32). Having provided Jesus as our savior, God provides the Holy Spirit to guide us through life. He will shepherd us until the end.

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