

Where is God in This Crisis?

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[0:00] I get the impression you guys kind of like each other or something, which is awesome.! Boy, it's not the same without the Hopkins here, is it? It really isn't. My goodness. That! Year and a half I think they've been here now, maybe a little more than that, but what a blessing they've been to our body. Just miss them. So, welcome again to Tri-State. My name is John Juan Snyder. I'm also one of the pastors here. Any Brewers fans in here? All right.

Where's Trey? I might have heard a loud, something loud from Trey. I know he's a big Brewers fan. There he is. I see you out there. Yeah, anyway, I grew up in suburban Milwaukee, so I grew up watching the Brewers, so it's been an exciting run for me. Anyway, it's just baseball, right? Just baseball.

So, the title of my teaching today kind of relates to what we've been going through a little bit, a lot of us. Yeah, there he is. There's Trey. What's your jersey? Contreras?

Contreras? You have a Contreras jersey, don't you? Yeah, anyway. Oh, Cheerio. It's a Cheerio.

Okay, all right. Yeah, I know it was. Anyway. Now, you'll all have to tune into the World Series, right? Anyway. Yeah. So, I entitled this, Where is God in this crisis?

Because, I mean, you know, what Kara's going through, losing Pastor Jack, you know, we've, so many more, so many tragedies, so many difficulties that we've been experiencing, just, you know, as a body even. You know, Jim Kelly, Harold Kelly's son, dying last year, you know, being lost in the woods, and, you know, all the cancer, you know, other illnesses. I know we've, we've seen some healing. It's been, it's been, been awesome, but, but, but not always, you know.

[2:22] And why is that, you know? Why, why is it even here in the first place, you know, cancer, those kinds of things? Sometimes we, we have those questions, don't we? About eight years ago, Kathy and I had a one, two, three punch.

I think I've shared this before. It's just, first of all, our furnace went out, you know, and so, now, you know, I gotta find a way to get a furnace, you know. So, that was one thing.

And then, I lost my job. I was literally, walked to the door. Some philosophical differences and things happened. I literally was walked to the door one day. No job. And then the third one was, this was, it was right this time of year, when, when our grandson, Ezekiel, was born at 20 weeks.

And, you know, too, too, too, too young to, to be able to thrive. And he, and he died. And, and it was just a one, two, three punch. It was like, you know, what's going on? You know, it, it, it's a part of life, isn't it? Unfortunately, it is. It's, you know, it's, we live in a, in a broken world. We live in a, in a fallen world. And these things are a part of life. But sometimes you just, you just wonder what, what's going on? Where, where is God in these, in these crises? And obviously, you know, John and Kara, I mean, there's good news there, but they're, they're still in the middle of it, aren't they? You know. And again, you know, Pastor Jack, he's founded this church and, and all of a sudden he's gone. And it's like, wow. You know, on top of that, you know, you have, you hear about shootings. It seems like every few weeks there's, there's a shooting going on somewhere. Or, you know, obviously wars going on all over and, you know, accidents happening. Addictions, you know, loved ones that are, that are caught in addictions, you know.

Abuse, you know, divorce, you know, there's so many things, so many things are affecting us, affecting our loved ones. Society is, is, is unstable. And life is scary, isn't it? Sometimes it really can be scary. Some of us have been through horrific life experiences. And the question isn't, will you go through a difficult time? You know, because some of us maybe haven't seen a lot of that. But it's not, it's not, will you? If you haven't already, fasten your seatbelts. Because none of us are exempt. Right?

[5:19] We're all going through them. And again, the, the question, oh, there we go. So I don't have that down here. Is that, is that something somebody can, I don't, I don't see anything down

here. I don't know if you can, in the monitor there. I see it up there. Again, that's the question. Where is God in this crisis?

Jesus. Jesus, when he gave his, his, his, uh, um, sermon on the mount, you know, I mean, Matthew records it, three chapters, you know, Matthew 5, 6, 7, sermon on the mount, um, you know, all, all kinds of wonderful, awesome instruction. Uh-oh, now we're affecting everything here. Should I sit down? And preaching's over. Should we, should we end it? You guys have a vote?

No. Um, all right. So at the end of the sermon on the mount, Jesus gives us some instructions and essentially he kind of essentially lays it out and warns us. So he gives us this passage here, a very familiar passage. Everyone, Matthew 7, 24 through 27, everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And listen to this, and this, this rain fell, the floods came and the winds blew and beat against that house.

It's going to happen. It's going to happen. It's going to happen. We're going to come back to this passage, but I just want to just again ask the question, um, where is God in these crises?

The question of life is how will we go through this? How will we go through these tragedies? You know, because they're going to come. Will we go through them alone?

[7:35] Maybe we'll just keep a stiff upper lip, you know, and just, I got this. No big deal. I got this. Or will we be crushed under their weight?

They're going to happen. Are we going to be crushed under their weight? Will we, will we give up in despair? Maybe we'll go into denial. That didn't really happen.

I think what happens a lot of times is we become bitter and resentful. Even Christians, going along life, you know, there's this thinking that, hey, I'm, you know, I'm a Christian. Nothing bad's going to happen to me.

But, again, it's a fallen world. This stuff happens. And it can happen where if we have that mentality that, uh, that that's not supposed to happen to me, you know, you can become bitter and resentful even toward God.

And I think we all know people like that. Or will we experience the peace and power of God in ways one could never imagine?

[8:52] I, I'm, I'm blessed by the Hopkins in there. So I know not all of you maybe are connected and see all the updates and things. But oftentimes, you know, John kind of gives an update.

And then he, and then he shares a thought, you know, about how he sees God in this. Or a verse. Or I've had opportunities to talk to people. Whatever. Or Pastor Jack, the same thing. He used to do the same, you know.

He was in the hospital for sepsis. Remember that? And he's, he's telling people about Jesus. He, he's, you know, nearly died. And, of course, and more recently, he, even when he was moving towards death, I mean, we heard, we heard the stories.

You know. What about us, though? How will we respond? God has provided some truths that I think will help us in this regard.

So we're going to take a slow walk through a passage of scripture that has helped me a lot over the years. It's probably the most familiar passage in the entire Bible.

[10:01] And with good reason. Unfortunately, the familiarity can sometimes remove the power, can't it? You know. Yeah, yeah.

I heard that. Heard that passage. Heard that verse. And then we kind of brush over it. But in this passage, God provides a roadmap to help us to deal with tragedy.

In a way that will help us to experience that peace and that power of God. So I'm talking about Psalm 23.

I want you to put aside what you know about Psalm 23. You know. I think people think it's just for funerals. Well, it's with good reason that Psalm 23 is shared at funerals.

And we're going to look at that. We're going to talk about that. I actually put it more in a prose format rather than the poetic way. Just because, again, I think we think of it as this pretty poem.

[11:03] And I think it loses the power. And so I want to take a slow walk. A thoughtful, hopefully prayerful walk. I invite you all to be in prayer as we go through this.

Through this powerful, powerful passage. So why don't we read it together? Don't always do this. I'm going to ask you to stand for the reading of the scriptures.

They did this a lot in the Old Testament. You see it in Ezra. I think there are other churches that do it. Again, it's not a requirement. You don't have to do it. But I would invite you to stand.

And then we'll read this together. I think it will also kind of help us to stay focused. And I'm going to kind of read it in a way that, in a way to hopefully bring it out a little more.

So, the Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures.

[12:06] He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil. For you are with me. Your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil. My cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord. I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Let's pray. God, we thank you so much for your provision for us, God. You created us. You know exactly what we need. You created the word of God to help us, Lord.

[13:16] To guide us. To encourage us. To teach us. To instruct us. And to comfort us. Your word, Father. Father, you live inside us.

The person of the Holy Spirit. If we've trusted you, we thank you for that. God, we ask you today, Lord. Here.

Just throughout, Lord. We ask you today, Lord. To teach us something, Lord. Help us, Lord. To grapple with these things that are just a part of life. Pray for your people all around the world, God, that you'd speak to them.

Speak to your people, God. Help us to be, help us all to be different because of today, because of you. We give it to you and thank you. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Have a seat. Amen. Amen. The Lord is my shepherd. So, let's talk about the Lord.

[14:18] The Lord, we see that word a lot. You know, the Lord, that just means God, right? Well, this, where this is used, this is God's covenant name.

It's Yahweh. It's Jehovah. It's the I Am. His covenant name. This is, the I Am is my shepherd.

He's my shepherd. It's powerful to think of that that way, that he is mine. He's my shepherd. Think about that. He's your shepherd. He's using a metaphor here to help us to understand our relationship with the living God.

He's our shepherd. We're his sheep. So, I think it's important to maybe think a little bit about sheep. I have no experience with sheep. I don't know much at all about sheep. I've done a little research, a little bit, and I know, I think a lot of us have heard some of these things.

[15:25] Because about 200 times in the scriptures, we are referred to as sheep. And with good reason, as you'll see.

Now, 3,000 years ago, when this was written to the Hebrew people, they knew what this was about. This meant a whole lot to them. Because they depended on sheep.

They knew sheep very well. So, they knew exactly what this metaphor meant. Don't take it personally, but sheep are not very smart.

You know? So, he's referring to us as sheep. They're not very smart. They're among the densest of animals. They're slow. They're defenseless.

They're stupid. They're dirty. They're stinky. And it's not so much that they're the dumbest animal.

[16:26] A lot of times we think sheep are just the dumbest animal. It's more that they're dependent on the shepherd. They're not smart enough to take care of themselves.

They don't know how to hunt. They don't know how to get food for themselves. They're afraid of running water. You know? So, they're just, they're dependent on the shepherd.

And that's really where we want to be, isn't it? We want to be dependent on the shepherd. The Lord is my shepherd.

They're literally unable to find food or water for themselves. You know, put them in an area. They're going to eat all the grass. And then they'll just lay waste to it.

Because they don't know enough to go somewhere else. So, they'll eat all the grass. Unless they're guided somewhere else. They won't move on. I mentioned they're afraid of the sound of running water.

[17:27] Very, very fearful animals. Very dependent on the shepherd. For their very survival. The shepherd is entrusted with their very lives.

You know, the job of the shepherd actually was a very lowly job in the Hebrew culture. It was like the lowest job. You know, you remember David, when they were looking, you know, looking for the king.

David was, you know, all the brothers, they looked at all the brothers. Well, there's another one. He's out watching the sheep. The youngest one. He was thrown out to watch the sheep.

It was a very low, very low job. The Lord is my shepherd. He's my shepherd. Just think of that. And put that to prayer. Is he my shepherd? We are his sheep. Keep that in mind. So, the main question is, is he your shepherd?

[18:37] Do you live your life that way, dependent on him? The way he's describing the way he wants us to depend on him. The Lord is my shepherd.

It goes on and says, I shall not want. What does that mean? He's talking about, again, because he's my shepherd, and I'm depending on him, I have all that I need.

I will not want. I shall not want. I have everything I need. Jesus said in John 10, he said, I'm the good shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep.

Didn't he say that? We have everything we need. All of our needs, our emotional needs, psychological, emotional, psychological needs. He meets our physical needs, doesn't he?

He meets our spiritual needs as well. But again, it's contingent on the first part, isn't it? He's my shepherd. Is he?

[19:44] Is he your shepherd? Do you live your life as if he was your shepherd? He takes the metaphor even further.

Listen to the imagery here in the next verse. Two verses. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters.

He restores my soul. This is what he desires to do for us. He's a good God.

He's a loving God. He's a merciful God. Mercy. We talk about what does mercy mean? Well, that means we deserve something. We deserve death.

But he withholds that from us. He's a merciful God. It's a part of his love because he sent his son to die for us. He withholds what we deserve. He's merciful.

[20:40] And he's gracious. He blesses us with things we don't deserve. Eternal life. Forgiveness. gracious God. I like how it says he makes me lie down in green pastures.

The shepherd has to make the sheep, you know. First of all, you think of lying down. It's about rest. I think God sometimes he makes us rest, doesn't he?

Makes me lie down. Also the green pastures. I mean, he provides for us. He makes us lie down in green pastures.

I think green pastures is more, it's about food. You know, the lie down part is more kind of rest and more emotional. He meets those needs, but he meets the physical needs.

Food and that kind of thing. Still waters. It's about refreshment. You know, water. It's about, you know, bathing, even.

[21:48] You know? Makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. And then he restores my soul.

The restoration here is, it's more of a spiritual thing. It kind of relates to us, you know, making him, making known sin in our lives or a direction that we're going that we shouldn't be going.

And giving us the opportunity to choose with his power to go his way. Restoration. He brings restoration. And restoration of our soul.

But we need to let him be our shepherd, don't we? So how could David pen these words?

You know, obviously he's out with the sheep, but he also, he was learning to walk with God, wasn't he? He was learning to walk with God, very close to God.

[22:50] You know, majority of the Psalms were written by him. And so he knows. He's learning to walk with God. Next part.

It says, he leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. He leads me, leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Paths of righteousness. What's he talking about there? He's really just talking about the right path, the right way. He will lead us to go the right way. The way that we should go.

You know, what is best in this situation? You know, I think of his passage in James chapter 1 about wisdom. He says, if any of you lacks wisdom, and listen to the promise here.

If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. You know, it says, when he asks, he should believe and not doubt. [23:52] It will be given to him. Wisdom. He'll lead us in the paths of righteousness. And then it says, for his name's sake.

What does that mean? For his name. So he's leading us in the paths of righteousness. It's like he's got a stake in this too, because we represent him, don't we?

On the planet. We represent him. He's going to guide us. Again, if he's our shepherd, he's going to guide us in the paths. And his name is, in a sense, his name is on the line.

I mean, in a small sense, obviously. Honestly. We are, we are Jesus to some people, aren't we?

I mean, we're his representative. Verse 4. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me.

[25:00] That's what we're talking about here, isn't it? The valley of the shadow of death. Again, we're facing difficult times.

Some of us, we've faced difficult times. We've got them in our future. We're going to walk through the valley of the shadow of death. This was kind of a, something that they had to do on a seasonal basis in the area we're talking about.

Of course, in the summer months, you could graze the sheep up in the mountain, up in the upper, the highlands. But in the winter months, you had to take them down to the valley areas.

And in order to get nourishment for the sheep. Now, there are areas where you're walking in these valleys between mountains.

And because of the lowness of the sun, it's very, very dark. And it's very treacherous. But it's also, the sheep would be exposed.

[26:12] You know, animals could hide behind rocks and things like that. They were very vulnerable. It's a valley of a shadow of death.

But we do not have to fear. We can trust in the good shepherd, can't we? Trust in the good shepherd. One thing that's guaranteed, what does he say?

You are with me. He will always be with us. He is always with us. God is always with us. He will protect us. We can count on that.

It says, your rod and your staff, they comfort me. Your rod and your staff.

So I found this picture of the rod and the staff here. The rod was a short, sturdy, wooden club, basically. And the shepherd would use that, of course, against wild animals.

[27:23] I mean, he could throw it at them or he could hit them over the head, that kind of thing. I know the story with David and Goliath. He was using a sling. I don't know why he didn't include a sling in here, but he didn't.

The rod and the staff. It also was used to prod the sheep, to kind of direct them, to guide them, that kind of thing. The staff, that's that long, slender pole with a hook.

Again, this was used to directly, or excuse me, to gently direct the sheep, to guide the sheep. But it also was used to rescue them from danger.

You see the hook, like it fell in the creek or something. They could literally pull them out. They could rescue them from danger. The spiritual application. These are tools that the shepherd uses, right?

These are tools that the shepherd uses for guidance. I think of the application for us. We need guidance. We need protection. We need rescue sometimes.

[28:31] And so, you know, some of the scholars, they'll kind of, they'll look at this and they'll point this to the tools that God uses for us. Tools, or I like to call them resources. The Word of God is a resource for us.

2 Timothy 3, at the very end of 2 Timothy, it says, All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness.

You kind of see that guidance, that protection, that rescue. Teaching, rebuking, correcting, training, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

His Word is one of the resources, one of the tools that God uses. And if he's our shepherd, we'll be in his Word. We'll be in his Word regularly.

And his Holy Spirit is another, I'm not going to call tool, but a resource that we have. You know, John 14 through 16, it's a number of references to the Holy Spirit, how he's our advocate, right?

[29:39] He is there to teach us and to guide us into all truth, to remind us of all things. You see that again. Guidance, protection, rescue. He lives in us.

It's a resource for us. Are we yielding to the Spirit's leading? Are we being a sheep to the shepherd? Is he our shepherd?

If he's our shepherd, we're going to be doing that. Yielding to the Spirit. Allowing the Spirit to guide us through the Word of God. That kind of thing. Recall we looked at this passage earlier in Matthew. And, you know, what does it say there? Everyone then who... And notice, it's interesting, he's comparing two individuals. One person who hears the words of mine and then the person and does them and the person who hears these words of mine and does not do them.

All right? Everyone who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a man who built his house on the rock. The rains fell. Floods came. Winds blew.

[30 : 47] And it says, what does it say? It did not fall because it had been founded on the rock. So what's the rock?

What's the difference here? One person... Actually, what's interesting is both of these people hear the words. So you could say both of them go to church. Right? Both of them hear the words. Maybe both of them are even reading the Bible. Reading the Word of God. What's the difference? One of them does them. The other one does not do them.

So the obedience thing. So if God... If the Lord is your shepherd, what does that mean? If God is my shepherd, it means I'm depending on the shepherd for my life.

I'm depending on his Word, his Spirit. And I'm also listening to him. I'm doing what he says. The Lord is my shepherd.

[31 : 45] I'm doing what he says. All right. Now the psalmist shifts the metaphors.

So he was using the metaphor of sheep and shepherd. He's going into something entirely different. So he took David through the valley. He stayed with him the whole way.

Provided for. Protected him. He was keeping his promises. But life is more than difficulties and darkness, isn't it?

That's certainly a part of life. But it's more than that. On the other side of the valley, guess what?

There's a banquet waiting for us. Isn't there? On the other side of the valley, there's a banquet.

David's psalm ends with a tribute to some of these blessings, these benefits of living a godly life.

[32 : 43] Essentially. Now, as he said, you prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. Think about that.

You prepare a table. You prepare a table for me in the presence of my enemies. Is that cool or what? Who are our enemies?

You know? Satan, obviously, is a very real, very present enemy, isn't he? The world system.

I'm not talking about secular. I'm talking about the world system. You know? The system of greed and, you know, getting ahead and, you know, just some of those things we talked about earlier.

You know? The abuse and selfishness. That kind of thing. And then the flesh can be an enemy. Sometimes our spirit is willing, but our flesh is weak.

[33 : 44] We want to do what God wants, but we fail. And we sin. That can be an enemy. He prepares a banquet table in the presence of our enemies.

It says, you anoint my head with oil. My cup overflows. That sounds kind of weird, doesn't it? It's like you anoint my head with oil. That doesn't sound appealing to me, you know?

It's just kind of weird. So I kind of did a little research. I'm going to read a little portion here from a book. This is Chip Ingram's book, Finding God When You Need Him the Most.

A very powerful book. So I'll just read from it. It says, notice the phrase, you anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows. In biblical days, the host of a huge victory banquet anointed the guests as they arrived.

The host would take olive oil, mix it with perfume and spices, and pour it on the guests as they walked in. As an honor. This was a way to honor them.

[34 : 54] Sometimes you wonder if maybe you want to, the guy kind of stinks. I don't think it's that. It was a way to honor them.

This was also an official welcome to the celebration. The act announced, you are special to me. You are special to me. So this is something they did.

Once the guests were seated, the servants kept the cups overflowing to underscore the welcome and the joy. God is not giving out goodness in eyedroppers.

The overflowing cup is a symbol of abundance and joy. It's not, watch how much you eat. You know, no second helpings. You know, sometimes you wonder about that.

No, it's instead, these details convey the idea there's the table. It is filled. It is all for you. It is lavish. There's plenty more where that came from.

[35:51] It is a picture of God's awesome goodness. He wants to do good things for us spiritually and in every other way. This is, that's God.

That's the God that we serve. So David's turning from the shepherd sheep. And he's, and he's, he's kind of basically finishing, finishing the song with some good news, essentially.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. Here, here the word follow actually means pursue.

Surely goodness and mercy will pursue me all the days. That's our God. He's constantly pursuing us with his goodness, with his love, with his mercy, isn't he? We are watched over by a good God. We really are. Goodness has the idea of lavish love. God's lavish love for us. Mercy is God's steadfast, loyal, and covenant commitment to you that never stops.

[36:58] I can read that again. Mercy is God's steadfast, loyal, and covenant commitment to you that never stops. It never ends.

You're familiar with the passage from Matthew 11, 28 through 30. It says, come to me. This is Jesus talking to us. Come to me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

Just think of that. That's our shepherd. That's our God. Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and that's all of us at times, and I will give you rest.

He says, take my yoke upon you and learn from me. What he's saying there is, join me in the harness, and come join me, and I'll guide you.

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

[38:02] That's our Lord. That's our Lord Jesus. He's talking to us. Isn't that amazing? Powerful stuff. That's Matthew 11, 28 through 30.

That one I didn't include in the slides. So then comes David's third and final confident affirmation. And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Amen. Amen. Amen. That's where Pastor Jack is, isn't he? He's there. It's a promise for all of us.

God promises us. He promises. This is what he's saying. He's promising us abundant life. You know, John 10, 10. And I came that they might have life and have it abundantly. He's promising us abundant life now and forever, isn't he?

Abundant life. Obviously, it doesn't mean we're going to, you know, he wants us to drive BMWs and, you know, that kind of thing. And he's talking about the real purpose and meaning and, you know, things that life is really about.

[39:13] Abundant life. Value. He's talking about peace and joy. I mean, that's what everyone's looking for, really, isn't it? They want that peace. They want that joy. They're trying to get it through these other means.

You can only get it through Jesus, can't you? So in the face of difficulty and tragedy, God offers hope for us.

And this psalm is a very hopeful psalm. We can confidently expect his goodness and his mercy. That's, you know, hope. It's not, I hope I do this, I hope I do that.

Hope is confident expectation in God. We can rest. And it relates to the future. We can rest that he's got our future. Psalm 23 is a psalm of hope.

Focus is on our future. What does he say? I shall not want. He's talking about the future. He's giving us everything we need. And going to give us everything we need.

[40:13] I shall not want. He says, I will fear no evil. That's, again, referring to the future. I will fear no evil. There is hope. I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Obviously the future. Well, now and the future. He promises abundant life now and into the future. Again, the question.

Is he your shepherd? Are you trusting him to be your shepherd?

Lord? This psalm has helped me a lot just through the course of my life with difficulties. And really, I just want to encourage you.

I wanted to kind of give you a taste of the power of this psalm. And as you're going through difficult times, something that I've done is I'll literally, I'll sit and I'll just stop everything.

[41:14] And I'll sit down and I'll take a slow, and I encourage people to do this, take a slow walk. A slow, thoughtful and prayerful walk through Psalm 23.

Again, there's a reason why this psalm is so popular and why it's used at funerals and other things. So I would encourage you to make it your own.

Do it yourself. Spend some time thinking through, praying through this psalm. It's powerful.

Powerful stuff. And again, I encourage you to think about, is God, is the Lord my shepherd?

Is he my shepherd? Let's pray. Lord Jesus, we do thank you so much.

Thank you that you love us so much, God. You created us. You've given us so many blessings, Lord, that you will provide for us, God.

[42:20] You will protect us, God. And you give us the opportunity of abundant life here and now and in the future. Lord, I want to, I just want to pray for everybody in here, Lord.

Some people here, maybe they've never even come to faith in you. Maybe they're just kind of investigating and think about, well, what's God about? I pray that you would make yourself known to them, God.

Maybe there are people that are on the verge of faith in Christ, but kind of holding back for whatever reason. I pray that you would reach them as well, God, and help them to decide to trust you, to put their faith in you.

In fact, if anyone here is in that state, I'm just going to lead you in a quick prayer. And you can follow me in this prayer. Lord Jesus, I thank you that you desire to be my shepherd.

I'm a sinner. And because of that, I deserve death. I deserve separation. Thank you that you died for me to forgive my sins.

[43:36] I ask you to forgive my sins. I ask you to make me the person you want me to be. Amen. Lord, we do just, I just pray for all of us, God.

It's possible to be a Christian, to be saved, but not be living like you're our shepherd, Lord. I pray that for all of us, God, that you help us to choose to live life.

Let you be our shepherd. We give it to you and thank you in Jesus' name. Amen.