



Topic: **THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD**

Text: *Psalm 23:1 (NIV) The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.*
(NLT) The Lord is my shepherd; I have everything I need.

God is Our Shepherd

This simple illustration of God being our Shepherd, reveals how God:

- **Provides** the basic necessities of our life EG: food and shelter.
- **Protects** us from harm and danger.
- **Guides** us when we are confused and have lost our way.
- **Corrects** our negative and undisciplined behaviour.

A shepherd has a relationship with his sheep.

In the parable of the lost sheep:

*Jesus used this illustration: “If you had a hundred sheep and one of them strayed away and was lost in the wilderness, **wouldn’t you leave the ninety-nine others** to go and search for the lost one until you found it? **Luke 15:3-4 (TLB)***

A shepherd has concern and care not only for his whole flock, but also for every single one.

This is how God cares for us.

*God takes **care** of His people like a **shepherd**... Isaiah 40:11a (NCV)*

God knew we were lost, and He made every provision to find us through His Son Jesus Christ.

We are His Sheep

We cannot identify God as our Shepherd if we don't see ourselves as His sheep.

When we open our eyes to how much we really need and rely on God for everything, the more we realise His provision in our lives.

But if we live on our own terms and conditions, we wander and drift away from our true source, looking for satisfaction in artificial places.

So, when David says *"I lack nothing"* or *"I have everything that I need"* he is acknowledging how completely reliant he is on God as his Shepherd.

- *"I lack nothing"* because God, as a good shepherd, will ensure I have everything I need.
- *"I lack nothing"* not because of what I've done, or I can do but simply because God loves me.
- *"I lack nothing"* because I know God personally as Shepherd.

When David says *"I lack nothing"* he's saying two things:

1. There are areas in his life that only God can fulfil and satisfy.
2. He made the decision not to desire anything outside of the scope of what God wants for him.

*Isaiah 41:13 (ERV) I am the Lord your God, who **holds your right hand**. And I tell you, **'Don't be afraid! I will help you.'***

Sheep Know the Voice of the Shepherd

*John 10:27 (TLB) My sheep **recognize My voice**, and I **know** them, and they **follow Me**.*

With so many voices constantly screaming at us, we need to still ourselves to hear our Shepherds voice amongst all the surrounding noise.

Personal Devotion

Read *John 10:1-21*

1. Why do the sheep follow the shepherd through the gate in *vv. 1-6*?

2. Why will the sheep never follow a stranger?

3. Jesus explains the metaphor of *vv. 1-6* in two stages. In *vv. 7-10* Jesus explains what it means that He is the gate for the sheep. What does it mean that Jesus is the gate?

4. In *vv. 11-18* Jesus explains what it means that He is the “good shepherd.” What does it mean that Jesus is the “good shepherd”?

5. Why is it significant that Jesus is both the gate and the shepherd?

6. Ponder what Jesus says in *vv. 14-15* about our relationship with him. What do you find amazing about what Jesus says?

7. What is Jesus talking about in *v. 16*?

(Source: www.coonapc.com)

Group Discussion

1. Discuss any general comments about the teaching on The Lord is My Shepherd.
2. What are areas in our lives' that only God as our Shepherd can fulfil and satisfy?

3. *John 10:27* says *My sheep recognize my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.*

Can you think of some examples of “strange voices” that are calling you away from following the “*good shepherd*” in your life?

4. What can you do so that you are better equipped to recognise the voice of the “*good shepherd*”?

Group Prayer / Needs

1. Are there any prayer requests from group members that can be prayed for before closing?
2. Are there any needs that the group can help each other with? Please discuss.