

PRESENCE

PART 2: THE PEACE OF GOD — RESTING IN HIS ULTIMATE CARE

Pastor Daniel Hahn
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MESSAGE NOTES

The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters, He refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for His name's sake. — Psalm 23:1 – 3

1. Peace begins with surrendering our lives to God's leadership, provision and control.

I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through Him who gives me strength. — Philippians 4:11 – 13

*What is wrong is when not getting what we want propels us into a state of bitterness, irritation, impatience, and anger, and we depend upon our own tricks and devices, our confidence in our own power, to get the things that we want. The right thing would be simply releasing it all and saying, "All right. God knows. I'm living in His world. He can give me what He wants. I will not put these things in the place of God." Putting things in the place of God is the central issue. — Dallas Willard, *Life Without Lack**

Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life ... — Matthew 6:25 – 34

Three reasons we don't need to worry:

Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? — Matthew 6:26

- Worry is illogical.

Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? — Matthew 6:27

- Worry is unhelpful.

If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? — Matthew 6:30

- Worry is unnecessary.

Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you. — 1 Peter 5:7

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. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. — Psalm 23:4 – 5

When anxiety was great within me, Your consolation brought me joy. — Psalm 94:19

I am the Good Shepherd; I know My sheep and My sheep know Me — just as the Father knows Me and I know the Father — and I lay down My life for the sheep. — John 10:14 – 15

2. Peace increases as our responsiveness to God's presence increases no matter the circumstances.

In solitude, I arrange to be alone, out of human contact, for lengthy periods of time. This allows my inner compass to stop whirling in response to the demands of others. The elasticity and wholeness of my soul is restored as I grow still and know that God is God (Psalm 46:10). ... Solitude well practiced will break the power of busyness, haste, isolation, and loneliness. You will see that the world is not on your shoulders after all. You will find yourself, and God will find you in new ways.
—Dallas Willard, *The Great Omission*

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.
— Psalm 23:6

3. Peace overcomes anxiety when we live each day with an eternal perspective.

Not merely does God guide us in the sense of showing us His way, that we may walk in it; He also guides us in the more fundamental sense of ensuring that, whatever happens, whatever mistakes we may make, we shall come safely home. Slippings and strayings there will be, no doubt, but the everlasting arms are beneath us; we shall be caught, rescued, restored. This is God's promise; this is how good He is. — J.I. Packer, *Knowing God*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What stuck with you from last weekend's message?
- Take some time in your group to read Psalm 23 slowly and thoughtfully and go back over the 3 main points Daniel shared.
- What correlation do you see between our understanding of God as the perfect Shepherd and our sense of contentment?
- What worries weigh you down the most?
- If worry is generally unhelpful, illogical and unnecessary — why do you think we default to it so often?
- Why is Sabbath, or spending focused time alone with God so crucial for our rest and well being?
- How does an eternal perspective reduce our sense of threat and anxiety?
- What do you fear might happen if you stop worrying about what keeps you up at night?
- What are some ways you can build a habit of unloading your worries onto God?
- Who in your life can pray with you about what's worrying you?
- What steps will you take this week to turn your worries over to God?