



Gathering at 502 Pike Street, Superior MT

TITLE: Reasons to Be Thankful, Pt. 5
TEXT: Psalm 23:1-6
DATE: 04 December 2022

Opening Thoughts

1. **"Reasons to Be Thankful"** In this time of year we need to be reminded that *"Jesus Is the Reason for the Season!"*
Luke 2:10-11:
¹⁰And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

2. **"Reasons to Be Thankful"** As we go from the Thanksgiving emphasis into the Christmas season, let's not forget to remain thankful to our Lord in all things and for all things.
1 Thessalonians 5:18:
In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

3. **"Reasons to Be Thankful"** I want us to review from Psalms 23 the reasons we have already listed, why? ... because It's so easy to get preoccupied on what we think we *do not have* that we can lose sight of *what we do have* as followers of Lord Jesus, The Great Shepherd:
 - **First Reason** we are thankful is... because while in the *pastures of our life* Jesus, our Shepherd, will adequately and *abundantly provide for all our needs.*

Psalm 23: 1: "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want."

Philippians 4:19: "But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

WIERSBE QUOTE: *"When God's people follow their Shepherd, they have all that they need and will not lack the necessities of life."*

- *There was a day when we needed a new in which to live: **Illustration #1:** In 2009 we arrived in Hagan MT in our 5th wheel. From 2010 to 2013 I had 4 surgeries to replace both knees and both hips. For recovery we rented a hospital bed for the church basement. Realizing my limitations, the 5th wheel was no longer adequate housing, so we sold it and moved into a back room in the church basement. God provided!*

- **Second Reason** we are thankful is... because while in the *valleys of our life*, Jesus, our Shepherd, will constantly *remain by our side* to calm every fear.

Psalm 23:4: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me."

Hebrews 13:5: "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

Matthew 28:18-20 "¹⁸ And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, all power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. ¹⁹ Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: ²⁰ Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: *and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

WIERSBE QUOTE: " *Through life, as we follow the Shepherd, we will have many and varied experiences, some of which will be very trying, but none of them can take the Lord by surprise. We may trust Him and always have peace ... His peace.*"

Romans 8:26-28

²⁶ Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

²⁷ And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.

- There was a day when we needed another house in which to live: **Illustration #2:** Still in Haugan, we hoped the basement living would be temporary. We looked for houses and land in St Regis (since we were ministering in both locations). But this door remained closed. We determined to use the back area of the basement in Haugan for a Food Pantry and Clothes Closet and eventually built a small dorm room for mission teams. Then we heard about a sweet little lady who wanted to sell her house about half a mile from Mountain Valley Fellowship. Ms. Martha showed her house several times, but she was not comfortable releasing it. Her son in law, Bob, asked if we wanted to look at it, and we agreed, not knowing how on earth we would be able to even get into it! We walked in to her house and she grabbed Sarah for a tour. Sarah was delighted and hopeful. There were windows in every room of the house (well except in the closets!) The house was tucked away on a beautiful cul-de-sac nestled against a mountain. We prayed. Ms. Martha came back and said she wanted Sarah to have her house. She decided that she would finance the loan for us so we would not have to go through a bank (we were not too sure we would qualify for a traditional loan). But it worked out in a wonderful way. Again, God provided!

- **Third Reason**, we are thankful is because... while in *the restful folds* (fenced in areas) of our life Jesus, our Shepherd, will certainly *provide protection and a place of peaceful rest*.
- **Psalm 23:5**: “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.”
- **Matthew 6:33**: “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

WIERSBE QUOTE: *“After each difficult day’s work, the aim of the shepherd was to bring the flock safely back to the fold where the weary sheep could safely rest for the night. Sometimes at the fold, the shepherd would spread out food in a trough because sheep lie down and rest after they have eaten. The Lord doesn’t always remove the dangers from our lives, but He does help us to overcome them and not be paralyzed by fear. This is what is meant to be ‘more than conquerors’ and have peace even in the midst of danger.”*

Romans 8:31-39

- ³¹ What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?
- ³² He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?
- ³³ Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.
- ³⁴ Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.
- ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?
- ³⁶ As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.
- ³⁷ Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.
- ³⁸ For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,
- ³⁹ Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- There was a day when we needed yet another house in which to live: **Illustration #3**: In 2018 after so much prayer, we felt the Lord would have us turn to a new chapter in our lives. In December I was diagnosed with prostate cancer. We moved in with Alana in Missoula in March 2019 as I went through and completed 44 radiation treatments. We understood this would delay our “new chapter” but we continued to plan for it and moved our departure date to later in the year (after treatments were complete). Then in June Sarah was diagnosed with breast cancer! Thankful for our daughter’s graciousness and patience as Sarah went through genetic testing, then a lumpectomy at the end of August followed by 22 double-dosed radiation treatments. During this process, by June Sarah and I gave away most of our belongings, sold the house in Haugan and on October 2019 moved to Kampala, Uganda wanting to help

Alisha, her family, and the Terra Nova Schools there. As you know, in March of 2020 the COVID PANDEMIC hit around the world. We did not want to cause extra burden for our sweet family there and made a truly excruciating decision to return to the states. By July we returned to the states not having any idea where to go or what to do. Proverbs 3:5-6 was our constant companion months before we left Kampala. We talked with our Montana Baptist office in Billings to see if there were any needs we might be able to fill. There were several open opportunities in eastern Montana and north of Mineral County, as well as an abandoned ministry in Superior MT. We had lived in Mineral County for just 2 months short of 10 years, so we were unexpectedly drawn to this particular open door--an abandoned building in pretty bad repair with absolutely no congregation! We knew one more time we would have a need for a house in Superior! We looked for a rental to start. This is the end of 2020 when people were sending money for homes they never even looked at! The Real Estate Market was going crazy in Montana! Again we clung to Proverbs 3:5-6 and prayed. Then one day we get a call from a young friend who has a wireless company based in Superior at the time who shared that he had a customer who wanted to sell a house without a Realtor and that we should at least go take a look. So, we made arrangements to see it. The Seller was doing a good bit of work and repair on the house, but again, it was perfect for us! We went to our bank with over 10 year history now, and they actually gave us the home loan! We were shocked, but once again, God provided!

- **Fourth Reason**, we are thankful is because... under the Old Covenant, the sheep died for the shepherd, but under the New Covenant, *the Shepherd died for the sheep* and one day, His sheep will join their Great Shepherd in Heaven, forever!
- **Psalm 23:6:** "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever."
- **Revelation 7:17:** "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

WIERSBE QUOTE: "As an old man, David, looking back over his life concluded that he had been followed by goodness and mercy. Then, as David looked ahead, he knew he would be in Heaven, his Father's house, forever. Listen, the things that perplex and disturb us today will all clear when we get to Heaven. We will possibly look back and only see God's goodness and mercy."

- **2 Corinthians 5:1:** "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."
- **1 Peter 1:3-4:** ³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you...

- There's coming a day when we will need another house in which to live -- forever! Illustration #4: No More Moving!

Psalm 23:6: ⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

CONCLUSION

1. Have you personally received Jesus as your Lord and Saviour -- as Your Shepherd?
2. If you have a personal relationship with Jesus as your Lord and Saviour, are you/how are you growing in that relationship?
3. As a sheep following your Shepherd, are you helping/how are you helping others grow in their relationship with Christ Jesus?

Philippians 4:4-7: ⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. ⁵ Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. ⁶ Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

INVITATION

Jesus invites you to COME to Him, FOLLOW Him, and find REST in Him!