

THE SECRET OF SATISFACTION



The Secret of Satisfaction (Bible Study)

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INTRODUCTION

THE SECRET OF SATISFACTION

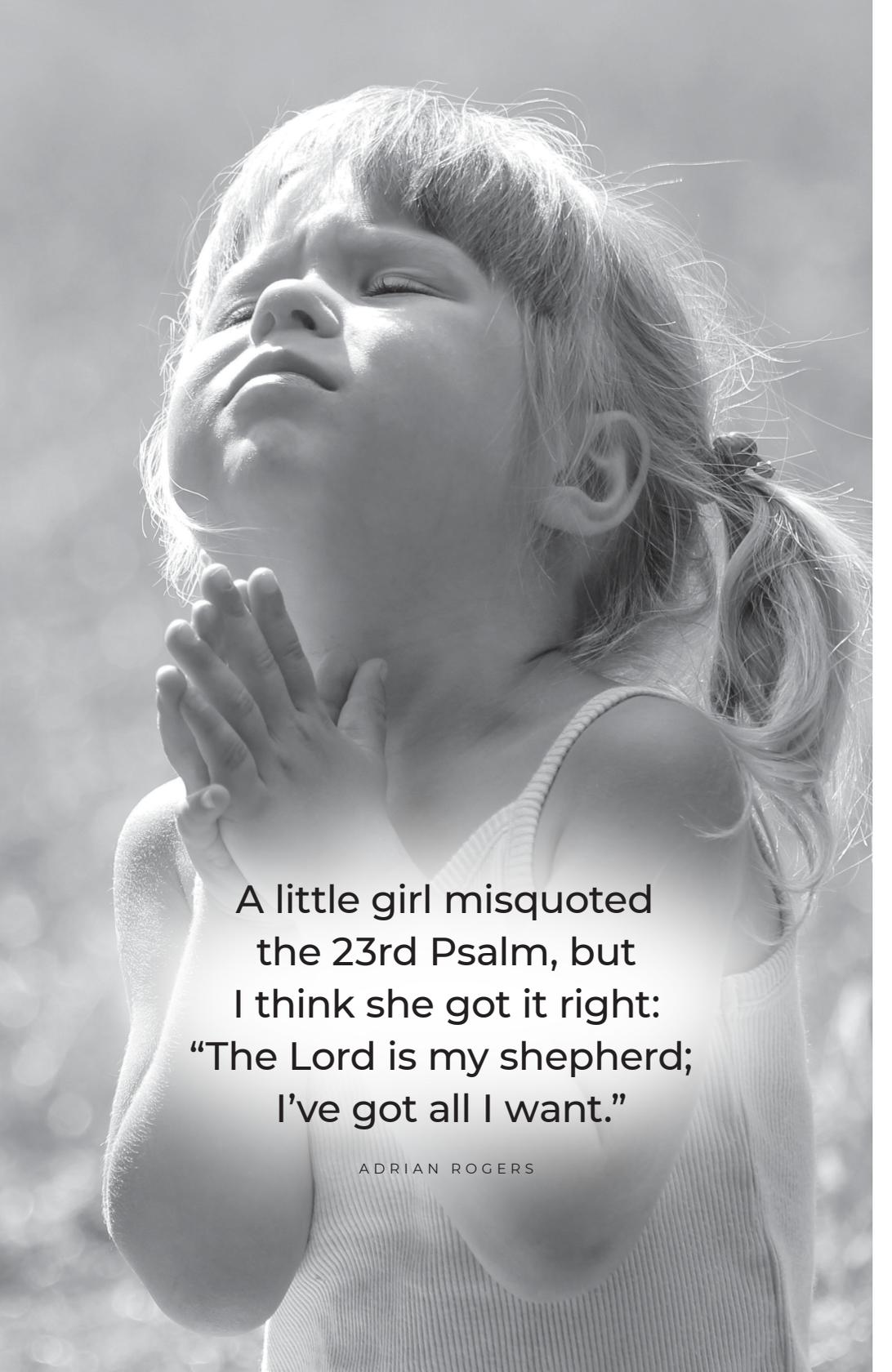
People can have all of the things of this world and not be satisfied. After all the Bible says,

He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver; nor he who loves abundance, with increase. This also is vanity (Ecclesiastes 5:10).

It isn't just money that fails to truly satisfy. There is nothing that can truly satisfy apart from the Lord Jesus—no relationship, no professional achievement, no level of status or recognition. We chase desires and have hungers we long to fill. And even when we think we are satisfied, ironically that satisfaction brings dissatisfaction.

But there is a secret of satisfaction, and it is found in Psalm 23. This Psalm has been quoted in the nursery school and on the battlefield. It has been quoted at weddings and at funerals. It is sweet to a little child yet perplexing to a scholar. It has been said that the Word of God is deep enough that scholars can swim in it without ever touching the bottom and shallow enough that little children can drink from it without fear of drowning.

In this study, Pastor Adrian Rogers goes verse by verse through Psalm 23 pulling rich applications for our everyday lives. You may learn how to get right with God, how to enjoy God, how to smile at death and how to make the rest of your life the best of your life. These six-day Bible studies can be done individually or with a group. We trust that God will use this study to help you grow. If you enjoy it, please consider inviting others to go through it as well and share the message with someone else who needs it.



A little girl misquoted
the 23rd Psalm, but
I think she got it right:
“The Lord is my shepherd;
I’ve got all I want.”

ADRIAN ROGERS

WEEK 1

THE SECRET OF SATISFACTION

■ INTRODUCTION

Are you dissatisfied with life and wondering if it will ever change? Can you say with the psalmist, “The LORD is my Shepherd; I shall not want” (Psalm 23:1)? Maybe you are confused about how Jesus could be both fully God and fully human. Maybe you believe the Lord is your Shepherd, but you still aren’t satisfied with life. Through this study of Psalm 23, Adrian Rogers helps us understand the identity of God and what it means to have a Shepherd who takes care of us and satisfies our souls.

■ PRAY OVER IT

Dear God, I know that You have given me so much, and yet I confess that I am still unsatisfied. I know that fame and fortune will not fulfill me, and yet I spend my time and energy pursuing those things and longing for more of them. I know that You have created in me a longing only God can satisfy. Help me learn how to be satisfied in You. Open my eyes so I can see more of who You are. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

DAY 1

JEHOVAH

■ PONDER IT

Psalm 23 is the best-known psalm in the Bible. You are probably familiar with the words, but this time, as you read it, ask God to help you see it with fresh eyes.

Read Psalm 23.

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, 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 runs over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever (Psalm 23:1-6).

The Psalmist David begins the psalm with “The LORD,” which translates to “Jehovah.” The word is in all capital letters to show that it is a translation for the most sacred name the Jewish people had for God. It was so special that no one could say it or write it. This sacred name claims that God is self-existing, having neither a beginning nor an ending. Some historians say it was only spoken out loud one time a year when the high priest went into the holy of holies and whispered this name. When a scribe came to the name “Jehovah” while transcribing Scripture, he would put down the pen and get a completely new one to write this special name.

When we acknowledge God with the name “Jehovah,” we speak of His deity. We acknowledge that He is all-powerful and eternal. We acknowledge that He is holy and set apart from humanity. Because of these qualities, He is worthy of our worship. He is worthy to be honored and praised above all others.

■ BONUS

The name “Jehovah” is used throughout the Old Testament, and different authors combine this name with other Jewish words that give us a more complete picture of the character and nature of God. If you want to hear about those other names and how all of them are seen in Psalm 23, listen to Pastor Rogers’ message *The Secret of Satisfaction*.



■ PUT IT IN WRITING

- When you read the psalm this time, what stuck out to you? What did you read differently than you have before?
- What does it mean to you to know that the God of the Bible is self-existing, that He doesn't have a beginning or an ending?

In the Lord Jesus, we have sovereignty and sympathy, a King and a Shepherd.

We have a God who is able and a Shepherd who is available, a God in the heavens and a Shepherd in our hearts.

ADRIAN ROGERS

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

■ PONDER IT

Yesterday we examined the name Jehovah and considered how this name for God reflected His deity. Interestingly, the Jehovah of the Old Testament is the Jesus of the New Testament, and in the very next phrase of the psalm, the Psalmist refers to “my Shepherd.” By using this phrase, one that David would understand because he was also a shepherd, we see Jesus’ humanity. The great mystery is this—that Jesus was both divine and human.

In John 10, when Jesus is speaking to His disciples, He calls Himself the “Good Shepherd.” In this metaphor, Jesus is the Shepherd, and we are the sheep.

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep...I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep...Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again... (John 10:11-18).

The fact that Jesus has the power to lay down His life and pick it up again reflects His divine nature. Consider this: Jesus was the only person who ever chose to die. Other people may have chosen to die sooner, but they were all going to eventually die. Because of Jesus’ divine and eternal nature, He never had to die. Instead, He chose to go to the cross to pay the penalty for our sin.

When have you ever heard of a shepherd sacrificing his life to preserve the life of one of his sheep? A shepherd would never do that because the lives of the sheep were not as valuable as the life of the shepherd. But this is why Jesus is the Good Shepherd. He loved us so much that He willingly laid down His life for His sheep. The punishment for sin is death, but Jesus chose to die so that you don’t have to.

■ PUT IT IN WRITING

- What does it mean to you to know that Jesus was fully God, but also fully human? What does the use of both human and divine names for Jesus in Scripture tell us about how God wants us to relate to him?
- What does it suggest when David uses the personal pronoun “my”?
- What does this passage in John tell us about Jesus? What does it mean to you that Jesus chose to die for you?

Your sin will either be punished
in Hell or pardoned in Heaven,
but it will never be overlooked.

ADRIAN ROGERS

THE GREAT SHEPHERD

■ PONDER IT

Yesterday we looked at how Jesus called Himself the Good Shepherd because He was willing to die for the sheep. But today we see in Hebrews 13 that Jesus is called the “Great Shepherd” because He rose from the dead.

Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen (Hebrews 13:20-21).

Jesus died to pay the penalty of our sin. But what good is a dead shepherd who can longer protect or provide for his sheep? Because Jesus was also Jehovah, the eternal God, He did not stay dead. He rose again to overthrow the power of sin to control our lives.

Our greatest obstacle in our relationship with God is our sin. When Jesus carried our sin to the cross, He paid the penalty of our sin—which was death. When He rose from the dead, He took care of the power of sin in our lives, so that we could do His will. Jesus not only died for us; He also lives for us. We worship a living Savior who has power over sin and death.

■ **PUT IT IN WRITING**

- What does this passage tell us about how Jesus sees us, His sheep?
- What does the deity and humanity of Jesus mean for us, His sheep?

It wasn't nails that held Him to the tree. It was the silver cords of love and the golden bonds of redemption that held Jesus Christ to the cross.

ADRIAN ROGERS

THE CHIEF SHEPHERD

■ PONDER IT

As the Good Shepherd, Jesus laid down His life for us and died to pay for our sin.

As the Great Shepherd, Jesus rose from the dead and gave us power over sin. He leads us in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. When Peter gives church leaders directions about how to shepherd the church, he calls Jesus the "Chief Shepherd."

...and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away (1 Peter 5:4).

As the Chief Shepherd, one day Jesus will come to take us away from the presence of sin and evil in this world. He will one day make us complete (perfect) and make all things new. We have this hope that someday the Chief Shepherd will return and take His sheep home.

Because Jesus is Jehovah *and* our Shepherd, He is the secret to satisfaction. We must have a personal relationship with Jesus. As He says in John 10:14, "I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own."

When we choose to have a personal relationship with Jesus, it means that we are eternally secure in Him. This is a permanent change in our status before God; we move from dead in our sins to alive with Christ. It also means that we are protected by His grace, and that even when we sin, He lavishes grace on us. Jesus has satisfied our greatest needs: to be loved, to be forgiven of our sins, and to be declared righteous. Every need He meets after that is a bonus—a generous, abundant gift.

Read Psalm 22, Psalm 23 and Psalm 24 together. You will see an interesting pattern: In Psalm 22, we have a picture of Jesus laying down His life for the sheep. This psalm describes the crucifixion—the Good Shepherd dying for His sheep. In Psalm 23, we have a picture of the Great Shepherd walking with His sheep and taking care of them. In Psalm 24, we

have a picture of the risen Savior. This is the Chief Shepherd coming back for His sheep, and it describes the entrance of the King of Glory.

■ **PUT IT IN WRITING**

- What do these passages say about the future of the believer?
- How does knowing how Jesus lived His life as the Good Shepherd impact the way that I should live my life?
- How does knowing that the future for those who follow Jesus is a “crown of glory that does not fade away” impact the way you live your life now?

If Jesus Christ is still in that grave nothing really matters, but if He came out of that grave, nothing but that really matters.

ADRIAN ROGERS

I SHALL NOT WANT

■ PONDER IT

Some people think that the secret of satisfaction is having a God who will give us everything we want. After all, in Psalm 37:4, it says, “Delight yourself also in the LORD, and He shall give you the desires of your heart.” But this is not the secret of satisfaction.

When your god is a vending machine who gives you everything you want, who is really sovereign and in control of your life? Do you want to trust your life to someone who gives you everything you ask for, even if it's not good for you? David called God “Jehovah” because he acknowledged the sovereignty of God in his life. But he also called him “my shepherd” because he acknowledged that God also wants a very personal and intimate relationship with us—His sheep.

The secret of satisfaction is the Lord Himself. Our needs will never be met until they're met in Him. Material things and earthly accomplishments will never satisfy. When we delight in the Lord, the deepest needs of our hearts will be met because we were created to be in a relationship with Him.

...for in Him we live and move and have our being... (Acts 17:28).

For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence (Colossians 1:16-18).

Fish were made to swim in the sea, and birds were made to live in a tree. But if you take a fish and put it in a tree, you will have an unhappy fish. If you take a bird and force it to live in the sea, you will have an unsatisfied bird. Likewise, you were made to live in Christ. When you live your life in and through Christ, you will be satisfied because you will be living the way

you were created to live. The desire of every human heart is ultimately Jesus—to be completely loved and completely forgiven. That’s what we yearn for. That’s what we were made for. Until we know Him, we will be like a square peg in a round hole.

Finding satisfaction is not about all the things He gives us. Our satisfaction comes from the fact that Jesus laid down His life for us, so that we could live in Him. You will never be satisfied until you can say with the Psalmist, “The LORD is my Shepherd.”

■ PUT IT IN WRITING

- In your life, what would it look like for you to “delight yourself in the LORD” (see Psalm 37:4) and to live in Christ?
- Can you honestly say, “The LORD is my Shepherd; I shall not want”? Why or why not? What would need to change for you to be able to say that?

THE SHEPHERD AND HIS SHEEP

■ PRACTICE IT

Is the Lord your Shepherd? That depends. Can you say, “the Shepherd is my Lord?”

When you acknowledge that the Lord is your Shepherd, you acknowledge that you are one of His sheep.

How do you know you are one of His sheep? Consider what Jesus says in the Gospel of John.

My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand (John 10:27-28).

A follower of Jesus is someone who hears His voice, someone He knows, and someone who follows Him. When you claim Him as Jehovah, sovereign Lord of your life, you also immediately enter into a personal relationship with the Shepherd. Your relationship with Jesus is personal, permanent, and protected. Every earthly shepherd is going to lose sheep, but the Good Shepherd has never lost one.

The Lord is the Good Shepherd. He laid down His life for the sheep. He died for you.

The Lord is the Great Shepherd. He rose from the dead to guide you and to lead you.

The Lord is the Chief Shepherd. He is coming soon, and you need to be ready.

When you delight in the Lord, the deepest desires of your heart will be satisfied. The Lord is your shepherd, not the things that He gives you. The things He gives are a representation of who He is. The Lord is our Shepherd, our Provider, our Healer, our Peace and our Righteousness. We will never be satisfied apart from Him. Do you have a personal, permanent, protected relationship with Him?

If you want to have that kind of relationship with Jesus, the Good Shepherd, pray this prayer:

Dear God, I know You love me. I know You want to save me. I was going astray but You died for me. You paid my sin debt; thank you for paying for my sin debt. I believe You are the Great Shepherd who rose from the dead. I believe You are the Son of God, and You are able to lead me in the paths of righteousness for Your name's sake because You are a living Shepherd. Come into my heart and take control of my life and make me the person You want me to be. I know You are the Chief Shepherd coming to take me home soon, and I want to go home to be with You. Amen.

■ PROCLAIM IT

If you prayed that prayer for the first time, please share your decision with another Christian you know or with your pastor. We would also like to hear about it, so that we can provide you with free resources to help you grow in your new faith. Please let us know by going to lwf.org/discover-jesus, scrolling down the page and clicking on *I Believe*.

If you know people who are disappointed or dissatisfied with how life has treated them, will you share what you have learned in this study? God wants everyone to know about His Son Jesus, the Good Shepherd, the Great Shepherd, the Chief Shepherd. Someone you know needs to hear about how to live a full and satisfied life.

If we could be saved by works, then
we could be kept (or lost) by works.
But because we're saved by the grace
of God, we're kept by the grace of God.

ADRIAN ROGERS