

Pictures of the People of God

Seeing ourselves through God's Eyes.

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, March 20th

Reflection: We've been discussing that one of the ways God describes our relationship with Him is that He's our "Good Shepherd" (Ps. 23; Jn 10) and we're "the sheep of His pasture". (Ps. 100)

This particular picture (sheep) reflects some of the Problems we tend to have.

(We're prone to: Wander; Poison; Predators; Panic; Bloat; and Division.)

Thankfully, this picture also reminds us of the Provision/Promises of the "Good Shepherd".

Ps. 23:1 If *"The Lord is my shepherd"* Then: *"I shall not lack;*

1. Pastors (poimēn: Pastor, Shepherd)

A. Biblically described as: Elders (1 Pt 5:1); Bishops (1Tim. 3); Pastors (Eph. 4:11)

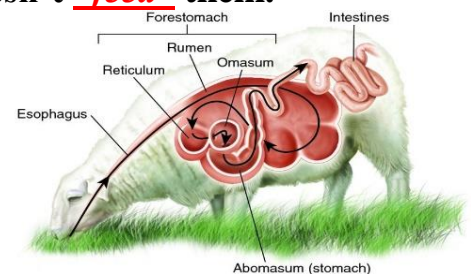
B. They are God's Gifts (Eph. 4:10,11); Guides (Heb. 13:7,17); and Guards for the local church. (Acts 20:28-30; 1 Pt 5:1-9) to help us Grow! (Eph. 4:12-16)

2. Pastures. Vs 2 *"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures"* (naw-aw': habitations)

A. The Shepherd Leads the sheep to the pastures, but he doesn't "feed" them.

1) They must choose to eat/ingest: *"Knowledge and understanding."* Jer. 3:15

2) Only babies are normally "fed" by others.



B. Ingestion without digestion produces Constipation!

1) It's not what you eat (ingestion), but what's digested that grows us.

a) You must first eat before you can digest!

2) Sheep Eat on their feet, but "Digest" lying down.

3) This process is Known as Rumination or "chewing the cud".

a) Requires "regurgitation". (Recalling) Psalm 63:5,6

b) Removes inedible material. (Discerning) 1 Thes. 5:21

c) Retains / further digests what's good. (Meditating/Applying) 1 Thes. 5:22

d) Eventually purges what's useless. (Eliminating) 1 Thes. 5:22

e) **Rumination requires rest!** (Peace) Is 26:3-4 *"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, (shalom) whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."* (bāṭaḥ: confidence, trust, careless)

(1) Our inability/unwillingness to do this is:

➤ At the root of our anxiety! Phil. 4:6-8; Ps. 46:10 *"Be still and know that I am God..."*

Ps. 23:4 *"I will fear no evil, for thou art with me!"*

➤ Causes Spiritual Indigestion! Luke 10:38-42 41 *"Martha, Martha, thou art careful (Miramna: distracted) and troubled (tyrbaxo: crowded) about many things: But one thing is needful" (chreia: required)*

C. God's Word is "soul food". Jer 3:15 *"I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you (rā'ā: shepherd) with knowledge and understanding."*

Jer 15:16 *"Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was ... the joy and rejoicing of mine heart:"*

Ps 34:8 *"Oh taste (perceive) and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him."*

1) We must cultivate an appetite (taste) for it. 1 Pt 2:2 *"As ... babes, desire the sincere milk of the word..."*

Heb 5:12-14 *"For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat."*

2) We must "exercise" to enable it to benefit us. Heb 5:13-14 *"every one that useth milk is unskilful (ap'eiros: inexperienced) in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe."*

But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, (Telios: mature) even those who by reason of use (hex'is: practice) have their senses exercised (gymnazo: trained) to discern both good (kalos: valuable) and evil." (Kakos; Worthless)

James 1:22 *"But be ye doers of the word, (Poiētēs': performers) and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."*

Eph 2:10 *"For we are his workmanship, (poi'ema) created in Christ Jesus unto good works..."*

Both Poietes and poiema come from Poieo: meaning to perform!

D. The difference between spiritual Ingestion and Digestion is "Meditation"! Ps. 1:2

"His delight is in the law of the Lord and in His law doth he meditate day and night"

Hāgâ': ponder, study (2 Tim. 2:15) Meditate: To think deeply or carefully about.

1) Biblical Meditation involves:

a) Memorization. Ps. 119:11 *"Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee"*

b) Regular, Honest Reflection. Josh. 1:8 *"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night..."*

Ps 63:6 *"I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches."*

c) Sincere Application. Josh. 1:8 *"that thou may observe (shamar': guard, protect, regard) to do according to all that is written therein."*

Ps 119:9-11 *"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed (shamar) thereto according to thy word. With my whole heart have I sought thee... Thy word have I hid in mine heart..."*

2) Biblical Meditation produces:

a) God's Direction / Wisdom Ps 73:24 *"Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."*
Ps 16:11 *"Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."*

Ps 119:98-100 *"Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep (nāšar: guard/value) thy precepts."*

b) God's Affection / Revelation Jn 14:21 *"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."*

Ps 119:97 *"how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day."*

c) God's Protection / Blessing (Ps. 1; Josh. 1:8) *"Then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, (Šālah': To push forward, profit) and then thou shalt have good success." (Šākal': skill, prudence, understanding)*

Ps 119:165 *"Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them." (mikshol: cause to trip)*

Conclusion:

If *"The Lord is my (your) shepherd"*, then *"I (you) shall not want" (lack):*

1) Pastors *"I will give you pastors according to my heart who shall feed you with..."* Jer 3:15

2) Pastures: *"He leadeth me... maketh me to lie down in green pastures"* (Ps. 23:2)

Application: If the Lord really is your shepherd:

1) Are you following Him? Jn 10:27 *"My sheep hear my voice... and they follow me!"*

2) Do you have a Pastor (under-shepherd) *"after God's heart"?* (Jer. 3:15)

3) What are you "ingesting?" *(Are you Learning the right Information?)*

4) How's your "digestion?" *(Are you making Application to your life?)*

God's Word Is His Truth and Food for our Soul:

When you find a Command: *Obey it!*

When you uncover a truth: *Believe it!*

When you Discover a Promise: *Embrace it!*