



LECTURE 4

HE LEADETH ME

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“But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.” Ephesians 4:15

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The Twenty-third Psalm is a favorite passage for many of God’s children. This passage begins, *“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.”* Then the Bible says in verse two, *“He maketh me to lie down in green pastures.”* This speaks of rest. The rest we find from fear is not in the absence of danger but in the presence of the Shepherd. May the Lord continue to teach us this lesson because we can be so anxious at times. The cure for our anxiety is not removing the things that cause the anxiety, but entering into the presence of the Shepherd.

Verse two says, *“He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.”* We could read this with emphasis placed on the word *“he,”* the word *“leadeth,”* or the phrase *“still waters.”* We are tempted to place the emphasis on *“leadeth”* or *“still waters,”* but again we learn from this psalm that the emphasis should be placed on the Shepherd.

OUR SUBMISSION TO THE SHEPHERD

“He leadeth me beside the still waters.” We are not going to be led by the Shepherd unless we submit to the Shepherd. God has established the principle of authority and submission to it.

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In Isaiah 58:11 the prophet promised, *“And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.”* I want my life to be like a watered garden. I love to see a beautiful garden, well-watered and kept. The Lord says our lives can be like a watered garden, but we must allow Him to guide us. *“And the Lord shall guide thee continually.”* The psalmist said, *“He leadeth me beside the still waters.”*

When our Lord Jesus was about to leave His disciples, He wanted to comfort them. He explained to them the great truth concerning the indwelling Holy Spirit. As our Lord spoke of the Holy Spirit, He said in John 16:7, *“Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away....”* The word “expedient” means “in your best interest.” How could it be in their best interest for Christ to leave? The truth is that Christ was not leaving; He was continuing with them in the Person of the Holy Spirit. He said, “I will bleed and die on Golgotha’s cross, be buried in a borrowed tomb, come forth from the grave alive, and ascend to heaven. But the Holy Spirit is coming to indwell every believer forever. He will live in you.”

We believe that God is coequal, coexistent, and eternally existent in three persons—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. We understand that God the Son is coequal with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. God the Holy Spirit

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is no more or less God than the Father and the Son. God the Son is no more or less God than the Father and the Holy Spirit. God the Father is no more or less God than the Son and the Holy Spirit.

When we speak of the Father, we speak of God. When we speak of the Holy Spirit, we speak of God. When we speak of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son, we speak of God. This may be a bit difficult to comprehend, but by faith we believe the clear Bible teaching of the Trinity. When we speak of God, we speak of coequal, coexistent, eternally existent God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

Jesus Christ said, “It is in your best interest that I go away and that the Holy Spirit come to indwell every believer forever.” The same Christ who walked with His disciples is abiding in you and in me today and forever in the Person of the Holy Spirit.

In John’s gospel record we read the Lord Jesus’ promise, *...for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now (John 16:7-12).*

The Lord Jesus said, “There is so much I want to teach you, but you can only receive so much at this

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time.” Think of how parents, with dreams of their child one day becoming a wonderful Christian young person will often think, “I’d like to teach him all he needs to know at one time.” But it does not work that way. It is a daily process, sometimes a moment-by-moment process. Likewise, as Christians, we grow day by day as we feed on God’s Word and commune with Christ our Savior.

He said in verse thirteen, “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.” In other words, the Lord Jesus said, “I want to share so many things with you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Holy Spirit comes to live in you, never to leave you or forsake you, He will constantly teach you what you need to know and help you to grow as a believer. The Holy Spirit will guide you.”

You may say, “Years ago, I asked God to forgive my sin and by faith I trusted Jesus Christ as my Savior. Years ago, the Lord came to live in me; but I’m not growing as I should grow. I have to admit that.” The secret to growing in the Christian life is in yielding to the Shepherd. If He is going to lead us, we must allow Him to lead us. God has established this principle for our lives.

An illustration of this is found in I Timothy 3, where we find the qualifications for both pastors and deacons, the two New Testament offices in the church. God calls and leads a man to a church that believes God has led him to be their pastor. They vote

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as a church to extend a call to him to be their pastor. This relationship is like a marriage. The church says, “We will love you and we want you to lead us. Will you love us and lead us?” Then the people choose deacons to help that pastor lead the church.

Notice a word in the qualifications listed in I Timothy 3. The Bible says in verse one, “*This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.*” The word “*bishop*” is another word referring to the office of pastor or shepherd.

Continue reading in verse two,

A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house.

Notice the word “*ruleth*.” This word is too strong for some people, but the Bible clearly says the pastor must rule his house. This does not mean he should have his wife and family in chains. He is not to be a tyrant, but he is to lead.

Much of the rebellion in our world today is against what is called the patriarchal society. The root of this patriarchal society, we are told, is the Christian faith. People are in rebellion against God and the Christian faith because they do not think a man should rule. If you are married and you want to have a happy home, you must understand that God’s design calls for the

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husband to lead his family and for his wife to be in submission. This is a principle God has established.

The Scripture continues in verse five, *“For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?”* The pastor is to lead the church. The Bible says in I Timothy 5:17, *“Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.”* The word elder is another word for pastor. God calls a pastor to lead a church. A church should be pastor-led. Not every church believes this, but Baptist people who believe the Bible believe that under Christ a pastor should lead the church.

This is not said for the pastor’s sake or for the husband’s sake; but to teach a principle, a principle of authority and submission to authority. Think of what God could do for us if only we were willing to be submissive!

Happiness is a by-product of obedience. You will never be a happy wife unless you are submissive to your husband’s leadership. You will never be a happy husband unless you submit to Christ and to the needs of your wife. I will never be a happy pastor if I do not lead the church and submit to the needs of the church. We will not be what God wants us to be unless we are submissive to authority.

In order for our Shepherd to lead us, we must be submissive to His will for our lives. Who knows more about our lives than the Shepherd? Do we know more about our lives, or does God know more about our

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lives? Who knows more about why we were created? Why do we make such disasters of our lives? Because we try to run our own lives. Why do we cause such heartache in the lives of others? Because we try to manage our own lives. We say, “I’m going to be my own boss. No one will rule over me.” But we must come to a place of submission if we expect our Shepherd to lead us. Everything else in life is settled when this is settled.

Our battle is not with people; it is with yielding to Christ. A woman may say, “I’m battling my husband.” The real struggle is your unwillingness to be submissive to God and the person God has placed in your life. A husband may say, “I’m battling my wife and kids.” Examine your life to see if the real struggle may be that you have not yielded yourself to God to be the husband and father God wants you to be.

If God is going to lead us, we must submit to Him. We must be in submission to the Shepherd.

OUR SUPPLY FROM THE SHEPHERD

“He leadeth me beside the still waters.” Life without water is impossible, and He supplies us with the water we need.

Almost seventy percent of a sheep’s body consists of water. Water is necessary for every bodily function.

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If the sheep does not get the water he needs, his body will not function properly.

It is not up to the sheep to find the water. Sheep have no sense of direction. The Shepherd must lead the sheep to “*the still waters.*” These are still waters, not raging streams that can take the life of the sheep. “*He leadeth me beside the still waters.*”

The shepherd provides three sources of water for the sheep. One source is a deep well where the shepherd finds water for the sheep. At times the shepherd must work with great effort to get the water to the sheep from the deep well. Many times God takes us to the deep well, and our Shepherd works tirelessly to get the water to us. It may look like a dark, troubled place, a place where it seems no water can be found; but He knows that in that deep well there is water for us, and He takes us to it.

Water is also found in streams and springs. The sheep can drink freely from the cool, refreshing water found there.

Another source of water for the sheep is dew. I am told that sheep can go for prolonged periods of time and never drink from a well or from a stream or spring if they can get enough dew. In the very early morning, dew can be found on the vegetation. The sheep can eat the lush vegetation covered in dew and find all the water they need. To get that water, they must arrive early in the morning before the heat of

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the day burns off the dew. The shepherd must take them to find a place to graze where the dew can be found upon the lush vegetation. Early in the day, before the heat of the sun, he leads the sheep to the place where they can walk among the dew-covered grass and vegetation and get the water they need.

What can we learn from this? It is not the sheep but the Shepherd who leads us to our supply. What is the water for our lives? The Bible says in John 7:37, “In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst....” Thirst is a gift from God. The sheep know their bodies need water because they get thirsty.

We have physical thirst, and sometimes we quench that thirst with things that are not hydrating, but dehydrating. We consume many liquids that are not hydrating liquids. They do not provide water for us; they actually take water from our bodies. By drinking these liquids, we have more water removed from our bodies.

In our spiritual life, God gives us thirst. So often, we try to quench that thirst with “dehydrating” things instead of “hydrating” things. They seem to satisfy, but in the end they do not satisfy. They actually harm us.

The Lord Jesus said, “*If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.*” What does “*drink*” mean in this verse? “*Drink*” is another word for “accept, believe, or take.”

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In John 4, we find the beautiful story of the woman at the well. This woman had been married five times and was presently living with a man in adultery. Her life was wrecked. She went to the well at noonday to draw water. She went at noonday because she knew the other women would be gone. She did not want to be embarrassed by the presence of the other women in the village. But Christ had an appointment to meet her at the well. The Lord Jesus saw her thirsty soul and spoke directly to her deepest need.

But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw. Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly (John 4:14-18).

How we need the heart Christ has for people! We are so full of hypocrisy. We make a practice of finding sins we do not commit and lifting our voices against others who do those things. The Bible says in John 3:16, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.” I am against sin, but God help me to be for sinners the way I should be for sinners. I am against sin, and you should be against sin; but may we have the love of Christ for people.

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The wonderful story of grace continues,

The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he (John 4:19-26).

Some say the Lord Jesus never claimed to be the Messiah. They do not know the Bible. The woman said, “I know that Messias cometh.” Christ Jesus said, “I that speak unto thee am he.” How much clearer could He be? Either Christ is the promised Messiah, or He lied to that woman. God cannot lie. It is not that He does not lie, but He cannot lie.

The woman received eternal water by believing on Him. “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.” The water we need for life, for spiritual existence, comes from believing Christ.

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OUR SATISFACTION FROM THE SHEPHERD

To be satisfied, the sheep must drink. People often say to me, “I know that. I’ve heard that before. I believe that.” But their souls will not be satisfied until they take it, until they drink, until they believe the Lord, until they go to the water and take it in. For every clear, cool drink God has for us, the Devil rushes up with something else to try to satisfy us. Only the Lord Jesus can truly satisfy.

The sheep traveled through places where there were holes dug out in the earth. As they walked through the water, they excreted their own waste into the water, and mud was mingled in the water. That was not the kind of water the shepherd wanted the sheep to drink. He did not want them to drink water that could harm them. He wanted them to drink clear, cool, refreshing water.

Our Lord does not want us to drink water contaminated with the things of this world. He desires for us to satisfy our spiritual thirsts with the clear, cool drink of heaven He has for us.

The Bible says in the book of Jeremiah that God has two things against His people. Jeremiah 2:13 says, “*For my people have committed two evils....*” What are they? The first one, “*...they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters....*” Christ is the Fountain of living waters. There is no other place to get living water. The Shepherd will lead us every day to drink

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if we will let Him. We will never be satisfied with anything else.

He said, “The first evil is that they have forsaken Me, the Fountain of living waters.” Then He said, “*And hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.*” In other words, “They tried to create places to get water. They have hewn out places to catch and hold water, but they are broken and cannot hold water.”

Remember, about seventy percent of a sheep’s body consists of water. All the functions of the animal’s body depend on that water. Do you know why so many of us who say we are Christians are not functioning like Christians? We are not getting the water from the Shepherd so that we can function the way His sheep should function. We have hewn out or created places where we can get a drink, but the water found there is not fit for consumption. Yet, we continue to drink it.

Often people look at Bible-believing Christians and say, “You are radical, off-the-wall. All you talk about is straight living!” What do we need? We need God to divide us, to discern for us, to separate us from all the unfit water and lead us to drink what He has prepared for us.

Our souls need to be fed from the fountains, streams, springs, deep wells, and early morning dew that Christ Jesus provides. We need to get it early

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in the morning before the heat of the day burns the water away. Why go through every day with a parched soul when we can be refreshed early from the presence of the Lord?

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