



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

January 26, 2020

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Deacons:

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Steve McCreary

Minister:

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Service Times:

Sunday

Bible Study 10 am
Worship Service 10:45 am
Worship Service 6 pm

Wednesday

Bible Study 7:00 pm

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5 POWERFUL WORDS FROM PSALM 23

Everyone knows the first five words of the 23rd Psalm: *“The Lord is my Shepherd...”* These words not only introduce the psalm and the God of the Psalm but are actually powerful words that reveal our relationship with Him. Notice, for example:

The – This reveals that Jehovah God is the only God. He is not merely a god – He is THE God. He is not one of many – He is the One and only! We should, like Paul, always profess, *“yet for us there is one God” (I Corinthians 8:6).*

Lord – This shows that God is the Lord - our master. A Lord is one who has rule over your life. If He is our Lord then He is first in everything. As Peter suggests, let us *“sanctify the Lord God in your hearts” (I Peter 3:15).*

Is - This present tense word shows that God lives. He was, and is, and always will be. God is just as alive today as when David wrote this Psalm. Let us indeed be convinced of what God thundered forth in **Malachi 4:6**, *“For I am the Lord, I do not change.”*

My – God is not an abstract power – He is not an aloof entity. He wants to be our personal God. He wants a relationship with us. It is imperative that we become as close to Him as possible. Let us, like Thomas, proudly proclaim, *“My Lord and My God” (John 20:28).*

Shepherd – A good shepherd is one who lovingly cares for, feeds, guides, and protects the sheepfold. This is what God does for us if we stay faithful to Him. We can be at peace if we fully trust in Him and obey His will. And we should, like the Psalmist, express joy all day long for Him: *“So we, Your people and sheep of Your pasture, will give You thanks forever, we will show forth Your praise to all generations” (Psalms 79:13).*

Is the Lord God truly your Shepherd? If so, you have nothing to fear (read the rest of **Psalm 23** for this assurance).

Edd Sterchi

“My” Religion

A famous country singer told how she got religion. When she was a child, her mother said the Holy Spirit told her that her daughter had a special gift. When she grew up and started singing, she said the gift had to come from God because she didn't get it from her mother or father. It was then that she felt she had a relationship with God. She said this was when she began to discover “my spirituality.”

“My spirituality.” A spirituality based on a gifted singing voice. How ridiculous! But her claim to religion is typical. People talk about my church, my beliefs, and my denomination. They talk about my values, my standards, and my priorities. They speak of my interpretation, my definition, and my opinion. This terminology is not in itself wrong. Paul spoke of “my gospel” (**Rom. 2:16**), but this was the exception, not the rule. People today talk about “my religion” and leave God and the Bible out of it. They are like the rich fool who said, “*I will pull down my barns and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods*” (**Luke 12:18**). He thought all of this was his—and it never was!

These people talk about “their church” like they talk about their car or their house. When this church doesn't suit them, they change it or they get another one. Religion to them is all about what they want, not what God says. That is why they don't even bother to give you Bible approval for what they believe and do. Why should they? “My spirituality” is based on feelings anyway. This is also why they are so accepting and tolerant of other beliefs. After all, “my religion” is not “his religion,” but “I can't say that what is right for me is right for him.”

Such people are often the most vocal about their beliefs. They testify about the good things that have happened to them as proof that “my spirituality” is right. They don't read verses like **Ecclesiastes 9:11** which says time and chance happen to us all. They don't pay attention to **Matthew 5:45** where Jesus said that God makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. If “my spirituality” is right because good things come to me at some point in my life, then everybody's spirituality is right because everybody receives good things at times.

A lot of people will wish on judgment they had listened to God's Words instead of their desires. They can talk about how religious they are, but their talk is cheap if they don't follow the Bible. Jesus said, “*Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is heaven. Many will say to me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity*” (**Matt. 7:21-23**).

“My spirituality” is not the standard. Only God's Word is. Until people humble themselves before it, they will not be saved.