

MAY 2/3 FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER Eyes On Jesus: Always Rejoicing

Psalm 23

1The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. 2He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, 3he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. 4 Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6 Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Acts 2:42-47 (sermon text)

42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. Acts 2:42-47 NIV

Acts 2:42-47

1. Have you ever experienced a fellowship like the one described here?
2. What are some of the upsides of having community?
3. What is unique about the church Luke is describing here?
4. What are the disciplines the Apostles are dedicating themselves to?

1 Peter 2:19-25

19 For it is commendable if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because they are conscious of God. 20 But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. 21 To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. 22 "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." 23 When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. 24 "He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by his wounds you have been healed." 25 For "you were like sheep going astray," but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. 1 Peter 2:19-25 NIV

1 Peter 2:19-25

1. Is suffering good?
2. How is 2:25 a further encouragement to the Christian who faces unjust suffering?

3. In what different ways could meditating on the cross of Christ each day be helpful to the Christian?
4. Read Isaiah 53 and note the similarities.

John 10:1-10

1"Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. 2 The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. 5 But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice." 6 Jesus used this figure of speech, but the Pharisees did not understand what he was telling them. 7 Therefore Jesus said again, "Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. 8 All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. 9 I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. John 10:1-10 NIV

John 10:1-10

1. How do we learn to recognize the Shepherd's voice?
2. Who is the gate?
3. Who are the true Shepherds?