

23 and Me

New Years Day, 2023, WRCOB

Choice

- I'm Freda, and I'm a sheep and I'm proud of it
- In 2023, I'm a sheep, yep, that's me.
- I really try to keep my goat-like behavior in check
- In Matthew 25 – As Jesus speaks of the judgement of the nations, he uses the analogy of sheep and goats where
 - Goats are the unrighteous whose end is eternal punishment
 - Sheep are blessed and receive an eternal inheritance
- What's the big difference between sheep and goats
- **Goats – associated with**
 - Strong-minded, singleness of purpose
 - Makes them, not good at following rules
- **Sheep –**
 - No sense of direction,
 - Defenseless
 - Can't even get up w/o help
 - Not meant to carry burdens
 - Can't care for themselves – very valuable
- **Nature**
 - **Goat – plays to our destructive worldly dualistic – False Self**
 - Right and wrong; Winners and Losers
 - I have to beat you to do well
 - **Sheep**
 - Live into our true selves
 - Obedient, trusting our Good Shepherd for the outcome
 - Not about me, About the plan of a loving God for my life
- In 2023 – It's about innovation, progress,

2022 – Looking Back

- **Ups & downs**
- Memorable, and some would say challenging
 - War in Ukraine continuing
 - Feb US sent troops to Poland, Germany and Romania to support Ukraine
 - May milestone of 1 million deaths due to COVID in the US
 - Multiple mass shootings
 - Buffalo, Colorado, Chesapeake to name a few
 - Jan 6 hearings and the recently released recommendations
 - Economic downturns and rising gas prices
- Positives
 - Confirmation of Ketanji Brown Jackson – 1st AA Female S. Crt Justice
 - 1st major gun safety legislation in 20 years or more
 - Approved new COVID vaccines; options for adults and cover children
- Personal Experiences
 - Losses, sickness, personal challenges and doubts
 - Marriages, births, retirements, graduation
- All of this – trying to find our way – make sense out of things.
- How you coped with all of this will be decidedly different depending upon whether you have a goat, or a sheep mentality
- Goats, being strong-willed, probably butted heads with a lot of people, and got pretty frustrated
- Sheep, by comparison, just focused on the Shepherd

2023

- New Year, New Challenges, New opportunities
- Some of the old stuff, the economy, immigration,

2023, I'm a Sheep, that's Me

- Spirituality, the number 23 represents change, progress and innovation
 - **Zechariah 8:23** "...ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that **God is with you.**"
 - **Matthew 1:23** ...THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL," which translated means, "**GOD WITH US.**"
 - **Matthew 18:20** it declares "where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst."
- In scripture, the number 23 is associated with the concept of 'God With us'.
 - The **2323rd** Bible verse: **Matt 4:23** Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom
- Imagine going into 2023, confident that God is with us.
- A goat steps into the year sure that they will have to butt heads and figure it out
- Sheep only have to hold on to one simple phrase

Ps. 23:1

- Repeat the 23rd Psalm
- The Lord is my shepherd
- I'm Freda, and I'm a sheep. My goal for 2023 is to leave behind my goatish ways and live into my natural sheep-hood
- How? By focusing on this 1 verse,
- If you'd like to live into 2023 as a sheep let's stop and focus
- Say the first verse with me – The Lord is my shepherd
- Declaration – of Lordship

The Lord

- someone or something having power, authority, or influence; a master or ruler.
- In feudal times, the Lord, was responsible for supplying everything for the people who lived on his land

The Lord is

- Existential verb – To be
- “To be” most frequently works in conjunction with another verb:
 - Bob is playing the piano
- the verb will stand by itself, alone, in a sentence.
 - Bob is
 - Exists, see Bob, touch Bob, - Bob is
 - The Lord is – not a corporeal being
 - Statement of Faith – I cannot see or touch the Lord, but I believe that the Lord exists
 - 2023 – starts with the biblical understanding of the number 23’ which is God with us –
 - My Sheepiness relies on the faith statement – The Lord is
- The Lord
 - The one is responsible for all my need
 - Is – by faith exists
- My
 - Possession
 - Belongs to
 - Not just a shepherd to others
 - He was a real, personal shepherd for me....and for you
- Shepherd
 - Provides for my daily needs
 - Matthew says do not worry about what you will eat, or what you will wear
 - The Lord knows you have need of these things
 - Knows what we need in every season of 2023 and will provide for it.
 - Deals w/the challenges from the outside world
 - Forsee’s danger

2023

Declaration of Faith – 2023

“The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want