Series: The Shadow of Death

Title: He Makes Me Lie Down in Green Pastures

Text Psalm 23:2a  
May 17, 2020

It is hard to know things.

According to NATURE a top scientific journal - Science has a reproducibility problem.

* 52% of scientists recognize a significant reproducibility crisis
* 38% view it as a slight crisis
* 3% say there is no crisis
* 7% don’t know.

70% have failed to reproduce another’s experiment

over 50% have failed to reproduce their own!

Organizational Sentence:

**3 things that must be true for this to make sense:**

1. **My inaccurate knowledge must prevent me from laying down.**
2. **God’s knowledge must be the truth.**
3. **My knowledge must come into alignment with God’s knowledge.**

**“He makes me lie down in green pastures.”**

Outline:3 things that must be true for this to make sense:

1. **My inaccurate knowledge must prevent me from laying down.**
   1. Sheep’s view:
      1. Paranoia
      2. I need to find provision.
      3. I need to find protection.
      4. I need to do more.
      5. Something is wrong and I don’t know what.
   2. Reality
      1. Our mental faculties are fallen.

Ephesians 4:17–19

[17] Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. [18] They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. [19] They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.

* + 1. Our self-knowledge is inaccurate.

Jeremiah 17:9

[9] The heart is deceitful above all things,

and desperately sick;

who can understand it? (ESV)

Application:

We know almost nothing about this situation right now. Here’s what I don’t know:

How it really started.

Who, if anyone, is at fault for it jumping to humans.

Who knew what when.

Who is at fault for the spread.

All the ways it spreads.

How to effectively stop the spread.

Whether we will ever have a vaccine; or if it will mutate too fast.

What will be the unintended consequences of the vaccines if we get them.

Whether we will ever achieve herd immunity or if it will mutate too fast.

How infectious it actually is.

Who in the world has actually done sufficient testing to thoroughly gauge how infectious it is.

How deadly it actually is.

Who in the world really has accurate numbers to figure out how deadly it is.

Whether success and failure are more the fault of my republican president or my democratic governor.

What the ulterior motives are behind: all the power players dealing with the virus.

What will be the unintended consequences of quarantine.

What will be the unintended consequences of lifting quarantine.

What we all could have realistically done differently and the actual results that would have come from it.

Whether it is what moved through our county last winter.

Whether I have already had the virus.

Who really has the virus.

How susceptible I am to the virus.

What would happen to me if I got it.

Who I would give it to if I had it.

What I don't even know that I don't know about this.

1. **God’s knowledge must be the truth.**
   1. Sheep’s view:
      1. Limited. Simple. Paranoid.
      2. But the Shepherd knows:
         * his sheep
         * the land
         * the seasons
         * the weather
         * the real threats vs. fake threats.
         * the tactics of predators
   2. Reality:
      1. God knows everything.

Psalm 147:5

[5] Great is our Lord, and abundant in power;

his understanding is beyond measure. (ESV)

* + 1. God knows you better than you know you.

Jeremiah 17:10

[10] “I the LORD search the heart

and test the mind,

to give every man according to his ways,

according to the fruit of his deeds.” (ESV)

Challenge: READ PSALM 139

* + 1. God’s knowledge is active rather than reactive.

Isaiah 46:8–11

[8] “Remember this and stand firm,

recall it to mind, you transgressors,

[9] remember the former things of old;

for I am God, and there is no other;

I am God, and there is none like me,

[10] declaring the end from the beginning

and from ancient times things not yet done,

saying, ‘My counsel shall stand,

and I will accomplish all my purpose,’

[11] calling a bird of prey from the east,

the man of my counsel from a far country.

I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass;

I have purposed, and I will do it. (ESV)

* 1. Application: View God as the only fully accurate source of truth. Spend time in God’s word directly. You, the truth, and the Holy Spirit.

1. **My actions must come into alignment with God’s knowledge.**
   1. Sheep’s view:
      1. I will be forced to lay down because I am unhealthy.
      2. I will choose to lay down because I am content and at peace.
   2. Reality
      1. Externally coerced – to prevent your self-destruction.

Ephesians 4:20-24

[20] But that is not the way you learned Christ!—[21] assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, [22] to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, [23] and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, [24] and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. (ESV)

* + 1. Internally motivated – to bring you to the point of contentment and peace.

Philippians 4:4–7

[4] Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. [5] Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; [6] do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. [7] And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (ESV)

C. Application

Romans 12:1–2

[1] I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. [2] Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. (ESV)

**Bottom Line: God is almighty and all-knowing so we can trust him with this situation.**