



WELCOME!

We are so excited that you will be joining us for the “Psalm 23” series! Over the next several sessions, we’ll explore the timeless truths of Psalm 23, uncovering its rich imagery of God’s care, provision, and presence.

Our goal is to immerse ourselves in the beauty of this psalm and see how its promises apply to every season of our lives. Together, we’ll reflect on how God is our Shepherd, leading us, restoring us, comforting us, and blessing us with His goodness and mercy.

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.” —John 10:11

Together, we will:

- ♦ Discover the depth of Psalm 23 and its powerful imagery of God as our Shepherd.
- ♦ Learn how God’s presence, provision, and protection sustain us in every season of life.
- ♦ Celebrate the unchanging goodness of God and respond to His shepherding care with gratitude and trust.



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STRUCTURE FOR EACH SESSION

READ:

Engage with the key Scripture passage for the session, noting themes and insights about God's character and presence.

REFLECT:

Discuss the passage and its connection to God's role as our Shepherd in every season of life.

KEY TRUTH:

Highlight the central truth that ties God's character and care to our experiences.

GROWING DEEPER:

Explore additional Scripture to help anchor our faith in the truth and reality of God's presence.

RESPOND:

Share reflections and personal experiences of how you've encountered God's provision, guidance, and presence.

BREAKTHROUGH:

Pray together for specific areas where you need to trust in God's care and leadership.

WHAT'S YOUR NEXT STEP:

Choose a practical step to apply the truths from the session and grow in faith throughout the week.





DISCUSSION GUIDELINES

COME REGULARLY: Just like any friendship, cultivating a healthy relationship with Jesus and others in your group starts with showing up! When you prioritize regular attendance with your group, you make a difference for yourself and others participating as well.

PARTICIPATE: Your story and life experience is a testimony to the character of God. When you share what God is doing in and around you, it helps everyone in your group understand more of who God is and build meaningful relationships within your group.

KEEP IT SAFE: During discussion, everyone is responsible for helping maintain an environment where people can be heard and feel loved. Please allow everyone an opportunity to speak and refrain from quick answers, snap judgments, or simple fixes.

CONFIDENTIALITY: We encourage and value honesty, transparency, and vulnerability. To help protect these values and each other, please keep anything shared in your group confidential.

KNOW & BE KNOWN: In group discussions, pay attention to the stories people share about their lives. As you get to know each other and learn about what is happening in each others' lives you will have opportunities to pray heaven to earth and see God's kingdom advance.

Note for Group Leaders: If there is something shared in your group that you believe is serious, involves potential or existing harm to a person, or requires additional pastoral care, please encourage that group member to share with a pastor at your campus or bring the situation to a pastor's attention.

INTRODUCTION:

Psalm 23, a Psalm of David

Psalm 23 is one of the most beloved and well-known passages in Scripture, often quoted in times of both comfort and celebration. Written by David, this psalm reflects a deep, personal understanding of God as a Shepherd who lovingly provides for, restores, protects, and blesses His people.

In this study, we will walk through Psalm 23 verse by verse, reflecting on its historical context, theological richness, and practical application. While the first session focuses on David's life and how his experiences shaped the psalm, the rest of the study will center on the truths of Psalm 23 itself.

This psalm invites us to trust God's care in every season of life, whether we are in restful green pastures or walking through dark valleys. It reminds us that God's goodness and mercy are constant and that He is always leading us toward His presence. Together, we'll journey through Psalm 23 to deepen our trust in the God who shepherds us.



OPENING SESSION: **David's Story** **The Shepherd Behind Psalm 23**

READ ALOUD:

1 Samuel 16:1-13; 1 Samuel 17:32-37

These passages highlight pivotal moments in David's life: his anointing as king while still a humble shepherd and his confidence in God's protection when facing Goliath. Each stage of David's journey taught him something profound about who God is.

Key Truth:
"God uses the seasons and experiences of our lives to shape how we see Him, just as David's life as a shepherd, warrior, and king formed his vision of God as the ultimate Shepherd."

REFLECT:

The Shepherd's Training Ground:

- In the quiet fields of Bethlehem, David learned to care for his sheep, protect them from harm, and trust God for strength and wisdom. These moments formed the foundation for his understanding of God as the ultimate Shepherd.
- David's view of God was shaped by experiences like defeating predators with God's help (1 Samuel 17:34-37), reflecting how God defends and provides for His people.

The Warrior's Dependence on God:

- As a young warrior, David faced impossible odds against Goliath. His faith in God's deliverance came from his past experiences of God's faithfulness. David's words, "The Lord who delivered me... will deliver me" (1 Samuel 17:37), show how God's past actions shaped his present confidence.

The King's Reliance on God's Leadership:

- Later, as king, David would draw on his knowledge of God as Shepherd to lead Israel with humility and dependence. His psalms reflect the wisdom born from both triumphs and failures, pointing to God's constant care through every season of life.

RESPOND:

1. How has a specific season or experience in your life shaped your view of God's character?
2. In what ways do you see God preparing you now for future challenges or opportunities?
3. What do you think it means that God often uses ordinary roles (like shepherding) to reveal extraordinary truths about Himself?

BREAKTHROUGH:

Discuss the following and then pray together!

♦What is one area of your life where you struggle to see how God is shaping your understanding of Him?

♦How can we pray for you to recognize God's presence and purpose in this season?

GROWING DEEPER

Psalms 78:70-72 - "He chose David His servant... to shepherd His people with integrity of heart." Reflect on how David's time as a shepherd prepared him to lead God's people.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 - God comforts us in our troubles so that we can comfort others. Consider how your experiences of God's care equip you to help others.

WHAT'S YOUR NEXT STEP?

- Reflection Time:** Spend 10 minutes this week journaling about a past experience that shaped your view of God. What did you learn about His character during that time?
- Memorize: 1 Samuel 17:37:** "The Lord who delivered me... will deliver me." Let this verse remind you of God's past faithfulness in shaping your confidence in Him now.
- Gratitude Practice:** Each day, thank God for one way He has used your life's experiences to reveal more of who He is.

SESSION 1:
Connecting to God
“The Shepherd Who Provides”

READ ALOUD:

Psalm 23:1-6

Session Focus:
“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.”

David’s confidence mirrors the Israelites’ experience in the wilderness, where God provided manna and water daily (Exodus 16:1-18). Just as He met their physical needs in a barren land, God satisfies the spiritual hunger and thirst of His people, teaching us to rely on Him rather than striving for self-sufficiency.

REFLECT:

- ◆ Contentment and provision come from trusting God as our Shepherd, not from striving or achieving.
- ◆ God’s care for us flows from His relationship with us, meeting our deepest needs.
- ◆ True satisfaction is found when we recognize that God sees and knows our needs before we do.

RESPOND:

1. How does God’s care for Israel in the wilderness reflect His role as our Shepherd?
2. What does this verse reveal about God’s nature or character?
3. Which aspect of God’s shepherding do you connect with most: guidance, protection, or provision? Which one do you find hardest to trust?

Key Truth:

“When God is our Shepherd, He meets our deepest needs, silencing our shallow wants.”

BREAKTHROUGH:

Discuss the following and then pray together!

- ◆ Where in your life are you feeling a sense of lack or scarcity?

- ◆ How can we pray for God to show you His provision this week?

GROWING DEEPER:

John 10:11 - "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."

Philippians 4:19 - "And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus."

WHAT'S YOUR NEXT STEP?

- Gratitude Journal:** Practice gratitude daily this week by writing down three ways God has met your needs.
- Reflection Time:** Spend 10 minutes each day reflecting on Psalm 23:1, resting in God's provision.
- Memorize:** Memorize Psalm 23:1 to help anchor your trust in God's provision.

SESSION 2: **Rest and Renewal** **“The Shepherd Who Restores”**

READ ALOUD:

Psalm 23:1-6

Session Focus:

Psalm 23:2-3a

“He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul.”

These verses highlight God's care in guiding us to places of rest and renewal, reflecting His understanding of what our souls truly need. This mirrors Elijah's story in the wilderness (1 Kings 19:1-13), where God provided rest, food, and His gentle voice to revive Elijah after a season of exhaustion and despair. The green pastures and still waters symbolize God's invitation to slow down, find peace in His presence, and be restored holistically—physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

REFLECT:

- ♦ God guides us to places of rest and renewal, knowing what our souls truly need.
- ♦ True restoration is holistic—renewing us physically, emotionally, and spiritually.
- ♦ “Green pastures and still waters aren’t just idyllic scenes; they’re God’s invitation to rest in His presence.”
- ♦ The image of “still waters” represents a sacred pause—a space where God’s voice can be heard more clearly, inviting us into deeper trust.

RESPOND:

1. How does the story of Elijah highlight God’s ability to restore us?
2. If God leads us to still waters, what might we be missing when we resist slowing down or resting?
3. How might experiencing God’s rest enable you to extend peace and gentleness to others in your life?

Key Truth:

“The Shepherd knows when we need rest even before we recognize it in ourselves.”

BREAKTHROUGH:

Discuss the following and then pray together!

♦ What fears or anxieties are weighing on you right now that's keeping you from experiencing God's rest?

♦ How can we pray for you to experience God's rest this week?

GROWING DEEPER:

Matthew 11:28 - Come to me, all you who are weary, and I will give you rest.

1 Peter 5:7 - Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.

Galatians 6:2 - Carry each other's burdens, and in this way, fulfill the law of Christ.

WHAT'S YOUR NEXT STEP?

Nature or Indoor Walk: If the weather permits, take a 15-minute walk outdoors to reflect on God's peace. If not, find an indoor space like your church or community center where you can walk and pray for renewal.

Sabbath Rest: Set aside one day this week as a Sabbath—a day to rest, focus on God's presence, and engage in activities that restore your soul.

Memorize: Memorize Psalm 23:2-3a and reflect on how God's rest renews your soul.

SESSION 3:
Paths of Righteousness
“The Shepherd Who Leads”

READ ALOUD:

Psalm 23:1-6

Session Focus:

Psalm 23:3b

“He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.”

God’s guidance is purposeful and aligns with His glory and His people’s good. The paths of righteousness require faith and trust, as seen in Abraham’s journey (Genesis 12:1-9). When God called Abraham to leave everything familiar and follow Him into the unknown, it was a call to align his life with God’s purposes. Similarly, God’s paths may not always be the easiest, but they shape us into people who reflect His righteousness.

REFLECT:

- God’s guidance is for His glory and aligns with His purposes.
- Walking in righteousness means aligning our actions with God’s will.
- God’s paths may not be the easiest, but they are always for our good and His glory.

RESPOND:

1. What does it reveal about God’s character that He leads us in paths of righteousness for His name’s sake?
2. How do God’s paths challenge our own definitions of success and purpose?
3. What was one of the most challenging decisions you’ve made in following God’s path of righteousness? How did that shape your trust in Him?

Key Truth:

“The paths God leads us on are not always the easiest, but they are for our righteousness and for his glory.”

BREAKTHROUGH

Discuss the following and then pray together!

- ◆ Where do you sense God leading you to take a step of faith?

- ◆ How can we support you in aligning your life with God's will?

GROWING DEEPER:

Psalm 119:105 - Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.

Matthew 6:33 - Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness.

WHAT'S YOUR NEXT STEP?

Vocation Reflection: Journal about an area in your life where God is calling you to align more fully with His path. Write down one specific action step you can take.

Prayer Walk: Take a 15-minute prayer walk outdoors if the weather is favorable. If not, use an indoor space like a church building or large hallway to walk and pray for guidance.

Memorize: Memorize Psalm 23:3b, reflecting on how God's guidance is for His name's sake.

SESSION 4: **Walking Through the Valleys –** **“The Shepherd Who Comforts”**

READ ALOUD:

Psalms 23:1-6

Session Focus:

Psalm 23:4

“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.”

Valleys symbolize life’s darkest and most challenging moments, yet David declares confidence in God’s presence and protection. This is mirrored in Ruth’s story (Ruth 1:16-18), where her unwavering loyalty to Naomi reflects God’s steadfast commitment to walk with us through our valleys. The rod and staff represent God’s protective and guiding love, ensuring that even in difficulties, He is present and faithful, bringing comfort and hope.

REFLECT:

- ♦ God’s presence is constant, even in our darkest valleys; He does not abandon us when things get difficult; He walks with us, providing comfort and strength.
- ♦ The rod and staff symbolize God’s protection, correction, and guidance – God’s love both protects and shapes us.
- ♦ Experiencing God’s comfort in our struggles equips us to comfort others in their valleys.

“God doesn’t avoid the valley; He walks through it with us.”

RESPOND:

1. How does Ruth’s loyalty mirror God’s commitment to us in our valleys?
2. How do you understand God’s priority in being present with us in our valleys rather than immediately delivering us out of them?
3. How has experiencing God’s comfort in difficult seasons equipped you to offer comfort to those around you?

Key Truth:

Valleys are not detours but opportunities for deeper trust, growth, and reliance on God’s faithfulness.

BREAKTHROUGH

Discuss the following and then pray together!

♦ What current fears or anxieties do you need to bring before God to experience His comfort?

♦ How can we pray for you to sense God's presence in the valleys you are walking through?

GROWING DEEPER:

1 Peter 5:7 - Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 - The God of all comfort... comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort those in any trouble.

WHAT'S YOUR NEXT STEP?

Lament: Write your own lament this week, expressing any fears or struggles you're currently facing. Trust God with your pain. For inspiration, consider reading Psalm 13, Psalm 42, or Psalm 77.

Encouragement Outreach: Reach out to someone currently going through a difficult time. Offer them a word of comfort, encouragement, or prayer.

Memorize: Memorize Psalm 23:4, reflecting on God's presence with you in the valleys.

SESSION 5: Overflowing Blessings – “The Shepherd Who Overflows”

READ ALOUD:

Psalm 23:1-6

Session Focus:

Psalm 23:5

“You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.”

This verse shifts to the imagery of God as a gracious host, offering peace and abundance even in the face of adversity. The story of Jesus feeding the 5,000 (John 6:1-14) illustrates God's ability to transform scarcity into overflow, providing more than enough for all. Just as Jesus met the physical and spiritual needs of the crowd, God prepares a table for us, anoints us with His favor, and fills us to bless others.

REFLECT:

- God's blessings are abundant even in the midst of our adversities.
 - The prepared table represents God's peace and provision, even amid opposition.
 - The anointing with oil represents God's favor and the overflowing of His blessings in our lives.
 - Overflow isn't meant for hoarding but for sharing—God fills us to bless those around us.
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RESPOND:

1. What does it reveal about the Kingdom of God that He prepares a table in the presence of enemies? How does this align with Jesus' teachings about loving our enemies?
2. How does understanding God's abundant provision challenge you to let go of a scarcity mindset?
3. If God overflowed your cup, who in your life would benefit most from the blessings He is pouring into you?

Key Truth:

Revival comes in the overflow—when we are filled to the brim with God's presence, we become vessels through which His love and power flow to others.

BREAKTHROUGH:

Discuss the following and then pray together!

♦ In what areas do you feel empty and in need of God's overflow?

♦ How can we pray for God to fill you to overflowing so you can bless others?

GROWING DEEPER:

2 Corinthians 9:8 - God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

Luke 6:38 - Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over...

WHAT'S YOUR NEXT STEP?

Gratitude Journal: Start a gratitude journal, recording areas where God has provided abundantly. Reflect on how you can share this overflow with others.

Generosity Practice: Identify one person to bless this week out of the overflow of God's blessings in your life—whether through time, resources, or words.

Memorize: Memorize Psalm 23:5, contemplating how God's overflowing blessings are meant to impact others.

SESSION 6: Dwelling in God's Presence – "The Shepherd Who Pursues"

READ ALOUD:

Psalm 23:1-6

Session Focus:

Psalm 23:6

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

This final verse captures the relentless nature of God's pursuit and the eternal invitation to dwell with Him. The Good Samaritan's story (Luke 10:25-37) reflects how God's mercy extends to us and challenges us to extend it to others. Just as the Samaritan actively pursued the well-being of the stranger, God's goodness and mercy actively pursue us, inviting us to live daily in His presence and extend His love to those around us.

REFLECT:

- ♦ The word "follow" implies pursuit – Goodness and mercy are the companions that God assigns to pursue us every day.
- ♦ Goodness and mercy don't just trail behind us; they push us forward into the fullness of life He promises."
- ♦ Dwelling in God's house is not just about a physical location but about *abiding in His love daily*.
- ♦ Living with an awareness of God's goodness naturally leads to a life marked by *generosity, gratitude, and grace*.

"God's house is not confined to a place; it's wherever His presence dwells within you."

RESPOND:

1. How do you see God's goodness and mercy actively pursuing you in your daily life?
2. What does it look like to dwell in God's presence daily, beyond attending church or devotionals?
3. How does the story of the Good Samaritan challenge you to extend God's mercy to others?

Key Truth:

"Our Desire to dwell in God's house is not just a future destination; it's an invitation to a daily experience of His presence."

BREAKTHROUGH:

Discuss the following and then pray together!

♦ Is there someone God is inviting you to pursue with His goodness and mercy this week?

♦ How can we pray for you to experience God's relentless love in a fresh way?

GROWING DEEPER:

Romans 12:10 - Be devoted to one another in love...

James 1:22 - Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

WHAT'S YOUR NEXT STEP?

Encouragement Outreach: Identify someone in your life who needs encouragement. Reach out to them with a kind word, note, or prayer.

Silent Reflection: Spend 15 minutes each day in silence, focusing on being aware of God's pursuit of you through His goodness and mercy. If possible, do this in a peaceful setting, either outdoors or in a quiet indoor space.

Memorize: Memorize Psalm 23:6 and reflect on how dwelling in God's presence can be a daily experience.

CHAPEL 
YOUNG ADULTS