

Dwell in the House of the Lord Forever

Psalm 23

Introduction:

This is merely a discussion guide for you and your Life Group. There is not any expectation for you to be a Bible scholar or the wisest person in the room. The expectation is that you would pray to God, asking Him to illumine your heart and mind as you walk through these verses. We trust that the Holy Spirit will guide you, and if you have any concerns after your group conversation, please reach out. Today's passage is Psalm 23. When utilizing The Moody Bible Commentary for this passage, you can find the content on pages 781-782. - JF

Questions:

Take a moment and reflect on what you look forward to regarding the New Heaven and the New Earth. Share with the group what it is that you long for in the presence of God. What has informed your view/understanding of what eternity with God will look like? Why is it that we should love to live with God forever?

Read Psalm 23. Who is the author of this psalm? What experience does he have in life that might influence his writing style, language, and illustrations? What does it mean for God to be a shepherd? In what way(s) have you seen or experienced God as the shepherd of your life? For some, the sentence "I shall not want." is confusing or unclear. For those that feel this way, how would you explain what David meant by the second half of verse 1? How should a Christian live this out? How are you currently seeking to live this out?

In verse 2, the psalm says that God makes David lie down in green pastures and leads him beside still water. What does it mean to lie down in green pastures? What does that show about the needs and desires of sheep? And what does it show us about the needs and desires of humans? Why do sheep need to be led beside still waters? How does that practically manifest itself in the life of Christians? Recall a time when God provided for you. Share with the group what that looked like, what you felt, how God was glorified, and how you look for God to continue to provide for you.

Verse 3 begins with "He restores my soul." How might a shepherd restore a sheep's life? How does God, as our shepherd, restore a person's soul? Consider a time when your soul felt restored by God. Share with the group what that looked like, what you experienced, and offer words of encouragement for others in the group looking to have their soul restored by God. What does it mean to be led in paths of righteousness? What similarities are there between shepherds leading sheep down certain paths and God leading us down the path of righteousness? How have you been living a life that displays Christ's righteousness in and through you? Why is this important for Christians to live in such a way?

In verse 4, David talks about walking through the valley of the shadow of death (or the darkest valley). Furthermore, he says that he will fear no evil because God is with him. What does David mean by the valley of the shadow of death? Sheep might not understand death in the same sense that humans do, but they do understand and recognize fear. Why is it important to understand what we fear? How does God alleviate the fear that you experience in your life? What does David mean by God's rod and staff comforting him? How are those tools beneficial for the shepherd and the sheep? In what way(s) does God's rod and staff comfort you in your current season of life?

As David closes out this psalm, verses 5 and 6 speak of peace, prosperity, and joy. What does David teach by saying that God prepares a table for him in the midst of his enemies? What is the significance of anointing a head with oil? What does he mean when David says "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life?" How is this true for the Christian today? David looks forward to dwelling with God forever. How would you describe your desire currently to dwell with God forever?

Chad Bailey, pastor and planter of The Mill Community Church in Celina, preached our message on Sunday. Is there anything he said that you would like to discuss further? Is there anything that stood out to you that we have yet to cover today that you would like to discuss now?