

LIFE GROUP APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Psalms Series

These questions are for the **January 16, 2022**, sermon, "Song of the Shepherd, Part 2." Please read the sermon passage (Psalm 23:1-6) together out loud.

Sermon Outline

NOTE HOW THE LORD, OUR SHEPHERD-KING, LEADS, PROTECTS AND GUIDES HIS PEOPLE. . .

1. Verse four: "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death . . ."
 - a. The hard path (valley of shadows) is often the right path (v. 3).
 - i. Follow the LORD, your shepherd, no matter the condition of the path.
 - ii. "Even though": when negative or difficult conditions prevail, we shall not fear.
 - iii. We do not walk through darkness, but shadows. Shadows prove the sunshine.
 - b. Fear is chased away by the presence of our good Shepherd.
 - i. Rod: protection. Strength used to keep us safe.
 - ii. Staff: inspection. Omniscience used to make us healthy.
2. Verse five: "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies."
 - a. God prepares a table to feed us, even while enemies surround us.
 - i. They can do nothing to thwart his generous and ample blessing.
 - ii. We feed primarily upon God's Word (Jesus) and promises.
 - b. God anoints the heads of his people with oil.
 - i. Primary meaning: David is king, and in the line of Jesus, the anointed (Messiah).
 - ii. He sets every believer apart for unique purposes which will not be thwarted.
3. Verse six: Surely goodness and mercy will "chase me down" all the days of my life.
 - a. God aggressively pursues each of his sheep, with goodness and mercy, all their days.
 - b. Our house in heaven is God's house. It is guaranteed and immovable.

Life Group Discussion Questions

1. Based on #1, above: The path is not made "right" by ease, or "wrong" by hardness. It is made right by the presence of the Lord and wrong by his absence. How has God led you on hard roads which he proved right by his presence? What did he teach you there?
2. Based on #1, above: The Lord brings protection (rod) and healing inspection (staff) right into the shadows of death's valleys. He is with us in the darkest moments. In what ways has God's presence with you changed the way you feel (fear)? Are your emotions tuned into his presence?
3. Based on #2, above: God feeds our souls (and bodies) even while our enemies seem to be circling, seemingly waiting for our demise. Discuss this principle and how God prepares tables.
4. Based on #3, above: While we live, God will not let his sheep go, but "chases us down," not out of anger or condemnation, but with mercy and lovingkindness. And after this life, our address and safety are already guaranteed and advertised. When we live (and even make mistakes), God is good and faithful in life and thereafter (death). Talk about the deep comfort and confidence that comes from facing shadows with this LORD at your side.