



THRIVE CHURCH

GROWTH GROUP STUDY GUIDE | SERIES: SEASONS OF THE SOUL
TITLE: A SONG OF REST
SCRIPTURE: PSALM 23

One Thing Follow-up:

Last week we started a new series and with a psalm for when we find ourselves in a valley of trouble. It is in these times that by reading God's Word and understanding his character that we will find assistance and encouragement through those seasons.

Q. How does knowing God's character give us hope during difficult times?

Q. How did last week's study impact your week?

Opening

The difficulties of life can leave us feeling far from God, isolated, and weary. Psalm 23 reminds us there is hope and that we can find rest with our Good Shepherd.

Series Review:

The book of Psalms has been a hymnbook and prayer book for countless generations of Jews and Christians. It covers the entire range of emotion and experience, from the highest points of joy and thanksgiving to the lowest points of depression and loss.

Similar to last week, Psalm 23 is also written David. Unlike Psalm 3, there is no background information given. We are not given the scenario that prompted the writing. This Psalm has brought comfort to many throughout the years as a beautiful reminder of Jesus.

A Closer look at the Text

The message contrasted the feelings of isolation and defeatism with the beauty of finding rest in promises and presence of God.

Psalm 23:1a "The Lord is my shepherd"

Q. Describe the difference between knowing God is a shepherd and knowing God is my shepherd.

Q. How does understanding that Yahweh is our shepherd change how we deal with difficulty?

Q. Share a scenario when the presence of God change the way you faced the struggle. Or, share a scenario when you carried the stress on your own, only to realize God was protecting you.

Psalm 23.1b “I have what I need.”

Q. How is contentment a gift from God?

Q. When have you felt rest and contentment provided by. God?

Psalm 23.2 “He lets me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside quiet waters”

Q. How does the Christian face difficulty different than non-Christians?

Q. Is this your experience? Why or why not?

Psalm 23.3-4 He renews my life; he leads me along the right paths for his name’s sake. Even when I go through the darkest valley, I fear no danger, for you are with me; your rod and your staff—they comfort me

Q. Describe the comfort that comes by knowing we have a shepherd that can lead and guide us safely down all of the paths? When have you most felt this comfort in your life?

Q. How can it be that walking down the darkest valley could be the “right path”?

Psalm 23.5 “You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows”

Q. The metaphor now changes from Shepherd to Friend. Has there been a time when you felt intimately close to God?

Q. This part of the psalm describes a victory feast and that we can enjoy the fact that the battle is over. We have more than enough because of the spoils of the battle.

Psalm 23.6a “Only goodness and faithful love will pursue me all the days of my life”

This is a picture of God’s faithful love [hesed]. The love of a grandparent or close friend that loves, supports, and provides for you no matter the scenario. This is a picture of God’s love.

Q. Who has shown you the kind of love explained above?

Q. Do you know that God loves you in this way?

Psalm 23.6b “and I will dwell in the house of the Lord as long as I live.”

Q. What does it mean to experience God’s glory now?

**Living It Out
Application:**

There may be times when we feel isolated or far from God. This is when it becomes important to dive into God’s Word and Psalm 23 to find rest.

Steve gave us four ways to live in the glory of God now.

1. Actively make the choice that God is with you.
2. Spend time with the church.
3. Spend time in prayer and reading Scripture.
4. Unite with God and the church in service to the poor and suffering.

Q. How have you experienced these to be true?

Q. What is one thing that you can commit to doing this week to learn more about God?

Q. How can we as a group help you?



Prayer:

The better we know God, the better equipped we will be to face difficulty.

We should pray that as individuals and as the church we have a Good Shepherd that we can trust to lead us, protect us, and guide us through every valley.

We should also pray that God will help us to reach out to someone who may be living or feeling the opposite Psalm and need to hear this message.

Are there any specific needs or struggles that require prayer?