

Psalm 23 Small Group Discussion Guide

Series Summary

You've probably heard it before. It's read at funerals, stitched on pillows, and quoted in hard times. "*The Lord is my shepherd...*" Psalm 23 is one of the most familiar passages in the Bible—so familiar that we often stop *really* hearing it. But this ancient poem isn't just for moments of grief or trouble. It's a radical declaration of trust, provision, identity, and hope for everyday life. In this two-week series, we'll slow down and listen again—line by line—to discover a God who walks with us, provides for us, fights for us, and welcomes us. Whether life feels full or fragile, Psalm 23 offers more than comfort. It offers a way to live.

Sermon Summary

Josh's message explores Psalm 23, focusing on the personal declaration "The Lord is MY shepherd." Despite its familiarity, this passage reveals profound truths about our relationship with God. David's metaphor of God as a shepherd emphasizes both God's personal care and our need for guidance, like sheep require of a shepherd. When we truly declare the Lord as our shepherd, we lack nothing essential. The sermon outlines four ways God provides: He refreshes us in green pastures, guides us along right paths, walks with us through dark valleys, and fights for us with His rod and staff of protection and correction.

Ice Breaker

Have you ever gotten hopelessly lost on the way to somewhere important? What did you do? How did it work out?

Discussion Questions

1. **Personal Declaration:** The sermon emphasizes the word "MY" in "The Lord is MY shepherd." What does it mean for your relationship with God to be personally "yours" rather than distant or maybe your families? Read [Isaiah 40:11](#) and share about a distinct time when you experienced God's personal involvement shepherding your life.
2. **Sheep-like Tendencies:** Josh mentioned that recognizing our "sheep-like tendencies" is necessary before declaring God as our shepherd (see [Isaiah 53:6](#)). What are some ways you see yourself acting like a sheep —making the same mistakes repeatedly or needing rescue? How does accepting our dependence help specifically with this

tendency?

3. **Needing vs. Wanting:** The sermon distinguishes between what we need and what we want, noting that declaring God as shepherd means "I lack nothing." How do you differentiate between genuine needs and cultural pressures to acquire more? What helps you find contentment these days?
4. **Valleys and God's Presence:** Review [Psalm 23:4](#) which talks about walking through "the darkest valley" while experiencing God's presence. Josh stated that "God's presence is often experienced more tangibly in the valley than on the mountain." Can you share about a difficult season when you felt God's presence more clearly? How does this truth encourage you about current or future challenges?
5. **God's Correction:** [Read Hebrews 12:4-12](#). The shepherd's staff represents protection through correction, and that "God's correction is ALWAYS in our best interest." How do you typically respond to correction or discipline from God? What helps you embrace correction as an expression of His love rather than resist it?

Prayer Requests

Pray for one another, keeping some of these requests in mind based on Psalm 23:

- **For Personal Relationship:** Pray for a deeper, more personal relationship with God as our Shepherd, moving beyond mere familiarity with Scripture to heart-level transformation and dependence on Him.
- **For Contentment:** Ask God to help us distinguish between our true needs and worldly wants, finding satisfaction in His provision and freedom from the constant pressure to acquire more.
- **For Trust in Valleys:** Pray for strength and faith during difficult seasons, trusting in God's presence even when circumstances are dark, and for the ability to experience His nearness in trials.
- **For Receptive Hearts:** Request grace to receive God's correction and guidance with humility, recognizing that His discipline comes from love and is always for our ultimate good and protection.