



Kings and Kingdoms
The Shepherd of Your Soul
Week 5

-Psalm 23 & 1 Samuel 24.

Open by saying this:

This week we were again reminded that David was pursued and hated by a man who should have celebrated him as a hero, but instead, treated him as a criminal. Despite this, David trusted the Lord to shepherd his life – not only trusting that God would protect and deliver him from Saul but also believing that God was leading him into goodness and “green pastures”. We learned that as we follow God, we must continue to look to Him for spiritual and emotional health, especially during times of hardship and uncertainty, trusting in His character over our circumstances.

Read Psalm 23 together:

Select a few of the following questions to discuss with your group:

1. Do you struggle with trusting God’s leadership? In What ways do you try to “self-shepherd”? What ‘pastures’ are you chasing that leave you empty instead of fulfilled?
2. Read James 1:2-4. When walking through “dark valleys”, do you count it as a joy? How does trusting God in times of hardship and suffering help us to grow as Christ followers?
3. In 1 Samuel 24, we see that David is being pursued by Saul. Yet in Psalm 23, David writes that he is pursued by God’s goodness and faithful love. Theodoret of Cyrus (a 5th century theologian) said that God’s love does not wait for our request but follows us closely like one pursing a fugitive. His love anticipates our needs and gives our souls rest. How have you seen this kind of pursuing love in your own life?
4. In 1 Samuel 24:16-19, we see Saul show remorse for his sin against David. Though he apologized, we know he later returns to his hatred and hunting of David. He was sorry for his sin, but he did not turn from it. Is there a sinful behavior or attitude in your own life that you’ve been sorry for, but have not repented (turned away) of? Psalm 23:3 says that God leads us in the paths of righteousness. How can following the Good Shepherd lead you into repentance today?



5. Jesus said that He is The Good Shepherd (John 10:11) yet we also Jesus as the Lamb of God (Isaiah 53:7, John 1:29). How do you think Christ's experience as a "sheep" makes Him a good shepherd? How does this encourage you as you learn to better trust him?

6. Read Psalm 23:6. Here we are told that God's goodness and faithful love pursues us *and* that He invites us to dwell in His house. Notice that this does not say "*if* you dwell in God's house, *then* goodness will pursue you". Do you struggle with this backwards mindset? How can we learn to rest in God because He is good to us rather than resting in God so that he will be good to us?

Challenge:

Consider ending your time together listening to 23 set to music. There are many available and we have provided one here well. Encourage your group to listen to this Psalm as a part of their quiet time or personal bible study this week.

<https://youtu.be/OoojAOcLPWY?si=KM-PPbfhAPWOG8S3>

Pray:

This is a great week to practice praying through a scripture passage. Try it! In your closing prayer, acknowledge the Lord as your shepherd, thank Him for giving you all you need. Confess that you are fearful in life's uncertainty but confess even more that you trust Him to lead you through. Close by asking God to teach you how to rest in Him alone.