

LifeGroup Meeting

I Shall Not Want 3
“Walking Through The Valleys”

Get To Know You Question:

How would you answer this joke: “What is a sheep’s favorite band?” If you don’t know, make up your own punch line. (If you want to know the correct answer text Scott during your LG and he will give it you.)

Let’s Dig Deeper

1. Someone read all of **Psalms 23**. Spend some time and share some key words that spoke out to you while reading. What is it about those words that spoke to you? Try to find something that you didn’t see last time you read this.
2. Where does the shepherd lead the sheep in verse 4?
 - Why do you think we have to walk through dark valleys in our life?
 - Do you think it is possible to avoid the valleys? (John 16:33)
 - What is the difference in pronouns referring to God in verse 3 and in verse 4? Why do you think the pronouns changed? Is there any significance to this?
3. The Shepherds would take sheep to higher ground during the Spring and Summer months. Why do you think taking them through the valley was the best route to get to the top?
 - Has there ever been a correlation between you walking through a valley and your faith with God growing?
 - Do you think God often provides valleys in our lives so that we can grow in our faith and trust in God?
 - Have you ever found refreshment from God in the midst of a valley? Explain.
4. Verse four says, “your rod and your staff, they comfort me.” How would you explain the difference between a rod and staff?

5. Pastor Scott mentioned that the Rod of God represents God's authority and power. It represents the expressed intent of God's mind and will towards people. What is the number one thing we have that expresses God's mind and will towards us?
- How can the bible (the rod of God) be useful when we are in the valley?
 - How often in the valleys of our lives do we resort to the Bible and its guidance? Why is that?
 - The rod was also used to inspect the sheep to make sure that there were no diseases or illness underneath the wool. It is a picture of how God knows every intimate detail about us. How often do we tend to forget that God knows every single thing about us?
 - Why do you think we would rather put on a brave front and act like everything is fine, when deep down we know it is not?
6. Phillip Keller in his book, *A Shepherd's look at Psalms 23*, states that a staff was only used by shepherds and their sheep. No other animal herder had a staff like the ones a shepherd uses. It was designed with a hook on top to bring and guide sheep in the right direction. It was an instrument of compassion and patience.
- When you think about God's compassion and patience in our lives, what comes to mind?
 - If the rod of God is symbolic of the Word of God, then the staff is symbolic of the Spirit of God. What are your thoughts on that?
 - i. How can we see the staff as representing the Holy Spirit in our lives?
 - ii. Someone read **John 16:13** and explain how this is a great example of the Holy Spirit playing the role of a staff towards sheep, especially sheep walking through deep dark valleys.
7. When you think about verse 4, it means the Triune God is present in the valleys of your life. God the Father is present in the Rod of God (the word of God), God the Son is present as Jesus is our Good Shepherd walking us through the valleys. And God the Holy Spirit is present in the staff of God as he gently guides and directs us with compassion and patience. How does this knowledge bring you comfort? How can it make you fearless?
8. End in Prayer.