

My Shepherd – Pt. 4

Psalm 23: 4

1. We all have dark valleys in our lives.

- A. Discuss a time when you were in a dark valley. Are you in one now? How was/is God leading you through it?
- B. What did you learn? How did you grow?
- C. How do we see God taking his people through dark valleys in the Bible? See Joseph in Gen. 37; 39-41; or Moses 2, 3; Or a biblical hero of your choice.

2. The same God who led you in will take you out.

- A. Where did you end up after God took you out of the valley?
- B. Why do we only experience the shadow of death? How can that change our perspective? (See John 14:19; John 11:25, 26)

3. The Good Shepherd is always with you.

- A. How can the story of Stephen's death in Acts 7 help us to apply/live out Psalm 23:4?
- B. How can claiming the promises given to Joshua impact our lives every day? In what particular ways is the Lord with you every day? (See Josh 1:5, 9 and Hebrews 13:5, 6)

4. The Good Shepherd will comfort you.

- A. Discuss a time God has defended you with the rod.
- B. Discuss a time God has protected you with the staff.
- C. Have you every visualized God literally standing beside you? How do you think that would impact your life?

Closing

How can we help each other apply these truths our lives this week?

Close in prayer.

Psalm 23 (NIV)

¹ The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.

² He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,

³ he refreshes my soul.

He guides me along the right paths
for his name's sake.

⁴ Even though I walk
through the darkest valley,^[a]

I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.

⁵ You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.

You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

⁶ Surely your goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD
forever.

More Passages on the Shepherd and dark valley

Ps. 5:8

As Jesus and his disciples were leaving Jericho, a large crowd followed him.

Ps. 4:8

In peace I will lie down and sleep,
for you alone, LORD,
make me dwell in safety.

Matt. 20:29

As Jesus and his disciples were leaving Jericho, a large crowd followed him.

John 14:19

Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live.

John 11:25, 26

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; ²⁶and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

Ps. 46:1, 2

God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea

Deut. 31:7

Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the presence of all Israel, "Be strong and courageous, for you must go with this people into the land that the LORD swore to their ancestors to give them, and you must divide it among them as their inheritance. ⁸The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged."

Josh 1:5, 9

No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."

Heb. 13:5, 6

Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said,

"Never will I leave you;
never will I forsake you."^[a]

⁶So we say with confidence,

"The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid.
What can mere mortals do to me?"^[b]