



SDG Discussion Guide

Psalm 23

February 24, 2019

For Starters:

With what formulas for dealing with stress were you raised? "Forget it?" "Pray about it?" "Sleep on it"? What was your experience?

If you could ask one thing of the Lord, and have it granted, what would it be? Will you ask it?

Guideline: The following is meant to provide an approach for further interaction with the respective sermon text and surrounding passage. Feel free to forward to your small group members ahead of the respective Sunday. Group members may also find this write up in print on that Sunday.

First, as you can, read aloud the selected passage in your group. If you have time, read it aloud a second time - from a different Bible translation.

Before you begin your discussion, pray and ask God to speak to your group. Notice, what may God be highlighting for your discussion and learning?

Now that you have read the text together and prayed, what points and questions arise? Spend plenty of time in your group to address these points and questions. Explore and see how God may steer the discussion. The following are further questions you may use to guide your interaction with the text.

1. From what part of David's life does this psalm come [see 1 Samuel 16:10-12]?
2. There are two main metaphors in the psalm, the shepherd (vv 1-4) and the host (vv 5-6). Compare and contrast these two images.
3. Look carefully at the shepherd. How exactly does he care for his sheep (vv 1-4)?
4. Look carefully at the host. How exactly does he provide for his guest (vv 5-6)? What are the conceivable meanings of "anointment" (v 5) [see 1 Samuel 16:13; Luke 7:46]?
5. Read this psalm and replace the first person pronouns with your name. For example, "The Lord is Bob's shepherd, Bob shall not be in want." What verse stands out as most reassuring to you? Share these with your group.
6. What dark valley have you walked through as a Christian?
7. Have you had an experience of God rescuing or protecting you with his "rod and staff" and if so, what was it?
8. What "green pastures" and "still waters" has God brought your way? What did you learn?

Take plenty of time to pray together in silence. As you pray, take some time and name all of your fears to God. Pause a while. Then, ask Christ the Shepherd, and Christ the Host, to *relieve* them. Trust the Lord... that he is... *your* shepherd.

*These questions were adapted from *The Serendipity Bible for Groups* (Zondervan, 1998).