

Psalm 23

FAMILY STUDY GUIDE





Psalm 23 Family Study Guide



This summer and into the beginning of the school year, our church will be studying Psalm 23 in our Worship Services. Children are always invited and encouraged to join us in worship!

We have created a springboard to help you have conversations as a family as you "walk along the road" this summer. Weave these questions and discussions into your everyday life— as you drive to new places, eat together, at bedtime, anytime!

This Study Guide is NOT meant to be used to force everyone to sit down, be still and have awkward long pauses while everyone gets frustrated. Not at all!

Instead, we encourage you to live out Deuteronomy 6:6-7: "The commandments I give you today must be in your hearts. Make sure your children learn them. Talk about them when you are at home. Talk about them when you walk along the road. Speak about them when you go to bed. And speak about them when you get up."

Our prayer is that you will be blessed by these conversations. We look forward to seeing all that God has planned for your family *and* our church family as we are led by our Good Shepherd.

— Your friends in the FPC Children & Family Ministry



We look forward to seeing you in worship this summer!

8:15am Sanctuary

10:45am Grand Hall

11am Sanctuary

Traveling? Don't miss out! Catch our sermons here:

[FPCHOUSTON.ORG/ONLINE](https://fpc-houston.org/online)



Psalm 23 Family Study Guide

June 11, 2023

The Lord is my Shepherd

Dive Deeper!

Learn with your children more about what a shepherd does using the library or other resources. Which things are similar to how the Lord is with us? Which things are different?

Reflect Together!

1. The Lord— Do you remember the story of Moses and the Burning Bush? You can read about it in Exodus 3:1-5. How does Moses treat the ground when he realizes it is Holy? How should we treat God's name?
2. Is My— Psalm 23:1 does not say the Lord is "a" shepherd; it says the Lord is "my" shepherd. Can you spot the difference? God is BIG and Lord of the universe! Yet he wants to be your personal shepherd. He wants a relationship with YOU. When do you feel far from God? When do you feel close to Him?
3. Shepherd— A shepherd loves his sheep, he lovingly guides them to safety, and he takes care of them. What similarities do you see between God and a Shepherd?

The Lord is my shepherd. He gives me everything I need. He lets me lie down in fields of green grass. He leads me beside quiet waters. He gives me new strength. He guides me in the right paths for the honor of his name. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid. You are with me. Your shepherd's rod and staff comfort me. You prepare a feast for me right in front of my enemies. You pour oil on my head. My cup runs over. I am sure that your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life. And I will live in the house of the Lord forever.

Psalm 23



Psalm 23 Family Study Guide

June 18, 2023



I Lack Nothing



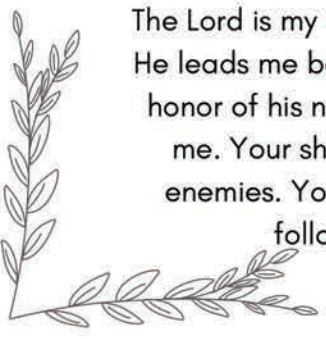
Dive Deeper!

What are some things that your family needs? Can you think of a family or organization that also needs those things? Gather supplies and drop them off this week!



Reflect Together!

1. The NIV version states "He gives me everything I need." What is the difference between a "need" and a "want"? What are some things you need? What are some things you want?
2. Do you remember the story of the Israelites and the manna? You can read Moses's instructions in Exodus 16:13-20. Each day the Lord gave His people exactly what they needed for *that day*— no more. How did this help His people learn to trust God?
3. It's easy to say we trust in God, but sometimes it's harder to actually trust Him! When do you find it hard to trust that God will give you everything you need? When do you find it easy? When hard times come, what is something you can use to help you remember God's goodness?




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Psalm 23



Psalm 23 Family Study Guide

June 25, 2023




He Makes Me Lie Down in Green Pastures




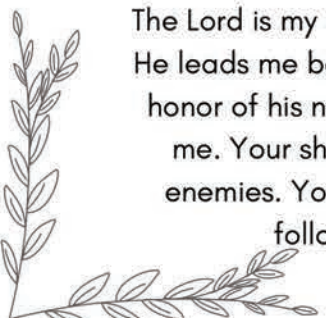
Dive Deeper!

Did you know that you can "rest" while still moving? Today we talk about resting in the Lord— this doesn't mean extra naptime! It means we can learn to trust Him and feel safe that he is our Shepherd. Step one is learning more about Him. What are some ways your family can do that this summer?



Reflect Together!

1. In order to rest, sheep need a few things. They need to be free from fear of predators. Nighttime can feel scary for sheep in the pasture, but they are not afraid when their shepherd is watching over them. We can be comforted that God is watching over us! When is that easy to believe? When is it hard to believe?
 2. Sheep also need have peace with the other sheep in their flock. Do you ever feel angry with your friends, siblings or parents? It's hard to rest in the Lord when your emotions feel so big! Read Philippians 2:1-4. What are some ways you can act this out today?
 3. In order to rest, sheep need to be free from hunger. We might sometimes experience physical hunger, but we more often might experience Spiritual hunger. This hunger is quenched when we read the Bible! As a family, will you take the challenge to read one story from The Jesus Storybook Bible for the rest of the summer?
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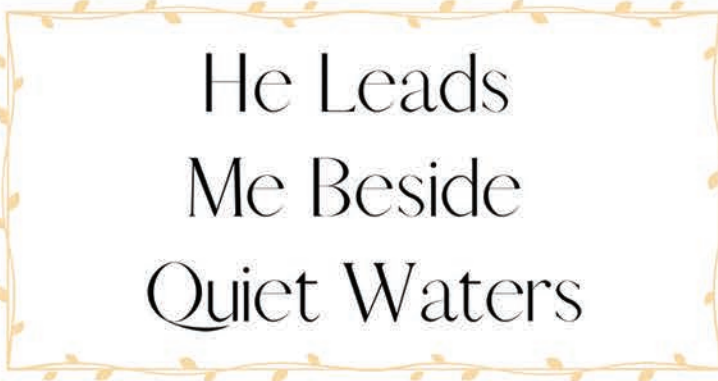

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Psalm 23



Psalm 23 Family Study Guide

July 2, 2023



He Leads Me Beside Quiet Waters



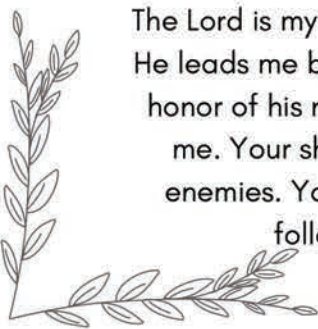
Dive Deeper!

Go for a family walk today and take turns letting each family member lead. Talk about how it's different to lead and to follow. Each family member will lead the family differently—how does God lead us, His children?



Reflect Together!

1. Do you remember the story of the Woman at the Well? You can read about it in John 3:7-14. What does Jesus mean when He calls Himself the "Living Water?"
2. The Psalm says that our Good Shepherd "leads" us to quiet waters, not "forces" us. God wants to have a relationship with us, but he won't force us to Him. His voice is quiet, but persistent. Have you ever felt that God was leading you to something? What was it?
3. Think of jumping into a pool on a hot day—how refreshing! God wants the best for us! He leads us to places that will refresh us. Do you feel refreshed after learning about God? What are some ways you can make Sundays more refreshing for your family?




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Psalm 23



Psalm 23 Family Study Guide

July 9, 2023



He Restores My Soul



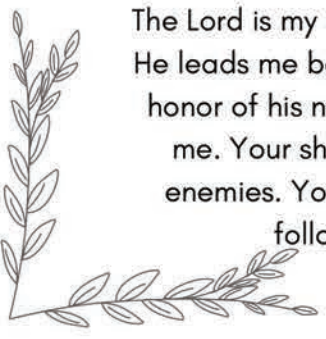
Dive Deeper!

Restore means to fix or bring back to how something was created to be. We were created to be with God! But our sin has separated us from Him. Jesus restored that relationship when he died on the cross. When we trust in Jesus, we are brought back to what we were made to be— in relationship with Him! What's something you can fix together as a family to illustrate "restore?"



Reflect Together!

1. The NIRV version translates this as "He gives me new strength." Everyone has strengths and weaknesses. What are some ways you are strong? Not just physically— maybe you're strong in math or art? What are some strengths you see in your family?
2. Do you ever feel weak? Or not good enough? It's ok to feel sad sometimes. But God gives us new strength! How can you remember that the next time you feel like you can't succeed?
3. We know that we were created to be with God, but do you remember when sin entered the world? What did Adam and Even do? You can find it here in Genesis 3:8— they hid! Have you ever done something wrong and tried to cover it up? What happened?



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Psalm 23 Family Study Guide

July 16, 2023



He Guides Me Along Right Paths



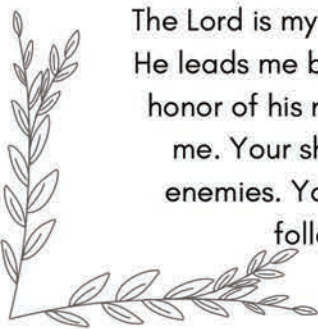
Dive Deeper!

Let the kids guide you home from church! Do they know where to turn? You'll make it home— but it might be a different route! Talk about how God guides our paths. Even when our life doesn't look like we expected, He is guiding us to Him.



Reflect Together!

1. Have you ever been lost? How did you feel? What did you do? Describe how you felt when you realized you were back on the right path.
2. The second part of our Psalm this week reads, "He guides me in the right paths *for the honor of his name.*" God wants us on the right path so that He will be honored or respected. What are some ways you can influence others by following God's plan for your life?
3. Jesus calls himself the Good Shepherd in John 10:14–15. He says that He knows His sheep and they know Him. You are known by Jesus! He loves you dearly. Do you know Him? What questions do you have about Him? Work together to find the answers!



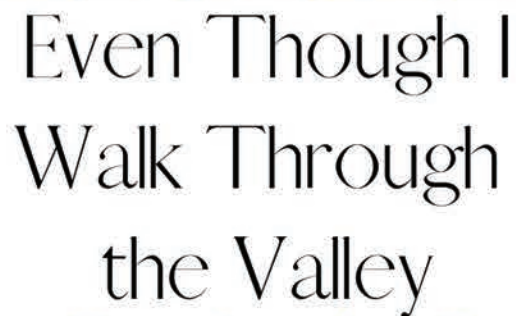

The Lord is my shepherd. He gives me everything I need. He lets me lie down in fields of green grass. He leads me beside quiet waters. He gives me new strength. He guides me in the right paths for the honor of his name. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid. You are with me. Your shepherd's rod and staff comfort me. You prepare a feast for me right in front of my enemies. You pour oil on my head. My cup runs over. I am sure that your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life. And I will live in the house of the Lord forever.

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Psalm 23 Family Study Guide

July 23, 2023



Even Though I Walk Through the Valley



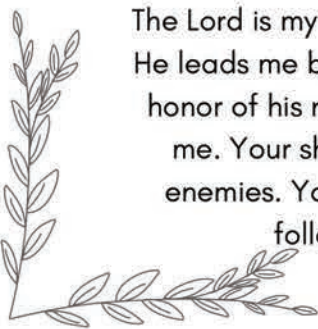
Dive Deeper!

Look up photos of mountains and valleys. Talk about the views that each spot sees. Remark on the difference in what's growing in the valley vs. the mountains. The NIRV translation calls this the *darkest* valley. Find photos of a cave (better yet, take a road trip!) Sometimes in life, we feel like we are in a dark valley— unsure of where to step next.



Reflect Together!

1. Have you ever been in a dark room— or maybe a dark cave? When the lights go out, you can't even see your hand in front of your face! It can be hard to know where to step or what movements to make. Now reflect on last week's phrase, "He Guides me Along Right Paths." Does that give you confidence?
2. Think of a time in your life when you didn't know what to do next. Maybe a big decision? How did you finally decide? Did you feel God guiding you in a particular way?
3. Sometimes life is hard or scary. Even though you are physically in your neighborhood, you might *feel* like you are in a dark valley. Notice though, that the Psalm says walk "through" the valley. Yes, there will be tough times, but God is with you and *that's not your final destination!* Often those tough times help us grow and walking *through* them gets you to the mountaintop God has for you! Have you experienced tough times? Did you grow from the experience?



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Psalm 23 Family Study Guide

July 30, 2023



Your Rod and Your Staff, They Comfort Me



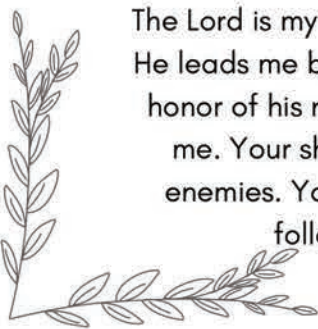
Dive Deeper!

A rod and staff are tools a shepherd uses. What tools do you use for your job, schooling, sport or hobby? Imagine doing that without your special tool! Try playing baseball without a bat or painting a picture without a brush— what funny solutions can your family create?



Reflect Together!

1. Sheep have no natural defenses. They don't have claws like a bear nor are they quick like a deer. They need their shepherd to protect them. The rod a shepherd uses can defend the flock from predators. Do you ever feel attacked? How does it feel knowing that Jesus, our Good Shepherd, has the tools to defend you?
2. Unlike a rod, that is used to defend, one use of a shepherd's staff is to bring the sheep closer to the shepherd. Imagine being a sheep and being hooked and pulled with a shepherd's staff. It doesn't sound very comfortable! But it's necessary to bring the sheep toward the flock. Are there times when you have felt hooked, pulled or stretched beyond what was comfortable? How was God using that situation to bring you to Him?
3. The staff is also used when counting the sheep. A good shepherd examines each sheep as he counts— and will drop what he's doing to rescue a lost sheep! How does it feel knowing that our Good Shepherd, our Rescuer, knows you so well?



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Psalm 23



Psalm 23 Family Study Guide

August 6, 2023



You Prepare a Table Before Me



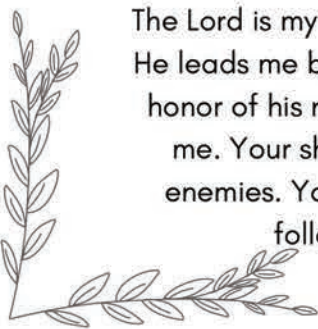
Dive Deeper!

The NIRV translation says that "you prepare a feast." Who in your community could use a "feast"? Is there a new family you could invite over for dinner? Maybe a neighbor with a new baby that could use a meal dropped off? Brainstorm as a family and choose someone to bless this week!



Reflect Together!

1. What does it mean that God is preparing a feast for us? What blessings has He already given you? How can you thank the Lord today for His generosity?
2. We are called to show hospitality; to show generosity and friendliness to guests or strangers. Have you ever been a guest? Talk about that experience. Have you been the host of guests in your home? Was it fun, hard, loud, refreshing? What are some ways that your family can practice hospitality this school year?
3. Do you remember the story of the Prodigal Son? You can read about it in your Jesus Storybook Bible or in Luke 15. What did the father do when his son returned? He prepared a feast for him! What did the son do to deserve the feast? What does this tell you about God's love for us, his children? What must we do to deserve His feast?



The Lord is my shepherd. He gives me everything I need. He lets me lie down in fields of green grass. He leads me beside quiet waters. He gives me new strength. He guides me in the right paths for the honor of his name. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid. You are with me. Your shepherd's rod and staff comfort me. You prepare a feast for me right in front of my enemies. You pour oil on my head. My cup runs over. I am sure that your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life. And I will live in the house of the Lord forever.

Psalm 23

Psalm 23 Family Study Guide

August 13, 2023

You Anoint My Head With Oil

Dive Deeper!

Anoint means "to chose by divine election". God has anointed you, *chosen you*! We know from David's anointing that God looks to what is on the inside, not our outward appearance (1 Samuel 16:7). What are some qualities that you see in your children? Speak those words over them daily, write them down and put them in places where they will see them this school year.

Reflect Together!

1. The physical showing of "anointing" is to literally put oil on someone's head! Does that sound a little messy to you? But oil actually has many helpful reasons to be put on skin. AND to be used with a shepherd on his sheep! Shepherds would put oil in their sheep's noses to keep bugs from getting in. Do you ever feel "bugged" by your family or friends? What are some ways that you can ask our Good Shepherd to protect you from those cranky feelings?
2. Have you ever felt really sad? Angry? Upset? God knows how you feel! Oil was also used for healing. Do you need help healing a friendship? God's love can help heal those angry feelings.
3. YOU have been anointed or chosen by God for a special purpose! Spend some time dreaming with your family about what you might want to do when you grow up. What are some ways that you can serve God *now*?

The Lord is my shepherd. He gives me everything I need. He lets me lie down in fields of green grass. He leads me beside quiet waters. He gives me new strength. He guides me in the right paths for the honor of his name. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid. You are with me. Your shepherd's rod and staff comfort me. You prepare a feast for me right in front of my enemies. You pour oil on my head. My cup runs over. I am sure that your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life. And I will live in the house of the Lord forever.

Psalm 23

Psalm 23 Family Study Guide

August 20, 2023

My Cup Overflows

Dive Deeper!

Blessings abound! We learned earlier this summer that God gives us everything we need. But he showers us with blessings, too. This week, make a gratitude poster with your family! You could cut photos out of a magazine, draw pictures or make a list. Make sure that everyone in the family can add the things they are thankful for throughout the week.

Reflect Together!

1. Sometimes our "cup" is filled with all the good things! You can see God's work in your life and are happy with the things he has given you! What are some ways that you can show God your thankfulness? What are some ways you can give God credit for the good things?
2. Sometimes our "cup" is filled with things that are sad. Do you remember the prayer that Jesus prayed the night he was arrested? You can read about it in Matthew 26:42. He asks that God take away "this cup", but also states that "may what you want be done". Sometimes life is sad. Can you take comfort in knowing that Jesus also went through tough times? Who was with Jesus during those times? Is He also with you?
3. As a family, is your cup feeling light and happy as we begin the school year? Or possibly it's heavy and sad. What are some ways you can rejoice together? What are some ways you can show God's love to each other in the tough times?

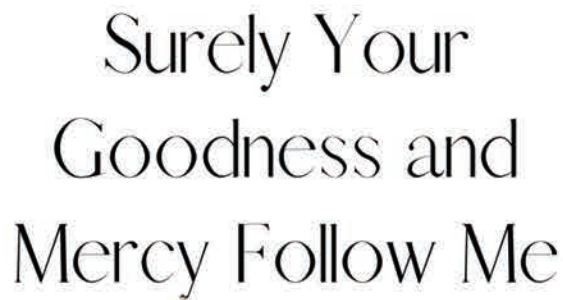

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Psalm 23



Psalm 23 Family Study Guide

August 27, 2023



Surely Your Goodness and Mercy Follow Me



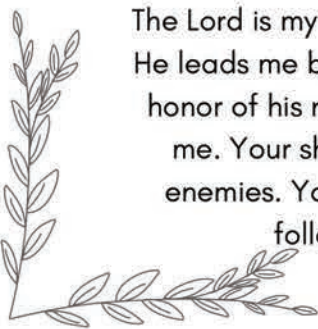
Dive Deeper!

Read James 1:17 together. What a comfort to know that God created the Heavenly lights! Go on an "after bedtime" walk (bring flashlights-- always a hit!) Look at the lights in the sky (if you can see them!) and also point out other sources of light and the shadows they create. Talk about how, unlike the shadows, God's goodness and love NEVER change!



Reflect Together!

1. Have you ever watched your shadow? How does it know how to move? Can you escape your shadow? No! You couldn't get rid of it no matter how hard you tried. God is like our shadow-- his love is always with you. You are never alone and can never be away from God's love-- even if you tried! When is the last time you felt alone?
2. Mercy is similar to forgiveness. This verse reminds us that God's forgiveness is always with you, too. No matter what you do, no matter how big you might mess up, God will always love you and always forgive you when you ask. Is that easy or hard to believe? When do you feel God's love the most?
3. We know that this school year you will experience some really neat things! There will also be times that are difficult. Maybe a friendship that changes or a class with a lot of hard work. How can you remember that God's love is with you all the time? What tangible ways can you remember God's love for you this school year?



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Psalm 23

Psalm 23 Family Study Guide

September 3, 2023

I Will Dwell in the House of the Lord Forever

Dive Deeper!

Read John 14:1-2. Jesus says that he is preparing a place for us in God's house! Imagine the craziest, zaniest, most fun house. What would it have? An indoor slide? A room made with Laffy Taffy? A bouncy house in the kitchen? As a family, design that house together.

Reflect Together!

1. In the Old Testament, the "house of the Lord" was the tabernacle: a place where God's people would meet with Him. We might think of Big Church as our "house of the Lord." But we know that God is with us all the time! What are some ways that you can worship God, even when it's not Sunday morning?
2. Throughout this study we have learned that God loves us all the time! We've learned we can find comfort in tough times and that the Lord will give us everything we need. Is there someone in your life who needs to hear this good news? How can you encourage your friends to lean on Jesus?
3. Read Psalm 23 in it's entirety with your family. Then ask a second family member to read it aloud... and a third! What new things do you pick up on each time? Talk as a family about what you've learned throughout these lessons over Psalm 23.

The Lord is my shepherd. He gives me everything I need. He lets me lie down in fields of green grass. He leads me beside quiet waters. He gives me new strength. He guides me in the right paths for the honor of his name. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid. You are with me. Your shepherd's rod and staff comfort me. You prepare a feast for me right in front of my enemies. You pour oil on my head. My cup runs over. I am sure that your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life. And I will live in the house of the Lord forever.

Psalm 23

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