

Discussion Questions

- Week Two: No Fear in the Valley -

Take a moment to read Psalm 23:3-4

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,

I will fear no evil, for you are with me;

your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

What are you drawn to today from these verses?

1. Verse three begins with this amazing fact, that God refreshes or restores souls. Your soul is the inner part of you that contains your personality and emotions and desires. C.S. Lewis famously said, "you don't have a soul, you are a soul. "Our souls can become discouraged, defeated, exhausted, or overwhelmed. Is there a time in your life when you know that God restored your soul? How did it happen?

Be honest, does your soul need to be refreshed and restored? Do you know how to allow Him to refresh you? How does it generally happen for you?

2. Verse three continues, **He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake**. Here again we are reminded that the Lord is our Shepherd. A good shepherd continually leads his sheep on the right paths to new fresh pastures. Sheep are very habitual and unless they are led to new pastures, they will destroy the pasture they inhabit by over feeding. People can also get stuck in unhealthy habits. God needs to lead us to new places so we can continue to grow. God desires to lead you, to take you someplace new. Romans 8:14 says; **for those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God**. This verse implies that God is leading, and we need to follow. Do you tend to get stuck in unhealthy habits? Be honest, what habits are you stuck in right now?

Do you believe that God is attempting to lead you? At times the Spirit's lead can be mysterious but I believe most Christians already know where God is leading them. In fact, I believe that most believers know at least one thing God is calling them to begin and some things God is calling them to stop. How is God leading you?

3. Let's focus on verse four, 4 **Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.** Do you agree that we all will have to travel through the dark valley of adversity? What are some dark valleys you have traveled through in your life?

David says, even though we walk through difficult times we can do it with calm confidence when we know God is with us. David is stressing the point that trusting God is the key to facing dark valleys without fear. Do you agree? How do you best remind yourself that God is with you? How does your trust in God grow?

4. David ends this verse with this, **your rod and your staff, they comfort me.** Shepherds depended on these two tools to properly care for the sheep. The rod was used for protection. The staff to care for and guide the sheep. The rod and staff remind us that God desires to protect us and care for us. David ends this classic verse with the simple phrase **they comfort me.** Finding comfort in God is essential. Which of these do you need more right now, God's protection or God's guidance? What do you need protection from? In what do you need the Lord to guide you?

Verse four reminds me of **1 Peter 5:7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.** In your life, how often do you cast your cares on him? How often do you have the need to cast your cares on him?