**Psalm 23 – The Lord is my Shepherd**

1. **What song do you like to listen to when you’re sad or stressed?**
2. **What has brought you joy in the past week? What’s brought you sadness or worry in the past week?**
3. Pastor Perry suggested psalm 23 is David’s happy place. Not just a romantic, idyllic happy place, but a place of rest in the midst of difficulties (Goliath, Saul, Absalom all tried to kill David). **What’s your happy place that you can go to that brings you feelings of happiness?**
4. **What has given Psalm 23 its enduring popularity for 3,000 years? Why is it a favorite of so many believers?**
5. **How do the things we lack drive us in life? What are some things you currently lack that would make your life happier?** “Are you running the treadmill for things bigger, nicer, faster, thinner? That’s the prison of want.” **Read Deut. 2:7. How could Israel go 40 years in the wilderness without lacking anything? How does Psalm 23:1 speak to chasing after things you want?**
6. **What kind of things does a good shepherd do for the sheep?**  (Feed the sheep, lead the sheep, protect the sheep, care for the sheep, go after lost sheep.) Those are things Jesus does for us. What Jesus does for us, He also expects us to do for others. **What Jesus-like actions are you doing (or would like to do) for others in our group?**
7. **In psalm 23:2, it implies Jesus feeds us. How? Aren’t we supposed to feed ourselves (like having our own quiet times)?**
8. **Psalm 23:2,3 talk about Jesus’ leading. How have you sensed Jesus leading you lately? What has He been prompting you to read, think, say or do?**
9. **Read Psalm 23:4, Psalm 116:15, Isaiah 57:1,2 and 1 Thess. 4:13-18. How do these verses help us grieve? What loss have you grieved lately?**
10. **How does the shepherd’s rod and staff comfort the sheep?** (The rod was a big stick used to fight predators. If a sheep wanders away or approaches poisonous weeds, or gets too close to some danger, the rod is thrown close to the sheep to send it back to the flock, but the rod isn’t used on the sheep. The staff was a long stick with a hook at the end. The shepherd will use the staff to guide sheep along a new path or through a gate, or to lift sheep out of holes. Both of the rod and the staff are instruments of comfort. But the real comfort isn’t in the tools – the rod and the staff. The real comfort is in knowing who is wielding the weapons. David says, “You are with me.” If the good shepherd, a good and loving God, willing to sacrifice His own Son for me, is wielding the weapons, then I’m calm.) **Read Romans 8:31,32.**
11. **How does the image of a good and loving Shepherd who cares for us change in Psalm 23:5?** (The image changes from Shepherd to generous Host). **What victory celebration dinner has God ever set for you?** **Read Isaiah 61:3. What’s the trade that Jesus offers? Read John 7:39. What kind of abundance does Jesus offer? Are you living in that kind of abundance?**
12. Psalm 23:6. **What will the last verse of your life look like? Have you ever thought about the end of your life, written a will, or signed an organ donor card? What does Rev. 7:16,17 say about the future hope of believers in Jesus Christ? What difference does knowing Jesus make at a funeral?**