

God's presence

Psalm 23

Some first words of explanation:

The first half of this Psalm is a picture of God as our shepherd. The second half is a picture of God as a host who invites us into his house and makes us part of his family. This Psalm points us to Jesus, the good shepherd, who makes it possible for us to be part of God's family.

A question to ask:

"What picture of the journey speaks to you at this point in your life – the green pasture, the quiet waters, the right path or the dark valley?"

- Green pastures are food for spiritual hunger
- Quiet waters are God's peace and rest for our souls
- Right paths are not so much specific guidance about big decisions but honouring God 'for his name's sake' in all we do
- Dark valleys are any time of difficulty

A possible response:

Assure them of the promise to Christians of God's provision, God's peace, God's help in doing what is right and God's presence – even when a dark valley means he seems far away.

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Another question to ask:

(related to verses 5 to 6)

“What are your ‘enemies’ right now – not necessarily people although there can be people who oppose us – but the things that get you down?”

Two possible responses:

1. Assure them of the security found in knowing that, as a Christian, they are seated at God’s table together with the promise of being in his house forever.
2. If they have not come to faith, tell them that this great promise of God’s love and life with him forever, awaits those who put their trust in Jesus for forgiveness and a restored relationship with God.

Suggested prayer

Lord, as our shepherd, please guide [person’s name] through life in the good times and in the dark seasons. Help him/her to trust you at all times and in all circumstances. Help him/her know the comfort of your presence especially in the difficult times.

Thank you for Jesus the good shepherd who laid down his life to pay for our sins. Help [person’s name] to recognise his voice and follow him into eternal life. Amen.



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