



WEEKLY STUDY

Summer in the Psalms - Week 5

We are spending the Summer in the Psalms. I hope you've been able to create space to spend time listening to God through these ancient words!

Please note our prayer focus for the week in the box below. Join us in seeing what God will do as we unite in prayer.

Peace of Christ,
Pastor Mark Youngman

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from your own daily reflections and consider the Group Discussion questions below. If you would like to get connected visit prov.church/smallgroups.

Prayer Focus:

- Pray for those who are grieving loss of life or loss of a dream for their life.

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: PSALM 23 (NIV)

A psalm of David.

¹ *The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.*

² *He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,*

³ *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.*

⁵ *You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.*

⁶ *Surely your goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD
forever.*

- We often hear the 23rd Psalm read at funerals. Why is that? It has plenty to say about life. But we often hear it at funerals because at that particular moment in life, we are walking through a valley. It is helpful to hear about the goodness of God when we are in our lowest places. Do you find that to be true? Can you name some of the valleys that you have been through or are walking through right now? How has God shown up in these seasons?

- **Prayer Prompt: “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; ²⁶ and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?” (John 11.25-26)**
- *God, I admit that in some of my most difficult seasons, I have wondered where you have been. I can see how you have always been with me. Help me to have the same faith in every situation. Amen.*

TUESDAY: PSALM 23 (NIV)

- As you read Psalm 23 again, notice how the Shepherd being depicted is a gracious host. The metaphor was a natural one for David, the shepherd-king. Are there roles in your life that help you to identify with God's nature? Friend? Parent? Son or daughter? Host?

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- **Prayer Prompt: As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness. (Ezekiel 34.12)**
 - *God, thank you for sending me the Good Shepherd. Jesus came to find me in all of my wanderings. Bring me back to life and restore me to your flock. Amen.*

WEDNESDAY: PSALM 23 (NIV)

- The Lord provides nourishment to those who hunger and thirst. He prepares a table for us and sets us apart as honored guests. It's all a little too much to take in, isn't it? Who would throw a feast for a sheep that had been lost? We would more likely tell the sheep that he or she was lucky that we even cared enough to find them. We might just send them back to the flock and put a new lock on the gate, but God sets us apart for nourishment and anointing. How do you respond to extravagant gifts like these?
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**Prayer Prompt: That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season
and whose leaf does not wither—
whatever they do prospers. (Psalm 1.3)**

- *God, you have provided everything I need. Forgive me for the times that I focus only on getting more. I want to delight at your table of goodness. Amen.*

THURSDAY: PSALM 23 (NIV)

- The Good Shepherd of Psalm 23 restores those who have spent time in the dark valleys of life. This restoration is a generous gift of a loving Father. David's "cup" was his lot in life. There are certain things that we just carry around with us and accept as normal. David considered his cup to be overflowing—he had all that he needed and more. What signs of God's generosity are present in your life?
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- **Prayer Prompt: But I will restore you to health and heal your wounds,' declares the LORD, (Jeremiah 30.17)**

- *Lord, I invite you into my brokenness. I can wander off and get lost. Will you restore me once again to your Kingdom-vision for my life? Amen.*

FRIDAY: PSALM 23 (NIV)

- David felt that God made him lie down in green pastures. There is a strange forcefulness to this language. It's always in hindsight that we see God's guidance most clearly. Have you ever felt the gentle (or not so gentle) hand of God on your shoulder leading you through a difficult time?
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- **Prayer Prompt: Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. (Proverbs 3.5-6)**

- *Lord God, I give you my life and trust you to lead through the valleys and into green pastures and a table set for me. Amen.*

SATURDAY: PSALM 23 (NIV)

- For all of our striving to earn, survive, and thrive, it is the Lord who is our provider. Have you ever been through a season where it was clear that you were not able to sustain yourself and that you could only rely on God?
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- **Prayer Prompt: And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4.19)**
- *God, I give you praise today for your faithfulness to give me just what I need, even when it doesn't match what I think I want! I trust you God. Amen.*

GROUP DISCUSSION

As a group, commit to reading a Psalm each day throughout the next several months (until October). You may have received a handout at Providence that will help you to keep track. When you come together as a small group, share with one another the ways in which God is speaking to you through each Psalm.

This week: Psalms 30-37

Does this Psalm reflect your words to God?

What is God saying to you through this Psalm?

Is there something you are invited to do in response to this Psalm?

What challenges you about this Psalm?