



**A CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER JOURNEY**

# Walking the Quiet Path

**Psalm 23 Participant Workbook**

Seven grace-filled gatherings for reading Scripture, listening well, sharing honestly, and learning to trust the Shepherd together.

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**One chapter each gathering • 45-60 minutes**

# How to walk this path together

The Quiet Path is not a class to complete or a performance to manage. Make room for Scripture, silence, honest conversation, and prayer. Let people share at their own pace. The goal is not to force a dramatic answer, but to notice the Shepherd's faithful presence.

## A SIMPLE GATHERING RHYTHM

Welcome and opening question — 5 minutes

Read the passage twice — 5 minutes

Explore the text — 10 minutes

Discuss and apply — 20-30 minutes

Prayer and next step — 5-10 minutes

## Before each gathering

Walk the matching chapter in The Quiet Path app. Notice one phrase, question, or prayer that stays with you. Bring that observation to the table without feeling pressure to have everything figured out.

## Group covenant

We will listen without fixing, protect one another's stories, leave room for silence, keep Scripture at the center, and trust God to work gently over time.

## Names / contact information

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# The Shepherd

David begins with who God is before speaking about what God gives. The Lord is not merely a shepherd; He is "my shepherd"—personal, present, and responsible for His people.

## Understand the passage

David knew shepherding from both sides of the staff. A shepherd guided, protected, fed, corrected, and sometimes carried the sheep. Calling the Lord his Shepherd was a confession of dependence: David was admitting that he needed to be led.

## Discuss together

1. What changes when we read "my shepherd" instead of simply "a shepherd"?
2. Why is dependence on God often difficult for capable, responsible people?
3. What is the difference between trusting God as Shepherd and expecting Him to give us everything we want?
4. Where are you most tempted to act as your own shepherd?
5. What does Jesus add to this image when He calls Himself the Good Shepherd in John 10?

## Respond in Scripture and prayer

Read Psalm 23:1 slowly two or three times. Sit quietly and consider what it means that the Lord is your Shepherd. Thank Him for His care and ask for help trusting His direction.

## Leader note

Let the group wrestle with dependence. Do not rush "I shall not want" into a promise of comfort or prosperity. Keep the focus on the sufficiency and character of the Shepherd.

## Notes

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# Green Pastures

The Shepherd leads His sheep to what nourishes them and makes it possible for them to rest. Rest is received under His care, not earned after every task is finished.

## Understand the passage

Sheep generally lie down only when they feel safe, are free from agitation, and have been fed. The image is not laziness. It is the settled security of creatures whose needs are known by a faithful shepherd.

## Discuss together

1. What conditions make it difficult for you to truly rest?
2. Why can stopping feel irresponsible, even when God invites us to rest?
3. How do we distinguish God-given rest from avoidance or passivity?
4. What has been nourishing your soul lately? What has been depleting it?
5. What would receiving God's care look like in your actual schedule this week?

## Respond in Scripture and prayer

Read Psalm 23:2 and Matthew 11:28–30. Identify one burden you have been carrying as though everything depended on you. Bring it plainly to Christ in prayer.

## Leader note

People may carry guilt about rest because of work, parenting, caregiving, or ministry. Avoid giving simplistic scheduling advice. Help the group see rest first as trust in God.

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# Still Waters

God does more than give temporary relief. He restores the inner life that exhaustion, grief, sin, and fear have worn down.

## Understand the passage

The phrase translated "still waters" suggests waters of rest—water where sheep can safely drink. "He restoreth my soul" can also carry the sense of bringing life back or returning someone who has wandered.

## Discuss together

1. What is the difference between distraction and genuine restoration?
2. What parts of a person can become depleted even when life looks fine from the outside?
3. How have you experienced God restoring you through Scripture, His people, or His presence?
4. Why do we sometimes avoid the very things God uses to restore us?
5. Where do you need restoration rather than merely relief?

## Respond in Scripture and prayer

Review Psalm 23:2–3. Name to God one place where you feel depleted or have wandered. Ask Him to restore and return you.

## Leader note

Give room for grief and weariness without forcing disclosure. Restoration may be gradual. Do not imply that a sincere prayer instantly removes depression, trauma, or every form of exhaustion.

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# Right Paths

The Shepherd leads His people in ways that reflect His character. Right paths are not always easy paths, but they are faithful paths.

## Understand the passage

The "paths of righteousness" can mean right or trustworthy tracks. Sheep need a shepherd because a path that appears safe may lead nowhere. God's guidance is tied to His name—He leads consistently with who He is.

## Discuss together

1. How do we usually decide whether a path is "right"?
2. Why might the right path still involve sacrifice, uncertainty, or waiting?
3. What roles do Scripture, prayer, wisdom, and Christian community play in discerning direction?
4. Where could personal desire be affecting how you interpret God's guidance?
5. How does God's reputation—"for His name's sake"—give us confidence in His leading?

## Respond in Scripture and prayer

Bring one decision before God. Write down what Scripture clearly says, what remains uncertain, and what wise counsel you may need.

## Leader note

Keep this from becoming a formula for decoding signs. Emphasize God's revealed character and Word. The goal is faithful obedience, not perfect prediction.

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# The Valley

Faith does not deny the darkness of the valley. It refuses to interpret the valley as proof that the Shepherd has left.

## Understand the passage

The Psalm shifts from speaking about God—"He leads"—to speaking directly to God—"You are with me." Trouble makes the prayer more personal. The rod protected the flock; the staff guided and rescued it.

## Discuss together

1. What does the Psalm promise in the valley, and what does it not promise?
2. Why do difficult seasons sometimes make God feel absent?
3. What changes when David moves from talking about God to talking to God?
4. How can correction and protection both be comforting?
5. How can a small group accompany someone through a valley without trying to explain it away?
6. What would honest trust sound like in your present circumstances?

## Respond in Scripture and prayer

Read verse 4 aloud. Without explaining or minimizing it, name a valley you or someone you love is walking through. Pray specifically for an awareness of God's presence.

## Leader note

This conversation may surface grief, illness, trauma, or loss. Listen well. Avoid clichés and unsolicited explanations. If someone shares an immediate safety concern, follow appropriate pastoral and professional care.

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# The Table

God's provision is not controlled by our opposition. The Shepherd becomes the Host who welcomes, honors, and abundantly cares for His guest.

## Understand the passage

A prepared table communicates welcome and fellowship. Anointing with oil and an overflowing cup picture generous hospitality. The enemies remain present, but they do not control the table or define the guest's standing.

## Discuss together

1. What does the change from pasture to table reveal about God?
2. Why might God prepare a table in the presence of enemies rather than first removing them?
3. How do shame or opposition affect our ability to receive God's welcome?
4. Where do you see abundance in this verse beyond material provision?
5. How should receiving God's hospitality shape the way we welcome others?
6. What would it look like to live from God's approval instead of fighting for everyone else's?

## Respond in Scripture and prayer

Thank God for three specific signs of His provision. Ask Him to help you receive His welcome and extend generous welcome to someone else.

## Leader note

Do not turn "my cup overflows" into a promise of wealth. The verse centers on belonging, honor, fellowship, and the generous presence of God even amid opposition.

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# Goodness and Mercy

God's covenant love does not merely wait at the destination. His goodness and mercy pursue His people throughout the journey and bring them home.

## Understand the passage

The verb often translated "follow" is stronger than casual following; it can mean pursue. The Psalm ends where it began—with confidence rooted in God's character. The Shepherd's care extends through all the days of life and into lasting fellowship with Him.

## Discuss together

1. How is being pursued by goodness and mercy different from trying to earn them?
2. Looking back, where can you now recognize God's care more clearly?
3. Why can yesterday's failure feel more believable than today's mercy?
4. How does the promise of dwelling with God reshape fear about the future?
5. Which part of Psalm 23 has most challenged or comforted you?
6. What would it mean to carry the Shepherd's goodness and mercy into another person's life?

## Respond in Scripture and prayer

Review the whole Psalm. Name one evidence of God's goodness, one place you need His mercy, and one person to whom you can extend mercy this week.

## Leader note

Use this gathering to look back across the entire path. Celebrate growth without manufacturing a dramatic ending. The lasting invitation is continued life with the Shepherd.

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SPEAK THESE TRUTHS TOGETHER

# The God of every path

The Lord is my Shepherd.

The Lord is my refuge.

The Lord is merciful.

The Lord is my Keeper.

The Lord is my light.

The Lord is with me.

Continue walking gently. Listen deeply. Trust the Shepherd who goes with you.