

Our Great Shepherd

Week Three | Our Shepherd Prepares | 11.19-20.2022

Group Conversation Questions: Use these questions to help you process the message in your personal study time or with your group. Time suggestions are based on a 90-minute group gathering.

Message Recap: Recognizing Jesus as our great shepherd is reassuring, realizing we don't have to have it all figured out and that he is guiding us and walking with us in all our uncertainties. It also requires we acknowledge some things about ourselves and our needs, even if we don't always recognize them.

» Opening

(3 minutes)

- Introductions - This is especially important if this is your first meeting or if there are new members.
- Housekeeping - Clarify expectations:
 - Remind your group that this is a confidential meeting.
 - **Remember, there may be many thoughts and views. Please remain kind and respectful during conversations.**
- Pray - Open your time together in prayer.

» Introduction

(12 minutes)

- Ice-Breaker: What are the images you think about as you consider the best meals you've ever had?
- Digging Deeper: How does God working to prepare that table for you change the way you relate to the challenges in your life today?

» Observation | Read Psalm 23:5; Isaiah 58:6-12

(12 minutes)

- What are your initial reactions to these passages? What do you find challenging? Are you encouraged by any of these verses? Why?

» Key Principle | God is ahead of whatever we dread.

(12 minutes)

- Is it comforting that God knows what our future holds? Why or why not?
- Can you think of a situation that you dreaded going through, but you were blessed by enduring it?

» Feasting With Our Foes | Reread Psalm 23:5a; Isaiah 58:6-8; Luke 7:36; Revelation 19:6-7

(12 minutes)

- When God has prepared a feast for us, do we sometimes choose a fast instead? Why or why not?
- Discuss the pattern of God providing tangible provision and protection. Should we expect that to continue? Why?

» Finding Fulfillment | Reread Psalm 23:5b; Isaiah 58:9-11; Luke 7:37-38; Revelation 19:8

(12 minutes)

- What does it mean to be anointed with oil, for our light to shine in the darkness, or to be clothed in righteousness?
- Do we seek fulfillment that cannot be satisfied in this life? How does God address that?

» Filling Forever | Reread Psalm 23:5c; Isaiah 58:12; Luke 7:44-48; Revelation 19:9

(12 minutes)

- What would – or does – it feel like to be repaired, restored, rebuilt, forgiven, and blessed? Do we live in that reality?
- How does our definition of being filled differ from God's? How can we trust God through unexpected circumstances?

» Next Steps and Prayer |

(15 minutes)

- What are the enemies (internal and external) that are at this table with you? How is God offering protection in their presence right now?
- Close by praying for one another to remember how Jesus prepared the table with us in mind and offers his protection always.