

Discussion Guide

October 19, 2025

The Good Shepherd: Week 3

Keep Walking, We're Not Staying Here

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Main Idea

No matter how heavy this season feels or how stuck you may seem, this is not the end of your story. You may be in a valley, but you're passing through it—you're not meant to settle in pain or confusion. God still has more for you: more grace, more healing, and more purpose. So don't quit—keep walking, keep trusting, and keep believing. We're not staying here.

Anchor Passage

"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. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You have anointed my head with oil; My cup overflows." (Psalms 23:4-5, NIV)

1. THE VALLEY DOESN'T MEAN THE SHEPHERD HAS LEFT ME.

Even in the darkest valleys, God has not abandoned you—His presence is closer and more personal in low places. You may not see Him, but His voice still leads you forward, reminding you to keep walking because you're not alone.

Discussion: When have you walked through a "valley" season and later realized that God was closer than you thought—what helped you recognize His presence in the middle of it?

2. I'M STILL GUIDED, STILL GUARDED, AND STILL GOOD.

Even in the valley, God doesn't just stay near—He actively protects and directs us. His rod defends us from what tries to harm us, and His staff gently guides us back when we drift, reminding us that we are still guarded, still guided, and still in His grip.

Read Isaiah 43:2

Discussion: Where in your life right now do you most need to trust God as your protector and guide—and what would it look like to fully rest in His grip instead of trying to handle it on your own?

3. HE SETS A TABLE FOR ME IN ENEMY TERRITORY.

God doesn't need to remove your enemies to bless you—He proves His faithfulness right in front of them. He has already reserved a table with your name on it, and no one can take what He has prepared for you. In the middle of pressure, conflict, or opposition, He still provides honor, healing, and overflowing provision, reminding you that His purpose for your life can't be stopped.

Read Psalm 23:5

Discussion: Where in your life do you feel pressure, opposition, or doubt right now—and how might God be using that very place to reveal His provision and faithfulness to you?

SUMMARY

This message reminds us that the valley is not our destination—it's just a season we're walking through. God never promised a life without challenges, but He did promise His constant presence, protection, and guidance. Even in darkness, pain, or uncertainty, the Good Shepherd is near—guarding us, guiding us, preparing a table for us, and pouring out overflowing grace. So don't stop in the valley—keep walking. Victory is ahead, purpose is unfolding, and God is still writing your story.

CALL TO ACTION

Stasy Close to the Shepherd Daily. Don't let the valley push you into isolation—let it pull you closer to God. Set aside intentional time this week to hear His voice through prayer, worship, and Scripture, even if it's just 10–15 minutes a day. When you draw near to Him, He will guide your steps.

Walk by Faith, Not By Feelings. Keep moving forward even when you don't have all the answers. Identify one area of your life where you've been stuck in fear, discouragement, or confusion—then take one bold step of obedience this week. Trust that God is protecting, directing, and strengthening you as you move.

Sit at the Table God Prepared for You. Stop giving energy to negativity, comparison, or the opinions of others. Instead, focus on what God has already placed in front of you. Write down three blessings or opportunities God has given you in this season, and choose to respond with gratitude and confidence—your Shepherd is still providing.

GROUP LEADER RESOURCE

Would You Rather

Description:

Would You Rather is one of the best icebreakers for small groups because the game can cover various topics. To play the challenge, come up with a list of questions that begin with “Would you rather...” and end with two options. For instance, “Would you rather have the ability to read minds or move things with your mind?” Then, have participants take turns answering and make sure respondents share the reasons for their choices.

Here are some of my favorite questions:

Would you rather be able to fly or breathe underwater?

Would you rather be able to see into the future or relive a moment from your past?

Would you rather lose all the memories you made this year or all the money you made this year?

Would you rather spend a year with the same song stuck in your head or with an itch you can't scratch?

Would you rather live alone in the woods or in a studio apartment with 10 people?

Here are some that could be adapted for the sermon:

Would you rather hear God speak clearly **once a year** or hear Him whisper **daily**?

Would you rather hear God say, “I’m fighting for you” or “I’m forming you”?

Would you rather have **overflowing blessings** or **overflowing peace**?

Would you rather go through a hard season **with community** or a good season **alone**?

Would you rather feel **God’s protection** from every storm or **God’s peace** in the middle of the storm?