

GOAT

GREATEST OF ALL TIME

A 6-WEEK STUDY GUIDE

1

**THE LORD
IS MY
SHEPHERD**

Each session will begin with an opportunity to help you connect with and get to know one another. Since this may be your first time together (or since you may have new members), take a few minutes to make sure everyone knows each other.

In your opinion, who has the most recognizable voice you have ever heard? Is it the voice of someone you know personally or of someone famous? What makes that voice so familiar?

Play the "Session One: The Lord is My Shepherd" video lesson.

What stood out to you from the video?

**THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD, I SHALL NOT WANT.
PSALM 23:1**

In the following section, you will explore Bible passages and take part in discussion to apply insights from this session. If time is a concern, please choose just a few questions to discuss in your group.

Read Psalm 23:1

1. Share about someone from your life whom you would call a trustworthy person. What about their character makes them worthy of your trust? What would you say are the characteristics of a trustworthy person?

2. If you were writing your own version of Psalm 23, instead of a “shepherd,” what would you say the Lord is like? The Lord is my ... what? How would you describe the kind of relationship you share with the Lord?

3. How does the Lord provide for the needs of those who love Him? How have you personally experienced God's provision? If one comes to mind, share an example of when the Lord provided for you in a surprising way.

Read John 10:1-18

4. In John 10:11-13, we are introduced to two characters: a good shepherd and a hired worker. What are the differences between them? What motivates their actions? What do those two characters represent?

5. Many times in these verses, Jesus promises to lay down his life on behalf of those who follow Him. How does Jesus' death and sacrifice lead us to trust in Him? Why do we need to sacrifice for others in order to build a relationship of trust with them?

6. Why must our relationship with the Lord begin with a sense of trust? How has God built a relationship of trust with you personally over time? If one comes to mind, share a moment from your life when God proved that you could trust Him.

DEEPER STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Hebrews 11:1-16

7. In Hebrews 11:4, the author writes about Abel—the second son of Adam and Eve, who was killed by his older brother Cain—and says that by his faith and trust in the Lord, he still speaks even though he is dead. How is this possibly true? How can our faith and trust in the Lord speak throughout generations, even after we have passed? How do you hope your personal faith outlives you?

8. The author declares in Hebrews 11:6 that having faith means that we believe God exists and that He rewards those who seek Him. Why are both of these truths necessary pieces of a faith that pleases God? Why must we continue to hold onto that faith to the point of death, even when we have not yet received what was promised?

A MEDITATION FROM PSALM 23

Each week during this series, we will provide a simple prayer and meditation exercise that you can use either in a group or on your own. Prayer and meditation are excellent resources for developing a relationship of trust with the Father, as well as ensuring we keep our focus on discovering a good life following Him.

Begin this time by closing your eyes and spending a few moments in silence, focusing on nothing but the sound of your breath. When you find a moment of stillness, feel free to begin.

1. Read the words of Psalm 23:1, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." Repeat those words slowly in your mind. Spend a few moments meditating on the meaning of those words.

2. Imagine you are standing in a field, watching a shepherd gently guiding his flock. Pay attention to how the sheep trust him. Listen to the sound of his voice. Focus on what he is saying to the sheep. Visualize this picture for a few minutes and consider what it reveals to us about the Lord's character.

3. As you return from that picture, consider this simple prayer to the Father: "You are everything I need." Speak this line to the Father over and over, and reflect upon its meaning for you.

4. In order to end this prayer meditation, thank the Lord for the time you spent together and for everything He has provided for you. Thank the Lord for His generosity and His kindness. Thank Him for what He has given to you.

JOURNAL

During each week for this series, we will provide a simple prompt and an opportunity to write and journal your thoughts. As we pursue a good life of following God, we will find a great benefit from putting our thoughts into words and thinking through how we can put our words into action. Do not overthink anything you write or try to find a “perfect” answer. Simply write what comes to mind.

Please spend at least 15 minutes writing about the question below:

Where am I currently putting my trust? If today I put my full trust in God and in His purpose for me, then what would change in my life?

PRAYER AND PRAISE

This is a place where you can write each other's prayer requests and make notes when God answers prayer. Pray for each other's requests out loud together as a group. If you're new to group prayer, you may pray silently.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports

2

**GREEN
PASTURES
AND QUIET
WATERS**

Each session will begin with an opportunity to help you connect with and get to know one another.

What fictional world or place would you want to visit? What would you do if you could spend a day in that place?

Play the "Session Two: Green Pastures & Quiet Waters" video lesson.

What stood out to you from the video?

**HE MAKES ME LIE DOWN IN GREEN PASTURES, HE LEADS ME
BESIDE QUIET WATERS.
PSALM 23:2**

In the following section, you will explore Bible passages and take part in discussion to apply insights from this session. If time is a concern, please choose just a few questions to discuss in your group.

Read Psalm 23:2

1. What place in this world makes you feel safe and secure? Why does that place give you a sense of security? How does your personality change when you are in that familiar place?

2. In Psalm 23:2, we see that the Lord makes us rest in safe places. Why does the Lord force us to rest and replenish ourselves? What happens to us if we do not take time to rest?

3. How does the Lord's guidance actually give us freedom for our lives rather than take it away? How does the security and protection of the Lord give us the freedom to pursue a good life? How does the world pursue a life of freedom outside of the Lord's protection and guidance?

Read Galatians 5:13-26

4. According to these verses, what is the purpose for finding freedom in Christ? Why is true freedom only found in this kind of life?

5. In Galatians 5:19-21, the apostle Paul lists a series of sinful acts and teaches that those who live according to them will not inherit the kingdom of God. How do sinful acts like these take away our freedom? How do they imprison us and enslave us?

6. How have you personally found freedom in your life by living more like Christ? How has a Spirit-filled life allowed you to pursue the kind of life you really want? If time allows, share a moment from your life when Christ set you free from something that was holding you back.

DEEPER STUDY QUESTIONS

Read John 8:31-47

7. How does the truth set us free? On the other hand, how does deceit and misinformation keep us captive? What are some of the most effective ways Christians seek the truth about God and this world? Why should followers of Christ always remain curious and seek the truth in all things?

8. In these verses, what kept the Jews from fully believing in Jesus? What beliefs and values kept them from accepting the Son of God fully? In our lives, what beliefs and values keep us from embracing Jesus Christ fully and finding freedom in His truth?

A MEDITATION FROM PSALM 23

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Begin this time by closing your eyes and spending a few moments in silence, focusing on nothing but the sound of your breath. When you find a moment of stillness, feel free to begin.

1. Read the words of Psalm 23:2, "He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters." Repeat those words slowly in your mind. Spend a few moments meditating on the meaning of those words.

2. Imagine you are sitting by a gentle stream, watching a leaf floating on the surface of the water. Pay attention to how it drifts past you, carried by the lazy currents of the stream. Focus on how freely the leaf moves on the surface of the water. Visualize this picture for a few minutes and consider what it reveals to us about a life following the Lord.

3. As you return from that picture, consider this simple prayer to the Father: "You guide me into freedom." Speak this line to the Father over and over, and reflect upon its meaning for you.

4. In order to end this prayer meditation, thank the Lord for the time you spent together and for the freedom He has given you from whatever has imprisoned you. Thank the Lord for His salvation and His forgiveness. Thank Him for the life of freedom He has given to us.

JOURNAL

During each week for this series, we will provide a simple prompt and an opportunity to write and journal your thoughts. As we pursue a good life of following God, we will find a great benefit from putting our thoughts into words and thinking through how we can put our words into action. Do not overthink anything you write or try to find a "perfect" answer. Simply write what comes to mind.

Please spend at least 15 minutes writing about the question below:

What are the parts of my life that I need to get rid of and surrender to God, so that I can find freedom following His will?

PRAYER AND PRAISE

This is a place where you can write each other's prayer requests and make notes when God answers prayer. Pray for each other's requests out loud together as a group. If you're new to group prayer, you may pray silently.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports

3

**PATHS OF
RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Each session will begin with an opportunity to help you connect with and get to know one another.

What is the longest road trip you have ever taken? Where did you go? What did you see on the way? What memories do you have from that trip?

Play the “Session Three: Paths of Righteousness” video lesson.

What stood out to you from the video?

**HE RESTORES MY SOUL. HE GUIDES ME IN THE PATHS OF
RIGHTEOUSNESS FOR HIS NAME’S SAKE.
PSALM 23:3**

In the following section, you will explore Bible passages and take part in discussion to apply insights from this session. If time is a concern, please choose just a few questions to discuss in your group.

Read Psalm 23:3

1. If you are willing, share about a time when you chose to do the right thing, even though it was difficult. How much did you have to struggle with the decision? What was the result of your decision?

2. In your experience, how does God lead us on paths of righteousness? How does He keep us on the right path? How does He turn us around when we stray? How have you personally been brought back to the path of righteousness?

3. In the video lesson, we learned that the purpose of a righteous life is to understand who God really is. How have you personally discovered what God is like by living like His Son, Jesus? How have you learned more about who God is by following Him?

Read Matthew 7:13-27

4. In Matthew 7:13-14, we see that the road to destruction is wide but the road to eternal life is narrow. Why is the road to destruction easier to walk than the road to eternal life? What are some examples of this that you have witnessed?

5. According to these verses, what kind of life can we expect if we follow the Lord's will? Why does a life of righteousness give us security and confidence?

6. What fruit and benefit have you personally found from living a life of righteousness? How has your life been enriched from following Christ? How has following the way of Jesus helped you live a more fulfilling life?

DEEPER STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Jonah 3:10-4:11

7. This story details the events after Jonah witnessed the Lord's mercy upon the city of Nineveh. Why was Jonah upset with the Lord's compassion toward the people of Nineveh? In what ways might the Lord's compassion upset us? How should we react when God's decisions upset us or confuse us? What should we do when this happens?

8. According to this story, what does the Lord value most in this world? What did Jonah value most in the story? What happens when what we value comes into conflict with what God values?

A MEDITATION FROM PSALM 23

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Begin this time by closing your eyes and spending a few moments in silence, focusing on nothing but the sound of your breath. When you find a moment of stillness, feel free to begin.

1. Read the words of Psalm 23:3, "He restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake." Repeat those words slowly in your mind. Spend a few moments meditating on the meaning of those words.

2. Imagine you are walking on a road together with the Lord. Pay attention to the horizon in the distance and the scenery around you. Focus on what the Lord is telling you. Listen to His voice as He shares a truth about Himself. Visualize this picture for a few minutes and consider what the Lord is revealing to you about Himself.

3. As you return from that picture, consider this simple prayer to the Father: "You lead me on a good road." Speak this line to the Father over and over, and reflect upon its meaning for you.

4. In order to end this prayer meditation, thank the Lord for the time you spent together and for the direction He has given to your life. Thank the Lord for His wisdom and His guidance. Thank Him for how He has directed your steps.

JOURNAL

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Please spend at least 15 minutes writing about the question below:

What am I currently doing that helps me understand God’s character on a richer and deeper level? How can I do more of that and less of what prevents me from knowing God?

PRAYER AND PRAISE

This is a place where you can write each other's prayer requests and make notes when God answers prayer. Pray for each other's requests out loud together as a group. If you're new to group prayer, you may pray silently.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports

4

**THE VALLEY
OF THE
SHADOW
OF DEATH**

Each session will begin with an opportunity to help you connect with and get to know one another.

If you could watch one movie for the first time again, what movie would it be? Why?

Play the "Session Four: Valley of the Shadow of Death" video lesson.

What stood out to you from the video?

**EVEN THOUGH I WALK THROUGH THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW
OF DEATH, I WILL FEAR NO EVIL, FOR YOU ARE WITH ME; YOUR
ROD AND YOUR STAFF, THE COMFORT ME.
PSALM 23:4**

In the following section, you will explore Bible passages and take part in discussion to apply insights from this session. If time is a concern, please choose just a few questions to discuss in your group.

Read Psalm 23:4

1. Share about a time when you witnessed an act of courage or bravery. What made that act so courageous? How can the courage of others inspire us and give us courage to face our fears?

2. Why do we need God's presence in order to get through the painful and difficult moments of our lives? How does the world try to get through the tough seasons of life? What strategies does the world use to find courage and bravery? What does the Lord provide us that the world cannot?

3. How has God personally walked alongside you during a painful or fearful moment of your life? How did He comfort you? How did He give you courage to keep going?

Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

4. When the apostle Paul asked for relief from his struggle, the Lord provided something much more powerful—His grace. Why is the grace of God a better gift than momentary relief from the difficulty of life? How does God's grace strengthen us to face situations that would make others run away?

5. Why does Paul say he actually delights in his weaknesses and in insults from others and in the difficulties of life? How does he achieve that kind of attitude? How can we, like Paul, find joy even in the dark seasons of life?

6. How have the difficulties of your life strengthened and encouraged you to face the challenges of the present? How has God strengthened you personally over time?

DEEPER STUDY QUESTIONS

Read 1 Peter 4:12-19

7. Why should Christians expect to receive undeserved suffering? How does our mindset change when we expect difficulty to arrive instead of expecting only easy days? How can we find strength by embracing the truth that we will suffer unjustly for bearing the name of Jesus?

8. Why should Christians continue to do good to others, even in the middle of a painful trial? Why might the painful trials of life encourage us to do wrong to others? Why might we feel more likely to sin in the middle of our grief and anguish? How can we ensure that we treat others well, even in the midst of our hurt?

A MEDITATION FROM PSALM 23

Each week during this series, we will provide a simple prayer and meditation exercise that you can use either in a group or on your own. Prayer and meditation are excellent resources for developing a relationship of trust with the Father, as well as ensuring we keep our focus on discovering a good life following Him.

Begin this time by closing your eyes and spending a few moments in silence, focusing on nothing but the sound of your breath. When you find a moment of stillness, feel free to begin.

1. Read the words of Psalm 23:4, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me." Repeat those words slowly in your mind. Spend a few moments meditating on the meaning of those words.

2. Imagine you are standing before a dark valley. As you descend into the valley, the Lord walks alongside you with a lantern in His hand. Pay attention to how the light from His lantern dispels the darkness and shows you there is nothing to fear. Focus on how the light bursts forth into the shadows. Visualize this picture for a few minutes and consider what it reveals to us about the courage we receive from the Lord.

3. As you return from that picture, consider this simple prayer to the Father: "You make me brave." Speak this line to the Father over and over, and reflect upon its meaning for you.

4. In order to end this prayer meditation, thank the Lord for the time you spent together and for providing you with bravery to face the difficulties and anxieties of life. Thank the Lord for His encouragement and His comfort. Thank Him for walking alongside you in dark times.

JOURNAL

During each week for this series, we will provide a simple prompt and an opportunity to write and journal your thoughts. As we pursue a good life of following God, we will find a great benefit from putting our thoughts into words and thinking through how we can put our words into action. Do not overthink anything you write or try to find a "perfect" answer. Simply write what comes to mind.

Please spend at least 15 minutes writing about the question below:

What is something important that I need to accomplish in my life that scares me? How will I accomplish it with the help of the Lord?

PRAYER AND PRAISE

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Prayer Requests

Praise Reports

5

**A TABLE
BEFORE MY
ENEMIES**

Each session will begin with an opportunity to help you connect with and get to know one another.

What is one of the most memorable parties or celebrations you've attended?
What made the event so memorable?

Play the "Session Five: A Table Before My Enemies" video lesson.

What stood out to you from the video?

**YOU PREPARE A TABLE BEFORE ME IN THE PRESENCE OF MY ENEMIES. YOU ANOINT MY HEAD WITH OIL; MY CUP OVERFLOWS.
PSALM 23:5**

In the following section, you will explore Bible passages and take part in discussion to apply insights from this session. If time is a concern, please choose just a few questions to discuss in your group.

Read Psalm 23:5

1. If you could change places with any person in the world, which person would you pick? How do you believe your life would improve if you switched with them? On the other hand, how do you think your life might get worse if you switched with them?

2. In this session, we discovered that many people try to “prepare a feast in the presence of their enemies” by making themselves look great or impressive. Why do we do this? Why do we seek to impress others or to make ourselves look successful?

3. What are some reasons people may feel small or insignificant in comparison to others? If you are willing, share about an insecurity you have felt either in the past or in the present. How did the Lord help you through that insecurity and encourage you?

Read Romans 12:14-21

4. Why should we bless the people who persecute or mistreat us? Why might it be better to treat our enemies with kindness and forgiveness instead of retaliation? Why does kindness have the power to change our world in a way that vengeance cannot?

5. How does seeking peace and reconciliation with our enemies lead us to a good life?

6. If time allows, share a moment from your life when you found peace with an adversary of yours. How did you reconcile your differences? What is your relationship like today? How does a relationship of peace bring more blessing than a relationship of conflict?

DEEPER STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Luke 6:27-36

7. In Luke 6:28, Jesus teaches us to pray for those who mistreat us. Why should we do this? How does praying for our enemies help us change the way we see them? Why does prayer have such a powerful ability to change the way we see the world and the people in our lives?

8. Why should those who only love the people who already love them receive no credit for their compassion? Why do those who love their enemies and give without expecting anything in return find a blessing from the Lord? What kind of blessing do they receive?

A MEDITATION FROM PSALM 23

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Begin this time by closing your eyes and spending a few moments in silence, focusing on nothing but the sound of your breath. When you find a moment of stillness, feel free to begin.

1. Read the words of Psalm 23:5, "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows." Repeat those words slowly in your mind. Spend a few moments meditating on the meaning of those words.

2. Imagine you are sitting down at a table before a feast, and a group of your enemies stand away from you and watch in anger. But then, imagine you invite those enemies to sit down with you and eat. Pay attention to how their faces and their attitudes change at your invitation. Visualize this picture for a few minutes and consider what it shows us about choosing an attitude of love.

3. As you return from that picture, consider this simple prayer to the Father: "You make my enemy a friend." Speak this line to the Father over and over, and reflect upon its meaning for you.

4. In order to end this prayer meditation, thank the Lord for the time you spent together and for choosing to love us, even while we were still sinners. Thank the Lord for His compassion and His mercy. Thank Him for filling us with love, so that we might love others.

JOURNAL

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Please spend at least 15 minutes writing about the question below:

What can I learn from my enemies and adversaries? What can they teach me about the character of God?

PRAYER AND PRAISE

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Prayer Requests

Praise Reports

6

**FOR
LONG DAYS**

Each session will begin with an opportunity to help you connect with and get to know one another.

If you could spend one day with any person from history, which person would you choose? How would you spend that day with them?

Play the “Session Six: For Long Days” video lesson.

What stood out to you from the video?

**SURELY GOODNESS AND MERCY WILL FOLLOW ME ALL THE
DAYS OF MY LIFE, AND I WILL DWELL IN THE HOUSE OF
THE LORD FOREVER.
PSALM 23:6**

In the following section, you will explore Bible passages and take part in discussion to apply insights from this session. If time is a concern, please choose just a few questions to discuss in your group.

Read Psalm 23:6

1. If you are willing to share, when would you say is the last time you spent some good, quality time with the Lord? What was that time like? What did you share with the Lord during that time?

2. In the final verse of Psalm 23, we see that David was eager to spend time in God's presence. Why was this true? Why is quality time with God an essential piece to the Christian life?

3. How do you typically feel whenever you spend time in prayer or meditation? What is your experience like? Where do you usually find your thoughts drifting? What are some practical ways you keep yourself focused?

Read Luke 10:38-42

4. In this story, we meet two sisters who hosted Jesus in their home. What was the difference between the two sisters—Martha and Mary? What was most valuable to Martha? What was most valuable to Mary?

5. In Luke 10:41, Jesus mentioned to Martha that her anxieties and worries were keeping her from spending time with Him. How can the same thing happen to us? How do our anxieties and worries prevent us from spending time in the presence of the Lord?

6. After going through this series, what do you think will be the main change you're going to make in order to pursue a good life following God? How are you going to take one step this week toward making that change a reality? How will your group members hold you accountable for making that change?

DEEPER STUDY QUESTIONS

Read Psalm 63:1-11

7. What does David mean when he writes that his soul thirsts for God? How does our soul thirst? And if our soul experiences thirst, then what quenches it?

8. In Psalm 63:6, David writes that he thinks of the Lord through the watches of the night. Why should Christians develop a consistent practice of meditation and thinking about the Lord? What are some practical ways you can find in these verses or from your experience to maintain a thought life centered upon God?

A MEDITATION FROM PSALM 23

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Begin this time by closing your eyes and spending a few moments in silence, focusing on nothing but the sound of your breath. When you find a moment of stillness, feel free to begin.

1. Read the words of Psalm 23:6, "Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Repeat those words slowly in your mind. Spend a few moments meditating on the meaning of those words.

2. Imagine you are in a comfortable room, a place where you would feel at ease. Pay attention to the decorations and furnishings of the room. And now, picture the Lord stepping into this room and sitting down with you. Focus on the subject of your conversation and on how He encourages you. Visualize this picture for a few minutes and consider how we are restored in the Lord's presence.

3. As you return from that picture, consider this simple prayer to the Father: "You are with me forever." Speak this line to the Father over and over, and reflect upon its meaning for you.

4. In order to end this prayer meditation, thank the Lord for the time you spent together and for His consistent presence in your life. Thank the Lord for His goodness and His promise of eternal life. Thank Him for giving us a good life spent dwelling in His presence.

JOURNAL

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Please spend at least 15 minutes writing about the question below:

What would happen if I spent quality time with the Lord every day?
How would my attitude change? How would my thoughts change?

PRAYER AND PRAISE

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Prayer Requests

Praise Reports