

Psalm 23: The Shepherd's Care — 4-Week Series

Four Sundays in six verses. The most familiar psalm in the Bible, slowed down until the congregation hears it again.

Whole-church series; particularly effective in a season of grief or transition

About this series

Everyone knows Psalm 23, which is exactly why it is worth four weeks. Familiarity has worn the edges off a psalm that moves from pasture to valley to enemy table to eternal house.

Each week takes one movement, with a three-point outline and a key KJV verse.

The arc of the series

Provision, presence, protection, permanence.

Planning notes

- Ideal for a congregation that has recently lost members.
- Week 2 (the valley) works well with a service of lament and prayer.
- Print the psalm as a bulletin insert for all four weeks.

I Shall Not Want

Big idea

The whole psalm rests on the first four words; everything after is consequence.

Outline

1. The LORD is my shepherd
2. Green pastures and still waters
3. He restoreth my soul

Key verse

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

Psalm 23:1 (KJV)

Application question

What are you treating as your shepherd — savings, health, a person?

Sermon notes

Through the Valley

Big idea

The psalm says through, not around — and it is the only verse where David stops speaking about God and starts speaking to Him.

Outline

1. The shadow, not the substance
2. Thou art with me
3. The rod and the staff

Key verse

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me.

Psalm 23:4 (KJV)

Application question

What valley are you in, and what has God actually withheld from you in it?

Sermon notes

A Table Prepared

Big idea

God does not remove the enemies; He sets a table in front of them.

Outline

1. In the presence of mine enemies
2. Thou anointest my head with oil
3. My cup runneth over

Key verse

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies.

Psalm 23:5 (KJV)

Application question

Where has God provided in the middle of opposition rather than after it?

Sermon notes

Dwelling in the House

Big idea

Goodness and mercy do not meet David at the end; they follow him the whole way there.

Outline

1. Goodness and mercy shall follow
2. All the days of my life
3. I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever

Key verse

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.

Psalm 23:6 (KJV)

Application question

Look back over the last year. Where can you now see goodness and mercy following?

Sermon notes

Verse set — the whole series at a glance

Every key verse in this series, King James Version. Print this page for the worship team, the bulletin, or a memory-verse card.

Week 1 — I Shall Not Want

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

Psalm 23:1 (KJV)

Week 2 — Through the Valley

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me.

Psalm 23:4 (KJV)

Week 3 — A Table Prepared

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies.

Psalm 23:5 (KJV)

Week 4 — Dwelling in the House

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.

Psalm 23:6 (KJV)

Frequently asked questions

Can four weeks be sustained on six verses?

Comfortably. Psalm 23 has four distinct movements and dense cross-references throughout Scripture, especially John 10 and Revelation 7.

Is the series suitable for a funeral season?

Yes. Week two in particular is written for congregations carrying grief.

Is the series free?

Yes — free to preach, adapt, and print.

More free KJV preaching resources at biblesundays.com/for-pastors — sermon outlines, Sunday service readings, printables, and free Bible widgets for your church website.