



# Morningside Church

## Sermon Discussion Guide

**Title: Comfort in the Darkness**

**Date: September 29, 2024**

**Scripture Text: Psalm 23:4**

### **Notes:**

We all find ourselves at times in need of comfort. The question is where we turn for that comfort. The book of Psalms is a great place to find comfort. It is a book where its authors pour out their soul to God and find peace, joy and comfort, in spite of their circumstances and respond with praise and thanksgiving. In today's message from [Psalm 23](#) is a focus on finding that comfort in dark times.

[Psalm 23](#) was written by David. It uses images of a shepherd and a gracious host. It also reflects on the many benefits God provides in the midst of life's dangers, and concludes acknowledging God's persistent, loving protection.

#### **I. We All Go Through Dark Valleys (Psalm 23:4a)**

"When I go through..." It's not a question if you'll go through a dark valley, but when. It is said that either you are in the midst of a valley, getting ready to enter a valley, or just coming out of one. Because of the nature of living in a sinful, fallen world, we will have trials ([John 16:33](#)). When we have trials, we go through "The darkest valley" or "valley of the shadow of death". Shadows are caused by an object blocking the light. When we are in the shadows emotionally or spiritually, it could be seen as if something has come between us and God, thus causing a shadow. Shadows are inevitable but the objects that cause them are not indestructible because of the redemptive work of Jesus on the cross.

- Describe a time when you found yourself going through the darkest valley.
  - Were you able to find comfort in the darkness?
- What created the shadow when you were in the valley?
- How were you able to get out of the valley?
- What did you learn about God while you were in the valley?

#### **II. God is With Us (Psalm 23:4b)**

Verse 4 transitions from talking about God to talking to God. The author acknowledges God's presence, even in the darkest valley, "for You are with me". Sheep need a shepherd. They are defenseless, not very smart, spook easily, and are helpless. The shepherd many times would lead sheep through valleys to get to new feeding grounds. The shepherd was always with the sheep. We, as Christians, are like sheep, and Jesus is our Shepherd. He will never leave us or forsake us ([Heb. 13:5](#)). [Psalm 23:1](#) states "the Lord is my Shepherd..."



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- Read [John 10:27-30](#).
  - What does it say about the relationship between the Shephard and his sheep?
  - What does it say about the Shepard's possession of the sheep?
  - How can that assurance give you comfort in the darkness?
- Describe what it means for God to be with you.
- Describe a time when you remembered that God was with you.
- How did remembering His presence affect how you dealt with your valley?

As a Christian, God is always with you, regardless of your circumstances and regardless if you feel Him being there with you.

### **III. God Comforts Us ([Psalm 23:4c](#))**

"Your rod and Your staff – they comfort me". A shepherd's rod and staff were used to direct, correct and protect the sheep. Very similar to the Word of God; "All Scripture is inspired by God' and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness", [2 Tim. 3:16](#). God's word, as the shepherd's staff, is a comfort, when we spend time in it, study it, and know it. We are assured of His presence through the truth of His word.

- Do you spend regular time in God's word?
- Why is it important to spend time in God's word daily?
- What are things you can do to be better at spending more time reading the Bible?
- Describe a time when the Bible brought you comfort in the darkness.

As we experience God and His comfort as we go through the darkest valley, we can take that and be a comfort to others.

<sup>3</sup>Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort. <sup>4</sup>He comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any kind of affliction, through the comfort we ourselves receive from God. ([2 Cor. 1:3-4](#))

Prayerfully consider how God can use you to be His comfort to another.