

BRMC Small Group Study

FAQs When Life is Upended

Participant's Copy

Please note that this study guide accompanies the pulpit sermon.

Scripture Passage:

Psalm 23

Context:

Our church, united with the Methodist Church in Singapore and our nation, is in the midst of taking serious measures to try to curb the spread of COVID-19. Many of us have to endure difficult circumstances, social isolation, possible unemployment, and illness. Yet within these circumstances, we can still choose to see the loving hand of God and to place our trust in Him and His goodness because He is our shepherd.

The passage sets out the Psalmist's view of God as his shepherd. He declares his trust in God his provider, protector, refresher, comforter, whose goodness and mercy was evident in the past, is now and will be forever more with him.

Lesson Objectives:

In this lesson, we will attempt to understand the following:

- When we are anxious, in the midst of difficult circumstances, we can turn to Jesus our Good Shepherd.
- We can trust in Jesus our Shepherd to protect us, to pour joy into us and to provide for us.
- We should take this time to allow God to refresh our soul:
 - pause and ponder on God's word, allowing God to speak to us
 - reflect on God's goodness seeing us through circumstances in the past, to have confidence of the future

Introductory

1. In Psalm 23 what are some of the key words used to describe or illustrate the Psalmist's response to the Lord?

Reflection

2. How do you respond to God? Have you experienced God in a way that would encourage you to respond as the Psalmist did?
 - (a) Who do you turn to when your life spins out of control?

(b) When was a time God used an unpleasant or difficult circumstance for your good?

(c) Have we had moments of doubt where we question God – “Sure or not?”

(d) When we take that decision to believe in God, do we fear that we will be humiliated?

(e) Do you remember when God was good to you? Why do you think you need to remember these occasions?

Application

3. How would you apply what you have discussed in your life? Perhaps you could identify one or two main areas from what you have discussed in this session and consider some practical ways you can apply it to your life?

Prayer

4. Write out a prayer for yourself based on what you have heard and learned from this session.

(a) What is in your heart for yourself?

- Perhaps you want to seek Jesus and to know Him as your Good Shepherd:

“Dear Lord Jesus, thank you for revealing Yourself to me through Scripture. I believe that You are my Good Shepherd and that You laid Your life down for me. I believe that by Your death on the cross and Your resurrection, You have paid the penalty of my sins. You have redeemed me. And I trust that You have ascended to heaven to prepare a place for me in my Father’s house. Indeed, I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever because of what You have done for me.

Lord Jesus may You be established in my heart forever.
Jesus in Your precious name I pray. Amen.”

- Perhaps you are seeking confirmation or assurance from the Lord in these challenging times:

“Almighty Father, I confess that I have been anxious and worried for my family and for myself during these difficult times. I worry because I have not been able to hear from You or see Your hand in all the circumstances.

Father God, may You bring to my mind all the times when I have lived in Your goodness and mercy. That I may rejoice, that I may experience Your anointing and that my cup may indeed overflow.

I put my trust in Your goodness and mercy even in these unpleasant and difficult times. I pray for Your perfect and good will to be revealed in Your time.

In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

(b) What is in your heart for others?

- Perhaps you would like to intercede for those in need:

“Loving Father, I trust in Your compassion and comfort, in Your sovereign power to heal. Father, may You comfort and heal those who are ill, those who are labouring under physical ailments and disease of the mind.

Father, in Your mercy and grace, bring comfort to the families of those who are ill. May they experience Your peace in the midst of their circumstances, that they may look to You.

Father, may You bless and honour those who are in the frontlines: the security personnel, the cleaners, the health care workers, doctors and nurses. Thank You for their sacrifice and their courage. May they experience Your abiding joy over each of them and their families. May You especially protect their families.

In Jesus’ name, Amen.”