

# WEEK 5

## My Refuge and My Fortress

### *Psalm 91*

Old Testament scholar C. Hassell Bullock has written one of the very best textbooks on the book of Psalms. Yes, sometimes I geek out and read textbooks. And sometimes I watch three straight hours of *The Office*, so don't be too impressed.

In his chapter on the Psalms of trust, Bullock writes, "Experience is the master teacher of trust. In fact, the spirit of trust seems more often than not to be directly proportional to the intensity of distress or depth of trouble."<sup>1</sup>

When I think of the people whose trust in God I would most like to emulate I am always confronted with the harsh realization that their trust was *learned*, not in the security a pristine Bible college classroom, but on the bloody battlefield of real life. A battlefield that has acquainted them with infertility and multiple miscarriages, or a husband's betrayal followed by a life-shattering divorce they never wanted. Or a battlefield of intense chronic pain and doctors with no answers. These are the ones who have buried babies, fought cancer, loved rebellious children, battled depression, suffered abuse, overcome profound failure, endured poverty. I want their trust, but do I want their stories?

Regardless of my answer, the truth remains that knowing God as a refuge and fortress, dwelling in His shelter, abiding in His shadow, nestling under the warmth and security of His wings – it all necessitates trouble, hardship, danger, and suffering. I dare say the Psalms simply wouldn't exist if God's plan reflected what most of us deep in our hearts really desire – an easy, comfortable, pain-free existence. God's character is a multi-faceted diamond that shines brightest up against the black velvet backdrop of real life. *Hard* life. We know Him because we *need* Him.

Desperately. Every day.

Experience is indeed the master teacher of trust. Studying the Psalms is wonderful, but *living* them is way better. Do I crave "terror...pestilence...evil...plagues" (Ps. 91:5, 6, 10)? Of course not!

God sent His Son to ultimately redeem us from all of these things! But when they come, I can choose praise over fear and thanksgiving over despair, knowing that *nothing hard is ever wasted*. The aspects of trust that I cannot learn in the classroom, God is ever faithful to teach me on the battlefield. These tears are actually helping me see Him more clearly!

The great theologian John Calvin has this to say about Psalm 91:

In this psalm we are taught that God watches over the safety of his people, and never fails them in the hour of danger. They are exhorted to advance through all perils, secure in the confidence of his protection. The truth inculcated is one of great use, for though many talk much of God's providence, and profess to believe that he exercises a special guardianship over his own children, few are found actually willing to intrust their safety to him.<sup>2</sup>

Having meditated on the truths of this Psalm, may we be part of the faithful few!

## Day 1 - READ: What does it say?

- Read Psalm 91 in the Bible you most often use for study. Read it out loud if you can!
- Read Psalm 91 in one or two other translations. The YouVersion Bible app makes this very easy! Biblegateway.com is another free resource for accessing various Bible translations. The NIV, ESV, NASB, and the HCSB are my favorites. The Amplified Bible (AMP) translation is another good one to reference.
- If time permits, read a modern paraphrase of Psalm 91 such as *The Message*. You can access *The Message* for free on your YouVersion phone app or biblegateway.com.
- If possible, use the audio function of your YouVersion Bible app to *listen* to Psalm 91 being read in your favorite translation.

## Day 2 - OBSERVE: What do I see?

Mark up the text below as follows:

- Use a **RED** pen or colored pencil to circle or underline any characteristics, attributes, actions, or names of God.
- Use a **GREEN** pen or colored pencil to underline any actions or characteristics of the person who trusts in God's protection.
- Use any color you want to circle or underline any key words and/or phrases. Look for repetition.
- Put a question mark next to any verse, phrase, or word that puzzles you.

*1 He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High*

*Will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.*

*2 I will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress,*

*My God, in whom I trust!"*

*3 For it is He who delivers you from the snare of the trapper*

*And from the deadly pestilence.*

*4 He will cover you with His pinions,*

*And under His wings you may seek refuge;*

*His faithfulness is a shield and bulwark.*

*5 You will not be afraid of the terror by night,*

*Or of the arrow that flies by day;*

*6 Of the pestilence that stalks in darkness,*

*Or of the destruction that lays waste at noon.*

*7 A thousand may fall at your side*

*And ten thousand at your right hand,*

*But it shall not approach you.*

*8 You will only look on with your eyes*

*And see the recompense of the wicked.*

*9 For you have made the LORD, my refuge,*

*Even the Most High, your dwelling place.*

*10 No evil will befall you,*

*Nor will any plague come near your tent.*

*11 For He will give His angels charge concerning you,*

*To guard you in all your ways.*

*12 They will bear you up in their hands,*

*That you do not strike your foot against a stone.*

*13 You will tread upon the lion and cobra,*

*The young lion and the serpent you will trample down.*

*14 "Because he has loved Me, therefore I will deliver him;*

*I will set him securely on high, because he has known My name.*

*15 "He will call upon Me, and I will answer him;*

*I will be with him in trouble;*

*I will rescue him and honor him.*

*16 "With a long life I will satisfy him*

*And let him see My salvation."*

## Day 3 - OBSERVE: What do I see? (cont'd.)

- 1) To whom is this Psalm addressed according to verse 1?
  
- 2) What aspects of God's work toward His people does this Psalm highlight? (check all that apply)
  - His protection
  - His care
  - His love
  - His desire to save
  
- 3) According to verses 3 and 5-7, from what kind of circumstances was this Psalm written? In other words, what is the real-life context of this poem?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4) What are the four proper names of God used in verses 1 and 2? (Look for the titles that are capitalized.)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5) What are the two action words of verse 1?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 6) What metaphors for God's care and protection do you find in verses 1, 2 and 4?

- 7) Note the contrast between the metaphors of verse 4 (a mama bird and strong shield/fortified wall). What does this reveal to us about God?
  
- 8) What aspect of God's character serves as a "shield and bulwark" according to verse 4?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 9) What assignment does God give angels according to verses 11, 12?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 10) In verse 14 the poem shifts from the Psalmist's voice to God's voice. What does God promise for the person who trusts in Him?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 11) Verse 5 says, "You will not be afraid of the terror by night, or of the arrow that flies by day." What reasons do we have to "not be afraid" according to Psalm 91? List as many as you can find.



## Day 4 - INTERPRET: What does it mean?

- 1) What appears to be the author's purpose in writing this Psalm?
  
- 2) What is the significance of the author's opening the Psalm with four proper names of God (Most High, Almighty, Lord, my God) and four powerful metaphors of His protective work (shelter, shadow, refuge, fortress)? In other words, what do you think the Psalmist is attempting to accomplish with this opening statement?
  
- 3) A basic concordance search for the word "refuge" in the NASB translation of the Psalms revealed no less than 44 occurrences, making the metaphor one of the most pervasive themes in the book. So, let's take some time to think through it....

What is a refuge? (feel free to use a dictionary)

What does the continual use of the metaphor of refuge tell you about the overall purpose of the book of Psalms?

According to Psalm 52:7 and Psalm 118:8, what is the alternative to seeking refuge in God?

- 4) In "Day 3" you identified "dwell" and "abide" as the two action words of verse 1. What do these words imply about how we are to relate to God as our refuge?
  - We should go to Him when times get tough, sort of like a divine emergency hotline.
  - We should look to Him and worship Him at least once a week like good church-going people do.
  - We should seek to maintain a *continual* connection to His presence through prayer, praise, thanksgiving, and meditation on His Word and works.

5) It may surprise you to know that Satan quoted from Psalm 91 when he tempted Jesus to throw himself down from the pinnacle of the temple. Read about this in Matthew 4:5, 6.

What verses from Psalm 91 does Satan quote?

How does Satan's use of these verses reflect how people often misinterpret/misuse verses about God's protection?

What is Jesus' response to Satan? (Matt. 4:7)

What do we learn from Jesus' response?

6) Throughout history God's people have been exposed to all sorts of danger. One quick glance at the life of the apostle Paul exposes the error of thinking that a life of committed discipleship is a life free from danger. Read 2 Corinthians 11:23-28 and list the many dangers that Paul experienced.

7) What did Paul believe about these experiences according to the following verses?

- Romans 5:3-5

- Romans 8:28

- Romans 8:35-39

8) How do Jesus' words in Luke 21:16-18 help us to reconcile God's unfailing protection with the reality of hardship and danger in this life? How is this consistent with what God says in Psalm 91:15: "I will be with him in trouble."?

9) Based on what you have studied in Psalm 91 and the other scriptures we have referenced, complete the following sentence:

While God's protection doesn't guarantee a pain-free, comfortable life, we can be confident that \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Day 5 - APPLY: How does it work?

- 1) What danger(s) do you most fear?
- 2) To what earthly refuge(s) do you tend to run when you are afraid?
- 3) Practically speaking, what does it look like for you to seek refuge in God *alone* for protection from that which you fear?
- 4) Fill in the following blanks with your name and then read the verses out loud. As you seek refuge in God, this is what He says about you!

*“Because \_\_\_\_\_ has loved me, therefore I will deliver her. I will set \_\_\_\_\_ securely on high, because she has known My name. \_\_\_\_\_ will call upon Me, and I will answer her. I will be with her in trouble; I will rescue \_\_\_\_\_ and honor her. With a long life I will satisfy her, and let \_\_\_\_\_ see my salvation.”*

- 5) Spiritual growth consists of applying a little bit of truth to a little bit of life over the course of days, weeks, months, and years. What “little bit of truth” from this Psalm are you seeking to apply right now? In other words, what is your main take-away from your time spent marinating in Psalm 91 and how might it change to way you think/feel/act?

# WEEK 6

## You Alone are God

### *Psalm 86*

I have often said “amen” and felt no less anxious, saddened, or discouraged than I did before I started praying. Growing up in church, I learned at a very young age that if you pray, the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will stand guard over your heart and mind so that the anxiety has to stay away. I cut my spiritual teeth on verses like Philippians 4:6 -7, but then I grew up...and so did my problems. If I’m honest, prayer became a rather unreliable source of peace. Anxiety stuck around. Going to God with the laundry list of my personal struggles just didn’t seem to work.

I’ve always been rigidly confident in the truth of the Bible, and I thank God for that gift of faith. Not once have I ever doubted that what God says about prayer is true. I figured the problem was with me - that I must have been missing something. That there must be some aspect of prayer of which I had somehow remained ignorant. And it must be really complicated if I’d managed to miss it!

The problem *was* with me. I *had* missed something. But it wasn’t complicated. In fact, I think the utter simplicity of it is why I missed it. Sometimes in our spiritual lives we’re out there working hard to mine some deep, hidden treasure, while God is standing next to us shouting out the answers for which we long. We have a dangerous tendency to ignore the obvious.

Somehow throughout all the Sunday school lessons, all the sermons, all the devotionals, all the Christian growth books, and all the Bible studies I had missed the fact that the kind of prayer that brings peace is prayer that focuses first and foremost *on the character of God*. Consider the opening line of The Lord’s Prayer: “Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” God, God, and more God – that’s how prayer must start and how it must be sustained. Laying out your problems to God doesn’t do much. But rehearsing the mind-blowing majesty of God’s character and *then* laying out your problems to God – that’s life-changing! Sometimes, after intentionally seeking to praise God in

prayer, I actually forget to ask for anything. It's as though the praise swallows up the anxiety. Now that I understand this, I see it clearly reflected in the verse I referred to earlier from Philippians 4. Paul writes, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication **with thanksgiving** let your requests be known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (vv. 6-7, emphasis added). Do you see it? There are two words that can utterly transform your prayer life: **with thanksgiving**.

In this same context Paul continues: "Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things." I can think of only one subject in all the universe that *always* measures up to this standard: *God*. Do you want to walk away from your time of prayer with anxiety-crushing joy? *Dwell on God*.

The Psalms show us what this looks like. Psalm 86 in particular is a beautiful example of God-focused prayer. The Psalmist is facing a real crisis. He's got big problems. But he chooses to focus first and foremost on the reality that He serves an even bigger God. And that makes all the difference.

## Day 1 - READ: What does it say?

- Read Psalm 86 in the Bible you most often use for study. Read it out loud if you can!
- Read Psalm 86 in one or two other translations. The YouVersion Bible app makes this very easy! Biblegateway.com is another free resource for accessing various Bible translations. The NIV, ESV, NASB, and the HCSB are my favorites. The Amplified Bible (AMP) translation is another good one to reference.
- If time permits, read a modern paraphrase of Psalm 86 such as *The Message*. You can access *The Message* for free on your YouVersion phone app or biblegateway.com.
- If possible, use the audio function of your YouVersion Bible app to *listen* to Psalm 86 being read in your favorite translation.

## Day 2 - OBSERVE: What do I see?

Mark up the text below as follows:

- Use a **RED** pen or colored pencil to circle or underline any characteristics, attributes, actions, or names of God.
- Use a **GREEN** pen or colored pencil to underline everything for which the Psalmist prays. (Pretty much the whole Psalm will be underlined when you're done!)
- Use any color you want to circle or underline any key words and/or phrases. Look for repetition.
- Put a question mark next to any verse, phrase, or word that puzzles you.

*1 Incline Your ear, O LORD, and answer me;*

*For I am afflicted and needy.*

*2 Preserve my soul, for I am a godly man;*

*O You my God, save Your servant who trusts in You.*

*3 Be gracious to me, O Lord,*

*For to You I cry all day long.*

*4 Make glad the soul of Your servant,*

*For to You, O Lord, I lift up my soul.*



*5 For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive,*

*And abundant in lovingkindness to all who call upon You.*

*6 Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer;*

*And give heed to the voice of my supplications!*

*7 In the day of my trouble I shall call upon You,*

*For You will answer me.*

*8 There is no one like You among the gods, O Lord,*

*Nor are there any works like Yours.*

*9 All nations whom You have made shall come and worship before You, O Lord,*

*And they shall glorify Your name.*

*10 For You are great and do wondrous deeds;*

*You alone are God.*

*11 Teach me Your way, O LORD;*

*I will walk in Your truth;*

*Unite my heart to fear Your name.*

*12 I will give thanks to You, O Lord my God, with all my heart,*

*And will glorify Your name forever.*

*13 For Your lovingkindness toward me is great,*

*And You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.*

*14 O God, arrogant men have risen up against me,*

*And a band of violent men have sought my life,*

*And they have not set You before them.*

*15 But You, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious,*

*Slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness and truth.*

*16 Turn to me, and be gracious to me;*

*Oh grant Your strength to Your servant,*

*And save the son of Your handmaid.*

*17 Show me a sign for good,*

*That those who hate me may see it and be ashamed,*

*Because You, O LORD, have helped me and comforted me.*

## Day 3 - OBSERVE: What do I see? (cont'd.)

- 1) Psalm 89 is a prayer attributed to David. Write out his particular requests in each of the following verses:

vv. 1 and 6 –

v. 2 –

vv. 3 and 16 –

v. 4 –

v. 11 –

v. 17 –

- 2) What circumstance forms the background of this prayer according to verses 1, 7, 13, 14, and 17?

- 3) How does the Psalmist describe himself?

v. 1 –

v. 2 –

v. 16 –

4) How does the Psalmist describe God?

v. 2 – *my God*

v. 5 –

v. 7 – *a God who answers*

v. 8 –

v. 10 –

v. 13 –

v. 15 –

v. 17 –

5) According to verse 13, what specific reason does David give for giving thanks to God and glorifying God's name forever?

6) You have noted the requests presented in the Psalm. Does the Psalm describe God's answer?

## Day 4 - INTERPRET: What does it mean?

- 1) How would you describe the author's overall purpose for Psalm 86?
  
- 2) Both verses 5 and 15 echo the words that God spoke to Moses in Mt. Sinai after the Israelites had utterly failed to keep His covenant (Exodus 34:6). Scholars refer to this as "the formula of grace" and it shows up all over the Psalms. Why do you think this "formula of grace" is repeated in Psalm 86?
  
- 3) In verses 8-10 David praises God's supreme greatness and authority over and above all others. How is this relevant to David's current situation (the threat of violent men who are out to get him)?
  
- 4) David faces an immediate and very real threat from "violent men" who seek his life, but instead of seeking a survival strategy, he prays the words of verses 11 and 12. Commenting on these verses, Derek Kidner writes, "It is a prayer about forming the right habits, rather than making the right moves."<sup>3</sup> What can be learned from this?
  
- 5) What do you think it means to have a "united heart" (NIV: "undivided heart") to fear God's name?
  
- 6) How might the discipline of praise (as outlined in v. 12) be a remedy for divided hearts?

- 7) Why is it significant that the Psalmists actual problem is mentioned toward the end of the Psalm, *after* David has addressed his relationship to God and God's own character and authority? Why is this a helpful pattern for prayer?
  
- 8) The Psalm goes back and forth between lament/crying out and praise. How does this reflect the Christian life?
  
- 9) The Psalm comes to a close without any resolution or answer expressly stated. What do you think happened? Why do you think this?

## Day 5 - APPLY: How does it work?

- 1) The attributes of God most prominently featured in this Psalm are His willingness to hear and act on behalf of His children (vv. 1, 6, 7), His mercy (v. 15), His grace (vv. 5, 15), His patience (v. 15), His steadfast covenant love (vv. 5, 13, 15), His forgiveness (v.5), His supremacy (vv. 8-10), and His trustworthiness (the whole Psalm). Choose one of these attributes and think through why and how it matters in your life today. Form it into the following prayer of thanksgiving:

God, thank you for being \_\_\_\_\_ because

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- 2) Spiritual growth consists of applying a little bit of truth to a little bit of life over the course of days, weeks, months, and years. What “little bit of truth” from this Psalm are you seeking to apply right now? In other words, what is your main take-away from your time spent marinating in Psalm 86 and how might it change to way you think/feel/act?
- 3) What divisions exist in your heart? In other words, what competes with God for your affection and attention?
- 4) Write out verse 11 and make it your heartfelt prayer as you close today.



# WEEK 7

## The Lord is My Shepherd

### *Psalm 23*

I've come across the following story a few different times, and it never gets old. I'm not sure if it actually happened or if it's one of those stories preachers make up to get a point across. Either way, it's a powerful reminder of what our priority should be as we study this familiar and beloved Psalm.

It seems that in a church meeting one evening, the pastor had those who were visiting stand up and introduce themselves. The first to rise and give his name mentioned that he was an actor. Thinking quickly, the pastor asked, "Do you know Psalm 23?"

"Why, yes," the actor replied with a smile.

"Would you mind treating out congregation to a recitation of it?"

"I would love to!" came his enthusiastic answer.

Rising in his place the artist turned, acknowledged his audience, cleared his throat, paused, and then launched into a flawless and eloquent oration of the familiar Psalm.

When he finished, the people in the church burst into hearty applause. It was perfect! And such expression!

Before the pastor moved on to the next visitor, he thanked the actor and remarked, "It's obvious you know Psalm 23 well!"

The next gentleman to introduce himself as a visitor was an elderly senior, bent with age, who commented that he was a retired preacher.

"Oh! Then I'm sure you know Psalm 23, too!" exclaimed the pastor. "Why don't you share your rendition with our people."

With great difficulty the man of God rose from his seat, turned, and with a raspy, aged, shaking voice, began. Slowly he articulated his way through the beloved Psalm. More than once he had to stop and struggle with his tears. When he finally finished and sank into his

seat, there was only the sound of choked sniffles as everyone sat, too stunned to move or respond.

Dabbing his eyes and finding his voice, the pastor of the church quietly spoke, “And you, sir, it’s obvious that you know the Shepherd well.”<sup>4</sup>

There’s a good chance you already know Psalm 23 well. You can quote it. You’re familiar with the structure and the imagery. You’ve heard several sermons on it. Perhaps you’ve read books about it. That’s awesome! But our goal this week – and for the rest of our lives – is to engage our whole hearts and minds to know the *Shepherd* well.

## Day 1 - READ: What does it say?

- Read Psalm 23 in the Bible you most often use for study. Read it out loud if you can!
- Read Psalm 23 in one or two other translations. The YouVersion Bible app makes this very easy! Biblegateway.com is another free resource for accessing various Bible translations. The NIV, ESV, NASB, and the HCSB are my favorites. The Amplified Bible (AMP) translation is another good one to reference.
- If time permits, read a modern paraphrase of Psalm 23 such as *The Message*. You can access *The Message* for free on your YouVersion phone app or biblegateway.com.
- If possible, use the audio function of your YouVersion Bible app to *listen* to Psalm 23 being read in your favorite translation.

## Day 2 - OBSERVE: What do I see?

Mark up the text below as follows:

- Use a **RED** pen or colored pencil to circle or underline any characteristics, attributes, actions, or names of God.
- Use a **GREEN** pen or colored pencil to underline the “I” statements the Psalmist makes. For example, “I shall not want”, v. 1.
- Use any color you want to circle or underline the pronouns used for God (“he” and “you”).
- Put a question mark next to any verse, phrase, or word that puzzles you.

*The LORD is my shepherd,*

*I shall not want.*

*2 He makes me lie down in green pastures;*

*He leads me beside quiet waters.*

*3 He restores my soul;*

*He guides me in the paths of righteousness*

*For His name's sake.*

*4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,*

*I fear no evil, for You are with me;*

*Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.*

*5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;*

*You have anointed my head with oil;*

*My cup overflows.*

*6 Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life,*

*And I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.*

## Day 3 - OBSERVE: What do I see? (cont'd.)

- 1) According to the heading in your Bible, who wrote this Psalm?
  
- 2) Where you do observe a natural shift in the Psalm. (Hint: Look at the pronouns you circled.)
  
- 3) List all of the benefits David experienced as He followed the lead of His Shepherd. Try to paraphrase these in your own words.

v. 1 –

v. 2 –

v. 3 –

v. 4 –

v. 5 –

v. 6 –

- 4) List all of the verbs conveying the activity of the Shepherd that you observe.

v. 2 - \_\_\_\_\_ me lie down

v. 2 - \_\_\_\_\_ me to quiet waters

v. 3 - \_\_\_\_\_ my soul

v. 3 - \_\_\_\_\_ me in right paths

v. 4 – You \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ me

v. 4 – Your rod and staff \_\_\_\_\_ me

v. 5 – You \_\_\_\_\_ a table for me

v. 5 – You \_\_\_\_\_ my head with oil

5) Of what is the Psalmist absolutely sure according to verse 6?

## Day 4 - INTERPRET: What does it mean?

- 1) Note the first two words of the Psalm. Why is this significant?
- 2) What is the significance of the word “my” in verse 1? In others words, how would the Psalm change if it began with “The Lord is THE Shepherd” or “The Lord is A Shepherd”?
- 3) According to 1 Samuel 17:12-15, 34-37, why is this shepherd metaphor a fitting one for David?
- 4) Throughout this study we have essentially been identifying two things in each Psalm: Who God is and how we are to respond. That is exactly how this Psalm begins: “The Lord is....I shall.” What do you think David means by the phrase “I shall not want?”
- 5) What aspect of God’s provision do you think David is seeking to convey with the metaphors of “green pastures” and “quiet waters”?
- 6) What kind of “soul” (a word that encompasses the whole person) needs to be “restored”?
- 7) What is the connection between verse 3 and verse 4 (guidance in paths of righteousness and walking through the valley of deepest darkness)?



8) What drives out fear according to verse 4?

A verse that has greatly helped train my thoughts to dwell on God's presence when I am afraid is Isaiah 41:10. Look it up and write it below. Consider committing it to memory.

9) Sheep don't sit and eat lavishly prepared meals at tables, so it appears as though the metaphor shifts a bit in verse 5. What do you think David is seeking to convey about God in this verse?

10) The word "follow" in verse 6 is more accurately translated "pursue". There's an intensity about it. Think for a moment about David's experience of running for his life as he was hotly pursued by Saul. Saul was not able not overcome him, but God's goodness and lovingkindness surely would. What does this reveal about God?

11) How does this Psalm point us to Jesus? (see Matthew 9:36, John 10:7-11; Hebrews 13:20; 1 Peter 2:25)

## Day 5 - APPLY: How does it work?

- 1) How has God cared for you in the past as His sheep? How is He caring for you now?
- 2) Has He ever led you through a dark and difficult valley? If so, what did you learn about Him there?
- 3) As you meditate on God's faithfulness in your current circumstances, complete the following sentence (you can borrow from Psalm 23, or use your own words):

The Lord is \_\_\_\_\_;

I shall \_\_\_\_\_.

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<sup>1</sup> Bullock, C. Hassell, *Encountering the Book of Psalms: A Literary and Theological Introduction, Second Edition* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001, 2018), 158.

<sup>2</sup> *Calvin's Commentaries, Vol. 10: Psalms, Part III*, tr. by John King, [1847-50], at [sacred-texts.com](http://www.sacred-texts.com/chr/calvin/cc10/cc10025.htm) <http://www.sacred-texts.com/chr/calvin/cc10/cc10025.htm>, accessed January 11, 2019.

<sup>3</sup> Kidner, Derek, *Psalms 73-150* (Dowers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1975), 344.

<sup>4</sup> George, Elizabeth, *The Lord is My Shepherd: 12 Promises for Every Woman* (Harvest House: Eugene, OR, 2000), 183, 184.