

LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Message Series: The Dark
Message Title: The Path of Righteousness
Speaker: Robert Conn / Q&A Panel
Date: October 8, 2017

UP NEXT

- **THE HALLOWEEN BASH - Saturday, October 28th** from 3:00pm-5:00pm at Reality Church. If you've been around Reality for any length of time you know we love The Halloween Bash. It's one of our biggest community events we do. Like previous years, we are asking that each Life Group host a 'trunk' complete with original theme and lots of candy for the kids. It could be a Pirate Ship or a Disco Floor, Candyland or Candy Crush. You're only limited by your imagination. Each trunk will get 2 parking slots. Please let us know if you're going to have any special needs (i.e. generator, extension cords, etc) and we will try to help accommodate. Roger Graber has assured me that an award will be given for the best trunk! Even if your group cannot supply a themed trunk, we still need help in other areas (Set-Up, Event help, & Clean-Up).

MAIN IDEA

What if the Valley of the Shadow of Death is the Path of Righteousness?

INTRODUCTION

- Here's a brief review of weeks 1-3 of The Dark:
 - In Week 1, we learned about the concept of Lament. How almost everyone in the Bible had a story of lament. We learned that Lament is not some sort of preparation for us as Christians to be able to worship. Lament is worship. It's bringing all that you've got to God. All of your doubts as to why something is happening. Bringing it to God and saying, "I don't know why I'm going through this... But I do know you. And I trust you"
 - In Week 2, we looked at how God didn't leave us alone in the dark. His unfailing love (*or the Hebrew word for it... Heseb*) actually came to earth as a man, and that man was Jesus Christ. God could have just looked upon us and felt sorry for us. But He didn't He sent Jesus as a rescue and a light into the middle of our darkness.
 - Then last week we learned that God uses The Dark to shape us but He also uses our response to The Dark to shape others. We looked at the life of Peter and how his journey through The Dark, not only shaped him but others as well.

DISCUSSION

- Have someone read (**Psalm 23**) *i've included it here in the New King James Version.*

¹ *The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.*

² *He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.*

³ *He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.*

⁴ *Yea, 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.*

⁵ *You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.*

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the Lord Forever.

- Do you like Psalm 23 for any particular reason? When do you first remember hearing this Psalm?
- Why do you think this Psalm so popular?
- Where have you heard this Psalm read the most? (Funerals perhaps? In times of Sickness?)
 - If so, that's unfortunate because this Psalm speaks to what Jesus does for us "All the days of our life..." and not just in death.
- This Psalm was written by King David. A man who was no stranger to *The Dark*.
 - When do you think King David wrote this Psalm? Was he young, or do you think this was after he had lived a long life?
 - Although we don't know for certain, the common belief is that he was older.
 - What demographic of modern Christians appreciate this Psalm more? Young Christians or Older Christians?
 - Why do you think that is?
- Think about the times in your life where you have experienced The Dark. Which of the following would apply to you?
 - I feel like God was leading me into The Dark.
 - I feel like my own decisions led me into The Dark.
 - I feel like I am currently in The Dark.
- Again, which of the follow best explains your experience?
 - I didn't learn anything from experiencing The Dark.
 - It was during The Dark that I grew the most.
 - It was after having gone through The Dark that I grew in my faith.
- Was anything asked or shared during the Panel Q&A that meant a lot to you?
 - What was it and why?
- What other promises does the Bible have for those experiencing The Dark?

APPLY IT

- Learn to Lament as part of worship.
- Realize God doesn't watch you in The Dark, God is with you in The Dark.
- Rest in knowing God uses The Dark to shape you, and your response to shape others.
- Consider that the Valley of the Shadow of Death is also the pathway to righteousness.

RESOURCES

- We have compiled a list of reliable, trustworthy counselors who are here to listen and help, as well as many other services for specific needs. Visit reality.church/thedark