

## **Small Group Guide: Walking Through Dark Valleys**

### **Opening Prayer**

#### **Key Takeaways:**

1. Dark valleys are a necessary part of our spiritual journey and growth.
2. God uses difficult times to strengthen our faith and draw us closer to Him.
3. The Good Shepherd (Jesus) leads us through dark valleys; we're not alone.
4. Fear is a common response, but trusting God is the key to overcoming it.
5. Our ultimate destination is eternity with God, which gives perspective to our trials.

#### **Discussion Questions:**

1. The pastor shared personal stories of dark valleys. Can you share a time when you experienced a "dark valley" in your life? How did you feel during that time?
2. How does the image of God as a shepherd leading us through dark valleys impact your understanding of difficult times?
3. The sermon mentioned that some Christians try to stay in "green pastures" and avoid valleys. Why do you think this happens, and what are the dangers of this approach?
4. Discuss the significance of Psalm 23:4: "Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me." How can this verse provide comfort during challenging times?
5. The pastor emphasized that dark valleys are part of our journey, not our destination. How does this perspective change how we might approach difficulties in life?
6. What role does community play in supporting each other through dark valleys? How can we better support one another in our group?

#### **Practical Applications:**

1. Memorize Psalm 23 this week. Reflect on how each verse applies to your current life situation.
2. Write a letter to God expressing your fears and anxieties. Then, write His promises from Scripture as a response to each fear.
3. Reach out to someone in the group or church who might be going through a difficult time. Offer support through prayer, encouragement, or practical help.
4. Start a gratitude journal, focusing on how God has been present in past difficulties. This can serve as a reminder of His faithfulness during future challenges.
5. Identify an area where you've been trying to stay in a "green pasture" instead of following God's leading. Take a step of faith in that area this week.

#### **Closing Prayer:**

Thank God for His presence in our dark valleys. Ask for strength to trust Him more deeply and for opportunities to support others in their journeys.