

Peace Forgiveness Contentment

Peace in an age of anxiety

Small group questions

Leaders - if the questions make no sense or you don't know the answer - please contact bishop@bathurstanglican.org.au

What was the message about?

- How would you summarise the main message of the sermon?
- Discuss the reasons for the prevalent anxiety in today's society, despite material and societal progress

Three clues to unpacking the psalm

1. Why are sheep so vulnerable? How does seeing ourselves in their position help us understand the Psalm?
2. What was unique about the sheep-shepherd relationship in ancient times?
3. Discuss the imagery of God as a shepherd in Psalm 23. Why do you think this image was chosen to describe God's relationship with His people?
4. If you have a good shepherd, you're one happy sheep. Discuss this in terms of the blessings of use having the Lord as our Shepherd.

Three things the shepherd gives = provision, protection, perspective

5. How does the shepherd's provision address not just our physical needs, but our emotional and spiritual ones?
6. How does knowing the Lord is present with us, help us through our dark valleys? What are ways in which we *know* the Lord's presence?
7. The Lord before us as our shepherd, and love and goodness pursuing us. How might grasping this reality change our perspective on living in God's world?

Two closing questions - who is the shepherd and do you know him?

8. Reflect on the portrayal of Jesus as the Good Shepherd in the New Testament. How does this understanding deepen our relationship with Him?
9. Considering the shepherd imagery, has your view of God evolved after the sermon? Have you seen anything in a new light today?
10. Have you experienced moments where you've felt a deep connection with God, sensing Him as your shepherd?
11. What practical steps can we take to continually know and draw closer to our Good Shepherd?

End the session with a time of prayer. Take your anxieties to the Good Shepherd and pray that we will increasingly know God's peace, provision, protection, and perspective in our lives..., and then be able to share something of our experience of Jesus with others.