

Life Group Questions
For the sermon on October 13, 2019

Get-To-Know-Me Question:

What was something you experienced that seemed too good to be true, but actually was true?

Into-the-Bible Questions:

Read **Psalm 23.**

1. This is a familiar text that is often quoted in Sunday morning worship services, as well as funerals and memorial services. Although the passage centers around God, there are mentions of forces working against us. What are some examples in the text?

2. The *rod and staff* mentioned in verse 4 are likely two different tools used by ancient shepherds. The rod, or club, was used to defend the flock from predators, and the staff, a long crook, was used to guide and steer the sheep. Why do you think the author uses these tools as metaphors in the psalm?

3. Verse 5 departs from the shepherd imagery, and instead paints a picture of an intimate meal that has been arranged by God. Why is it significant that this is done in the presence of enemies?

4. Overall, what central themes do you think this psalm is trying to communicate?

Let's Go Deeper:

Read **Esther 3:5-6**

1. In the beginning of this chapter, are introduced to the main antagonist of the story, Haman. After Mordecai disobeys the king's command and refuses to bow before Haman, Haman asks that King Ahasuerus issue a decree for the destruction of the Jewish people. Why do you think Mordecai refused to bow? Have you ever been faced with a decision to between standing up for what you believe to be right, even if it meant breaking a rule or expectation?

Read **Esther 3:5-14**

2. By this point in the story, Esther has been named queen, but her identity as an Israelite woman is still hidden from her husband, King Ahasuerus. Although *God* has not been explicitly mentioned in the story, Mordecai believes that Esther could have been placed in her royal position "for such a time as this." Share a time in your life when you felt that you were "placed" in a position for a particular purpose.

Read **Esther 3:15-17**

3. Two weeks ago, we highlighted spiritual practices such as Study of Scripture, Prayer, Fasting, Meditation, and Acts of Mercy. These practices help center us amidst our busy lives, and also root us in our identity in Christ. Last week, we discussed if engaging in a spiritual practice ever changed your mind about how you should approach a difficult situation or decision. Esther orders Mordecai and the Jewish people in Susa to fast for three days as she beseeches the king to overturn the decree. Share a time that you engaged in a spiritual practice, and it changed a circumstance or situation.