

## Self-reflection starter questions

Read through Psalm 23 as a picture of abundant life and reflect upon the following questions.

You can choose to answer them all or just the ones that feel most relevant to you.

***The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want...***

Do I live with a sense of inner contentment, or am I always looking for something else to fulfil or satisfy me? What are my priorities and what do they reveal about what is most important to me?

***He leads me beside still waters...***

Do I live with an abiding sense of peace? What robs me of peace? What can I do in Christ to resist this?

***He leads me in paths of righteousness...***

What is the fruit of righteousness in my life? (Consider the fruit of the Spirit – Gal. 5:22) In what areas am I not bearing fruit? Do I live with a confidence in God's acceptance of me or give more thought to my own or other's opinions / criticisms of me?

***For His Name's sake...***

Does my daily life centre around worship for God's glory? Am I grateful or do I grumble? Is all I have in Jesus enough to fulfil all my ambitions and hopes? If not, where could rejoicing as a practice be used during my daily thinking?

***Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil...***

Does my hope stand firm in suffering? Where does fear have a hold in my life? How can I realise God as my fortress, strength and stronghold the next time my sufferings overwhelm me?

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

Do I welcome the Lord's discipline, or do I resist it? Do I seek out what God is wanting to teach me in moments or seasons of affliction or loss, or do I just withdraw from Him? Where in your life might the Holy Spirit be wanting to refine / prune you?

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

Am I walking by faith and in victory? Or are there areas of my life or my thinking where the enemy has a foothold? Am I enslaved to any habitual sin or pattern of wrong thinking? What can I do to combat lies with truth?

***You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows...***

Do I experience a joy in Jesus – in his sacrifice for my sins and my forgiveness and acceptance – that outweighs the travails or irritations that arise in daily life? What would it look like in my daily life to 'rejoice always?'

***Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life...***

Does faith in Gods governance for good help me to overcome adversity? What has robbed me of assurance in Gods goodness and purpose for me and what can I do in Christ to resist this next time?

***And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.***

Am I aware of God's presence with and in me throughout the day? When, and how, do I feel closest to the Lord? When do I feel furthest away? What practices / habits could I adopt that would help me to keep company with Jesus?

**Journalling**

Keeping a journal can be a great way to regularly examine yourself and reflect upon your spiritual progress. Why not set aside some time once a week to reflect upon these questions in the light of your past week to see where the Holy Spirit is working in your life.