

ELEMENTARY DISCUSSION GUIDE

CHARACTER TRAIT:

GENTLENESS

DEFINITION:

Responding in a kind and careful way

MEMORY VERSE:

"Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowances for each other's faults because of your love." **EPHESIANS 4:2**

FINISH LINE:

God responds to us with gentleness

READ: PSALM 23

WHAT DOES IT SAY? (OBSERVATION)

1. How is God described? (*Shepherd*) Who are we? (*Sheep*)
2. Look at verses 2-3. How did God take care of David, the author of this psalm? (*God let him rest, renewed his strength, and guided him along the right paths.*)
3. Does God promise life will be easy and that we will always get to be in green meadows and by peaceful streams? (*No.*) Look at verse 4, what might we have to walk through? (*Dark valleys*)
4. Why was David not afraid when he had to walk through dark valleys? (*David knew God was close beside him and would protect and comfort him.*)

WHAT DOES IT MEAN? (INTERPRETATION)

1. Why do you think David was confident that with God he had all that he needed? (*David knew that good shepherds always take care of their sheep and that the Lord would take care of his needs and protect him.*)
2. What do you think the purpose of the shepherd's "rod" and "staff" is? (*To chase away the other animals who might hurt the sheep and to direct the sheep in the right direction.*)
3. What do you think it means that God pursues us with love all the days of our lives? (*Even if we try to run away, He will show us His love. He will still respond to us in a kind and careful way because He is loving and good.*)
4. How long does God's goodness and love last? (*Forever!*)

WHY DOES IT MATTER? (APPLICATION)

1. How does God guide us on right paths? How do we know where to follow Him? (*Through prayer, the Bible, wise counsel from other believers.*)
2. What are some dark valleys or hard times you, or someone you know, has had to walk through? How did God respond to you in a kind and careful way when you were in a dark valley?
3. How does it make you feel to know that God is close to you and will respond to you with gentleness when you are walking through a hard time?