

## Session 3: Paths (Psalm 23:3)

### SESSION GOALS

Every session has a point—what we want to walk away from the discussion knowing, feeling, and doing.

**Main Idea:** When the Lord is our shepherd, we receive the righteousness of Christ as a free gift that he extends to us for the glory of his name.

**Head Change:** To believe that God has counted us righteous not because of our obedience, but because of the obedience of Christ.

**Heart Change:** To feel free from the need to earn God's acceptance through our good works

**Life Change:** To repent of any ways in which we are living to build up our name and seek solely to live our lives for the sake of making much of the glory of God.

### OPEN

**Describe a time when you broke the rules as a kid—the funnier the better. What happened? What were the consequences?**

Learning—and choosing—right from wrong is an important part of growing up. As Christians, we have a God who will not only show us what it means to do what's right, but he also enables us to be righteous. Up to this point in this series, we've talked about how God is our shepherd, which means he provides for us and leads us to rest. This week we'll explore what it means that he leads us into righteousness.

### READ

Read Psalm 23:1–6.

Show Session 3: *Psalm 23:3* (7 minutes).

### DISCUSS

So far, we've studied some pretty spectacular truths about God as well as what we receive by following him. When the Lord is our shepherd, we lack nothing. He leads us into green pastures, beside still waters, and restores our souls. But why? What is the grand goal behind the kindness he extends to us? That's the topic of our session today.

Read Psalm 23:3.

The final half of verse 3 introduces us to one additional benefit of knowing him that we haven't talked about before—he leads us in paths of righteousness. **What is righteousness? How would you define it according to your understanding of Scripture?**

#### DUST OFF THE HEBREW

The Hebrew term David uses to describe righteousness is *zedek*. In its most basic sense, the word refers to that which is right or upright. But in the context of Psalm 23, it carries a deeper sense. Certainly, God cares for our physical well-being and often leads us along such paths, but he is far more concerned with the makeup of our hearts. The *zedek* David has in mind here concerns external health, but also internal salvation. So not only does he provide us a place among his flock and grant us the peace we need, but he also extends to us salvation for the sake of his name, which is further made clear through the example of Jesus Christ who laid down his life for his sheep. Psalm 23 may be short, but it overflows with the generosity of our God in heaven.





