



## Life Groups in Central Telford Parish

### Summer 2016 "Live Like You Mean It"

Week beginning 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2016

## You Are Invaluable

- **Welcome**

What is the biggest risk you have ever taken? Did it work out well?

- **Worship**

Read Psalm 23 and the Reflection at the end of the study. You may like to play some music for people to quietly wait on God – Crimmond, Rutter or Stuart Townend, there are many versions of Psalm 23 available! Ask God to teach you something of the profound relationship that David describes in Psalm 23.

- **Word**

Think of a team sport – any one will do!

- ❖ Who is the most important person in the team? Why?
- ❖ Who is the least important person? Why?
- ❖ How can we discover which is which?
- ❖ What did Jesus say in Luke 13:30 about importance?
- ❖ Do we need to look at teams differently?

Read 1 Samuel 17:38-51

- In verses 38-39, what is the underlying message of David trying on the armour? Who or what is Saul encouraging David to trust in? Do you think David ever had any intention of wearing it? Read Psalm 20:7
- How are we tempted to arm ourselves for the battles we face? What do we use to defend ourselves (eg sarcasm)? What do we use as weapons (eg accusations)? Are these ever effective?
- You probably won't have time to look at this in this study – but read Ephesians 6:13-17 to see the armour God provides!
- Verse 40: some presume that David took five smooth stones instead of just one because he had some doubt. However, there is no indication in the story that by picking up five smooth stones instead of one that David was doubting God. Rather, David was simply being prepared. What if the Philistines attacked him after he killed Goliath? How can we prepare ourselves for battle – what do we do beforehand? And what do we take with us into our battles?
- Verses 41-43: Goliath resorts to insults – but uses questions to try and fill David's mind with doubts. Read Genesis 3:1 and Luke 4:3 to see questions that the devil uses to attack. What sort of questions does he use in our lives to try and promote doubt in our minds?
- Verses 45-47: David knew his moment had come. After him being anointed by Samuel some years earlier (1 Samuel 16:13), he had been filled with the Spirit so that he sensed God's guiding him literally into the valley of the shadow of death. Think back to that moment of anointing ... think back to what David wrote in Psalm 23 ... read what David says in these verses. What gives him the confidence to say them?
- Verse 51. What difference was there in the Israeli army through David's actions?

Let's be realistic – the heroes of the Bible such as Noah, Gideon, David and many, many more acted with a clear and uncluttered assurance that God was speaking to them and seemed to have enormous faith to follow through what they had been told to do. But I would bet that every single one of them had moments of fear and doubt!

And another – important thing ... on their own none of these could have succeeded in the work God called them to: Noah couldn't have repopulated the world on his own, Gideon needed 300 men to make the noise to defeat the Midianites and here ... David could not defeat the Philistine army all on his own, even after killing Goliath!

Which brings us back to the role of others in whatever team we are part of ...

- ❖ Why do we often feel that our role is not important?
- ❖ What lies does the devil whisper in our ear to make us feel this way?
- ❖ How can Psalm 23 help us in this?
- ❖ Read 1 Corinthians 12:14-18. In all Churches, there are those who have more “starring” roles than others and there can often be jealousies among others – which is what Paul is addressing here. In churches there are more visible leadership and other roles but, like the body and like a team, everyone needs to play their vital part in order for it to be a fully functioning and successful group.
- ❖ In other words YOU ARE INVALUABLE!

- **Walk**

- ❖ When you read Psalm 23, are you able to identify yourself in the sheep and shepherd picture described?
- ❖ Do you know what your role is in the life of your Church? If it is appropriate – share it.
- ❖ How far would you be able to say “I am invaluable” in the life of the Church?
- ❖ Are there areas in which you think God might be wanting to use you in the team?
- ❖ What difference would it make to others if you grasp this idea and run with it?
- ❖ What are the risks?

If you feel able to, ask for prayer from others. Spend some time listening to God and sharing any words, pictures, verses you think he might be saying to you as an individual or as a group. Be bold and brave – share with one another and discuss what you sense God is saying. Pray for any other specific issues people are facing in the Life Group.

- **Next Time ...**

Week beginning 30<sup>th</sup> October:

**1 Samuel 18:1-11: Be An Obedient Hard Working Servant**

David is the glory boy and a national hero. How does he keep his feet on the ground?



## Psalm 23 – A Reflection

*The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.*

The Shepherd watches.  
The Shepherd keeps watching.  
The Shepherd is aware of the dangers.  
The Shepherd knows the needs.  
The Shepherd ensures food and water.  
The Shepherd cares.  
The Shepherd loves.

The LORD is my shepherd,  
I shall want for nothing.  
He will keep watch over my life.  
He is aware and knows my needs.  
He will ensure, care  
and, above all, love.

He will love, and love perfectly.

Perfect love casts out fear.  
Perfect love gives and goes on giving.  
Perfect love looks like a Saviour crucified.

The LORD is my perfectly-loving shepherd

*He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters,*

My Shepherd knows when I lie down and when I rise.  
My Shepherd knows when I need to be still and when I need to be active.  
My Shepherd knows.  
Because he loves.

*He restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.*

He knows me.  
He knows my failings, my faults and my frailties.  
He knows my need of forgiveness.  
He doesn't just know about it – he addressed it.  
He has restored my soul.  
He goes on restoring my soul.  
He will take me to places where I must be.  
He will lead me to where I will bring Glory to Him.

*Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil,  
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.*

There are times of struggle.  
There are times of danger.  
There are times of risk.

There are times when fear stalks my every breath.  
There are times when all my good intentions seem to evaporate in battle of life.  
There are times when I am scared.

He is with me.  
His authority, his rod and his staff are there for me to hold on to.  
The Shepherd never leaves me.  
Even in the darkest, loneliest, bleakest day of my life.  
The Shepherd is still my Shepherd.  
I am still a sheep of His pasture.  
Because he loves.

*You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.  
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.*

I cling on to the rod and staff of his authority.  
In them I stand tall.  
Though giants may taunt and threaten, the authority of the Shepherd is greater.  
I am a beloved sheep.  
I am a beloved child.  
I am loved by the Shepherd who gave himself for the flock.  
I stand tall in the valley of the shadow of death.  
I stand tall when I face the giant across the valley.  
I feel the anointing of your love dripping down my cheeks.  
The abundance of the Shepherds love flows into my cup and overflows to those around.  
I stand tall.

*Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.*

Though I would like to stay by still waters,  
The Shepherd takes me to the valleys and the steep slopes  
Where the pasture may be sparse but the experience spectacular.

Goodness and love will follow me  
but only if I follow the goodness and love of the Shepherd who leads  
and live wherever he takes me.

The Shepherd watches.  
The Shepherd keeps watching.  
The Shepherd is aware of the dangers.  
The Shepherd knows the needs.  
The Shepherd ensures food and water.  
The Shepherd cares.  
The Shepherd loves.

The LORD is my shepherd,  
I shall want for nothing.