

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY
SOCCER DEVOTIONS

4-9 year olds

Week 3

You are with Me

You are with Me

The objective is the goal or main teaching point of this week's study. If you convey one thing to your players, make it this.

Read this passage aloud to the kids, as it will be the focus of this week's study. Each week's memory verse will be in bold.

Here is where we will discuss today's passage with the players. This can be read off the page or summarized and explained in the coach's own words.

Objective This study will look at how the Lord's presence with us helps us through difficult circumstances.

Scripture Passage:

"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. **Yea, 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.**"

Psalm 23:1-4 (verse 4 in **bold**)

In the Word

As we continue to study Psalm 23 and what it means for the Lord to be our Shepherd, today's verse tells us that sometimes as we follow Him, we go through a place with an interesting name: the valley of the shadow of death. Now what kind of place does that sound like to you? Do you think it's a nice, safe, happy place? Or does it sound dangerous and scary? Yet the writer of this Psalm says that even though he is going through such a difficult place, he isn't afraid. How is that possible? Because the Lord, our Good Shepherd, is with him.

You've probably never walked through a place that was actually called "the valley of the shadow of death," but all of us have had times in our lives when we were sad, afraid, lonely, or going through something difficult. Maybe you got lost and were alone or afraid. Maybe you went to a new school where you didn't know anyone. Or maybe you or someone you love was seriously sick or injured. You could even be going through one of these times today. Yet our verse tells us that when such times come, you don't have to be afraid because God is with you.

To understand why we don't have to be afraid, let's again look at the picture of a shepherd. Imagine a sheep wandering through a dark valley, with predators all around. If the sheep was on its own, that would be pretty scary! But when the shepherd is there, the sheep doesn't have to be afraid because the shepherd will protect it. He can guide the sheep to safety and use his rod and staff to fight off predators. The Lord does the

In the Word (Continued)

same thing for us. When we face things that are difficult or scary, He is right there with us, helping us with our problems. When you're sad, He's there with you to comfort you. When you're afraid, He's there beside you, protecting you. When you need help, He's there for you.

Sometimes when we are going through a difficult situation, it can be hard to trust that the Lord is really with us. After all, we can't see Him with our eyes. But even though we can't see Him, He promised that He would always be with us (Matthew 28:20) and that He would never leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5). We can trust these promises by faith. It can also be helpful to remember all the times God has been there for us and all the things He's done for us in the past. He has never left us before, and we can trust Him to be with us still today.

"On the Field" gives some in-game situations where today's lesson can be applied, while "Off the Field" gives examples from everyday life. Encourage them to do the things you listed during the game today.

On the Field

- In a situation where you have a teammate or opponent who is unkind to you, the Lord can encourage you and help you to keep doing what's right.
- If you make a big mistake during your game and feel discouraged or embarrassed, remember that the Lord is still with you.
- Sometimes when you play soccer, you can get injured. God sees you when you are hurt, He knows what you're going through, He cares, and He can help you.

Off the Field

- When you find yourself in a situation where you are alone and afraid, remember the truth of Psalm 23:4, that the Lord is with you, helping and protecting you.
- Sometimes you may face problems with friends. People may let you down, but God never will. He will never leave you.
- Times of sadness and loss are difficult, but Jesus sees you when you cry and is there for you.

These are some final notes/goals to accomplish this week. These are not meant to be read, but are instructions for the coach.

The Game Plan

1. Review last week's memory verse, Psalm 23:3. Give a ticket to anyone who can recite it.
2. Learn and memorize Psalm 23:4 with your team. Encourage them to practice the verse over the week.
3. Ask if any of the players are going through a difficult situation right now. Pray for them as a team and encourage them with the truth that the Lord is with them.