



Psalm 23

Psalm 23:4-6 – The Valley / Table / Dwell

- **Psalm 23:4-6**, *“Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”*

- **Main Idea:**

- {Vs. 4} Our hope in times of darkness is the presence of God, not the resolution of our circumstances.

- {Vs. 5} God does not just accept those who surrender their lives to Christ – He delights in them as children adopted into his family.

- {Vs. 6} The ultimate hope of our Christian faith is to dwell with God forever, and that is a promise for those who belong to his flock.

- **Head Change:**

- {Vs. 4} To know that God is present with us as we walk through times of suffering.

- {Vs. 5} To know that God is pleased with us based on the perfect righteousness of Christ.

- {Vs. 6} To know that even in difficult days, God is giving us His goodness and mercy.

- **Heart Change:**

- {Vs. 4} To feel confidence when facing difficulty based on the comfort experienced through God's presence.

- {Vs. 5} To feel the Lord's delight not because of what we have done, but because of what Christ has done on our behalf.

- {Vs. 6} To feel strengthened by the truth that God's mercy can overcome any and all of our sin.

- **Life Change:**

- {Vs. 4} To reject any fears we have about suffering while in this world, knowing that our true hope is in God and the comfort He brings.

- {Vs. 5} To reject any behaviors or habits in our lives where we are trying to earn God's acceptance and instead rest in the acceptance He has freely given to us through faith in Christ.

- {Vs. 6} To pursue God's presence as the solution to our longings rather than freedom from our temporary circumstances.

Personal Reflection & Application

- If verse 4 – and Psalm 23 as a whole – is painting an accurate picture of reality, do you believe Christians today have a good understanding of what the Bible teaches about suffering? Do you understand? Why or why not?

- In what ways should your faith in Christ be strengthened by the truth that the creator of the world cares for you?

- What's one way the truth that God delights in you here and now could change how you approach your relationship with Him today?

- What can you do practically to rest in God's acceptance this week? What do you need to surrender to Him in order to do so?

- Where are you in need of mercy today? How should the truth that God's mercy follows you through faith in Christ meet you in that need?

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- How are you orienting your life around the presence of God? What can you do to find spaces throughout your day to make yourself aware of His presence? To soak up His Word and spend time in prayer with Him?
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Go Deeper

What is David's consistent request in each of these passages?

Read more
about dwelling
with God in
the following
verses:

Psalm 27:3-4;
42:1-2; 63:1-7

What does it say about his perspective in difficult times?

How should David's example in these verses change the way you pray when facing suffering?

Read more about Biblical suffering in the following verses:

John 16:32-33

James 1:2-4

Romans 5:1-5



Based on these passages, does suffering seem like an optional experience for Christians in this world?



What is the purpose of suffering in our lives?



In what ways do these passages echo David's words in Psalm 23 about our hope in suffering?

Live It Out!

- **Memorize**

- Continue working on memorizing Psalm 23.

- **Pray**

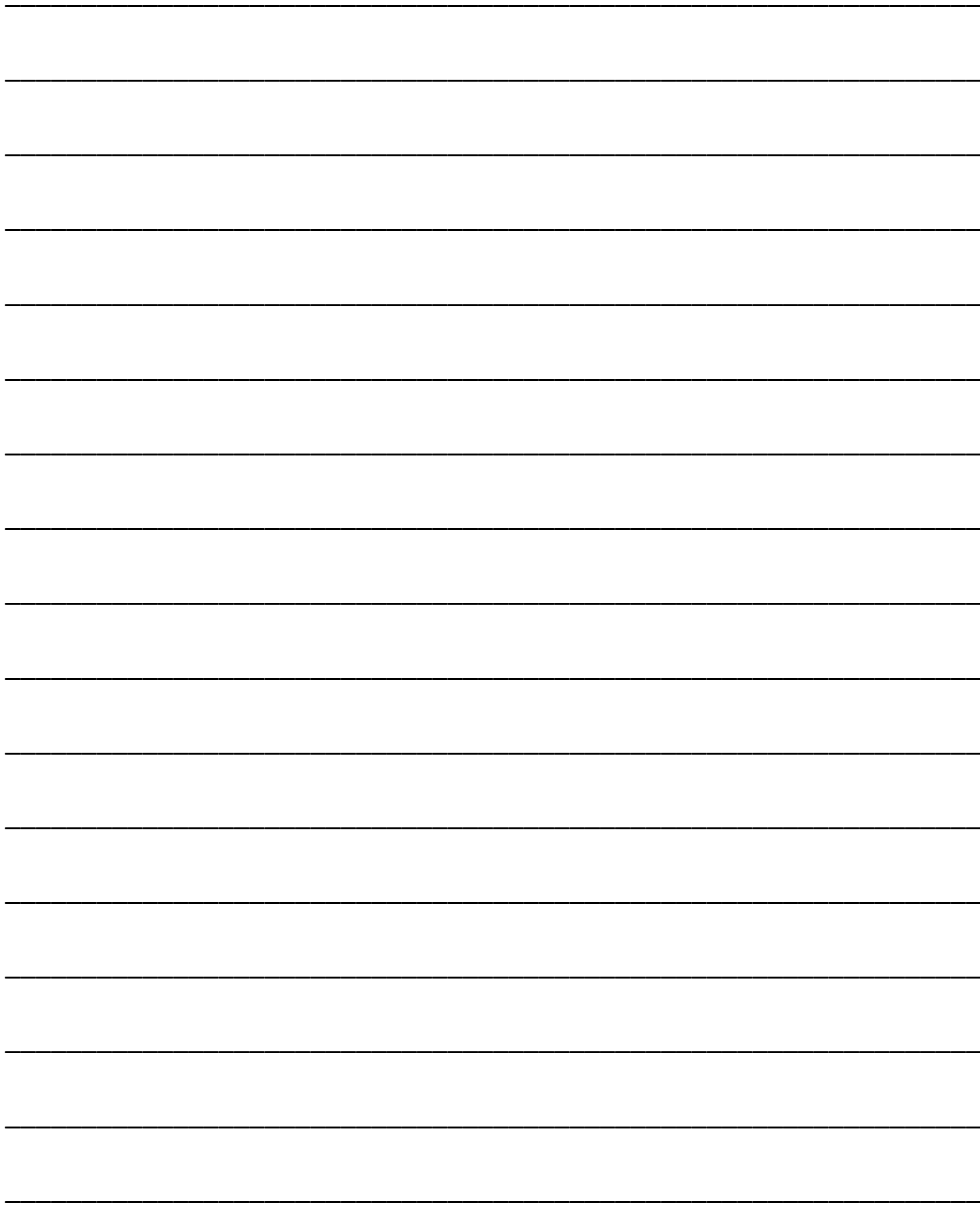
- Whether or not you are currently in a season of difficulty, ask the Lord to prepare you for suffering. Pray that He would remove all other shepherds that compete for priority in your life so that He alone would be your comfort in both good and bad times.
- Ask the Lord to help you see Him as He truly is and to more fully believe in the richness of His love for you.
- Each morning this week, before you start your day, take a moment to invite God into whatever you have planned (work, errands, school, etc.). Ask Him to help you sense His presence as you go about your day.

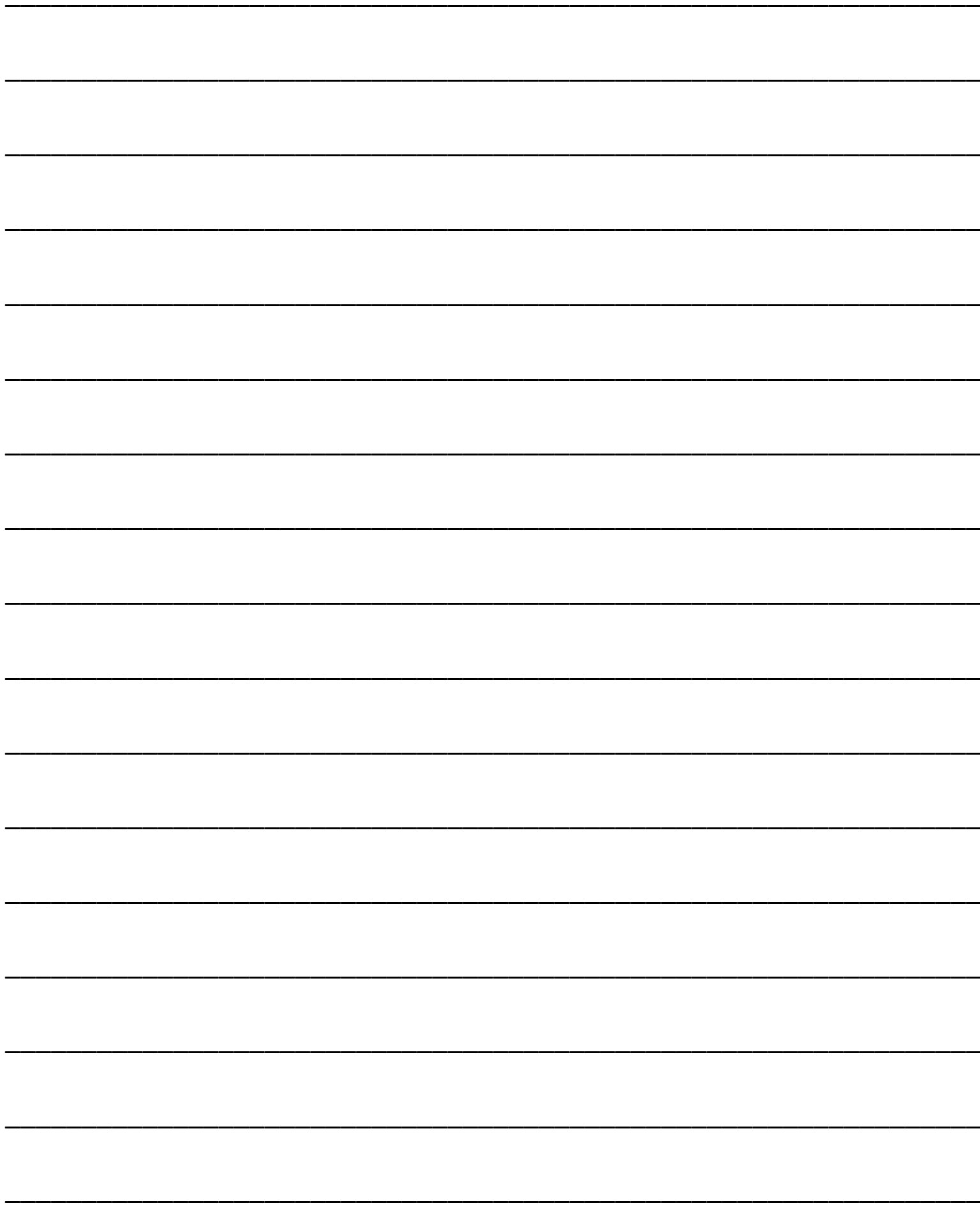
- **Journal**

- Set aside some time this next week to reflect on times you have faced suffering in the past. For each instance, write down 2-3 specific ways that God comforted you throughout that time with His protection and guidance.

- **List**

- Take out a small piece of paper and write down 2-3 specific ways that God has demonstrated His delight in you at various points in





ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Community Book Exchange** – Third Saturday of every month :: Next date: Saturday, September 19th from 11am to 3pm
- **Prayer Walk** – Every 2nd Monday of the month :: Next date: Monday, September 14th at 5:30pm
- **Faithlife Giving** – Tithes & Giving. Go to www.TheGatheringBV.com/giving
- **New Sermon Series:** *Walking in Truth, Surrounded by Lies*
- **Weekly Prayer**

○ Church: Lighthouse Ministries

○ Businesses: Domino's Pizza

Perry Ward Agency,

Global Vista Technologies,

Pawn All of Buena Vista, LLC

- **Announcement Notes:** _____
