



Overview

Home ... when we think of that word, the optimist in all of us may picture comfort, warmth, happiness, security, and rest. At least that's the way it's portrayed in the movies – white picket fences, perfectly kept homes that smell of home-baked chocolate chip cookies filled with people who love each other and are full of joy and laughter. There's nothing but joy and happiness in "Pleasantville," right?

Others of us live in the "real world" where life is rarely perfect and isn't always pleasant. In fact, we would say that home isn't nearly as comforting and peaceful as we'd aspire for it to be. And security and rest are hard to find, much less homemade cookies and white picket fences! Life is hard, and we must endure hard and heavy things. But what isn't just a trite line from a movie or a vain expression are the words David penned from this week's final verse of Psalm 23. These words convey a sure and steadfast promise that we can put our hope in and base our homes and lives on – both in the here and now and for eternity ...

***Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever. – Psalm 23:6***

Going Deeper

- What does it mean to "pursue" something or someone? Has anyone ever pursued you? What was that like? Explain.
- What thoughts come to mind when you think of home?
- Share some struggles you are currently facing.

Making it Stick

God's Guidance is ...

- **An Action of Grace** (*Surely*)
 - What is grace?
 - How do you see God's grace displayed in these verses?
 - Exodus 34:6, John 1:14, 16-17, John 6:44, Psalm 94:17-19
 - Read Luke 15:1-7. What is significant about the shepherd in this passage?
 - How have you seen God pursue (or go after) you or someone you know?
 - How have you seen God's guidance as an action of His grace in your life?
- **A Work of Completion** (*goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life*)
 - Often we are unable to see or understand the "whys" in what we are going through. How can knowing and trusting the character of God help us see "goodness and mercy" in the hard places on our journey?

- Can you begin to believe these struggles are works of completion in our lives given to us by God for His glory?

Every experience that God gave us, every person He puts in our lives, is the perfect preparation for the future only He can see. – Corrie Ten Boom

- Philippians 1:6, 2 Corinthians 4:16-18
- Share a struggle you have faced or are facing and discuss ways you can view this situation in light of eternity or in light of God's overall plan and completion of your life.

He tempers our turbulence and reassures our restlessness with the assurance that He is with us and is working on our behalf "all the days of my life." – David H. McKinley

- **A Service of Safety** (*and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever*)

- Read John 14:1-6.
- Do you know the Shepherd, or do you just know "about" Him? Have you trusted and accepted him? Is He Lord and Master of your life? (In other words, are you following Him or is He having to chase after you?)
- Has God placed someone in your life who needs to be told about the Shepherd and the assurance you have in dwelling with Him forever? Who can you share Jesus with this week?

Our final destination is unhindered fellowship with Jesus Christ. And it is our final destination that should define everything we do in the meantime. – Bryan MacPhail

What can you do this week to pursue unhindered fellowship with Jesus?

Here are some suggestions ...

Commit to:

- Read your Bible daily
- Pray daily (and throughout the day)
- Trust God's goodness, grace, and mercy in the hard times

Living It Out

Let Psalm 23:6 be your prayer this week ...

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

Jesus, You are good. You are full of mercy all the time. You pursue me every day because You are Jehovah, the One who made a solid and everlasting covenant with Your people. Thank You for loving me so much. Thank You for the grace You displayed for me at the cross and the grace You give me in my everyday life. Help me rest in Your goodness even when I can't see that what You're doing is good. Help me say, "This portion You are giving me is a good portion" all the days of my life. In the name of my strong and loving Shepherd I pray, amen.