**FOCUS** in 2020

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**I Am Not Alone –** *A study in Psalm 23*

***Soak It Up!***



**I have always loved Psalm 23 but have grown in my appreciation of it even more as we have been walking the text out together these last seven weeks.** I am grateful for the life of David and how God would use him to encourage us as we journey through our own lives.

David worshipped; he complained; he asked God for answers in times of doubt. And through it all, he was met with the never-ending love of a personal and purposeful God, who was with him every step of the way. In Psalm 23, David reflects and writes about His reliance on the Lord as His shepherd and how God cares for Him in his most difficult of times.

**I am sure you have or will have times** where you have some weighty decisions, exhausting demands, complications in relationships, dark valleys you find yourself walking through. There are times where you feel or will feel under attack. Times when you feel physically and emotionally worn out. Maybe spiritually dry. Life can be full of difficulties, but …

Life’s difficulties are an invitation to **intimacy** with God.

The Lord is a generous **host**.

And He is ready to receive you in the midst of life’s struggles.

He invites you to be His honored **guest**.

When your days are full of weighty decisions, exhausting demands, complicated relationships, dark valleys of problems and uncertainty, or lurking evil. When you feel attacked and like you are surrounded by enemies,

*You* ***prepare a table before me*** *in the presence of my enemies;*

**Psalm 23:5a**

At God’s table:

You are **accepted**.

You have **provision**.

You are **safe**.

*… you* ***anoint my head with oil****;*

**Psalm 23:5b**

**Good hospitality** - Anointing with oil was traditional among the Eastern culture as a practice of welcoming someone to their home. Typically, olive oil possibly mixed with a fragrant scent was placed on the head and face of the guest. It soothed the skin and refreshed your guest, reviving their bodies. This practice still happens today to honor someone as an act of hospitality.

In Luke 7, Mary sees Jesus coming for dinner at Simon’s house and she brought out very expensive perfume and began to anoint Jesus with it. Jesus commends Mary instructs Simon’s lack of hospitality.

*You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment.*  **Luke 7:44-46**

The Hebrew word translated to anoint is **“to fatten”** or some say …

You are **blessed** as God’s honored guest.

He meets you with the most incredible hospitality. He anoints you with His presence. The Holy Spirit refreshes you, lifts up your spirit, encourages you, strengthens you, invigorates you, quiets you from all the noise with His steadfast blessings.

*Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good!* ***Blessed is the man*** *who takes refuge in Him!*  **Psalm 34:8**

*…my cup* ***overflows****.*

**Psalm 23:5b**

When a generous host overfilled a cup, the host is saying “There is more than enough.” To overfill a cup is saying, “Stay as long as you like; I am grateful to have you, willing to serve you; I have more where that came from. You are my honored guest.” And I am here to lavish my goodness on you.

**Our God is a God of extra abundance!**

You have more than **enough** as God’s honored guest.

*Oh, how abundant is your goodness, which you have stored up for those who fear you and worked for those who take refuge in you, in the sight of the children of mankind.*  **Psalm 31:19**

When you come to God’s table and He blesses you as His honored guest…

Carve out some **time** and **space**.

*And God is able to make all grace* ***abound*** *to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things in all times, you may* ***abound*** *in every good work.*  **2 Corinthians 9:8**

The Holy Spirit empowers you to do so.

Your portion from God will not run out. You come to the table as often as you need to, and He will keep filling your cup to overflowing

You can **give** what you have **received**.

Whatever God overflows your cup with, you can give to others.

If it is comfort – you have comfort to give.

If it is joy – you have joy to give.

If it is mercy – you have mercy to give.

If it is forgiveness – you have forgiveness to give.

If it is grace – you have grace to give.

If It is love – you have love to give.

When Jesus is your Shepherd, your generous host … He is all you need. **Nothing more … nothing less … nothing else.**