



A LIFE IN BALANCE

PSALM 23

Group Study Guide

Fruitfulness: Investing in What Matters

Psalm 23:5b

you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

Sermon Notes:

Another way for us to evaluate what belongs in our lives and what needs to be weeded it is whether these activities are bearing fruit or not – both in a practical and spiritual sense. Sometimes the hardest decision is to let go of something good so that there is room for something greater.

4 Purposes of Anointing in Scripture

anointed for healing – medicinal, spiritual - Isaiah 1:6, James 5:14

anointed as an honour – chosen, beloved, set apart

anointed for a spiritual blessing – consecration, before you even begin, presence of God - Leviticus 8:30

anointed for a task – special responsibility (king, priest, prophet, messiah)

1 John 2:20,27 *“you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge... the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie—just as it has taught you, abide in him”*

3 Types of Overflow in Spiritual Life

- ancient middle east hospitality - obligated to give food and drink – but...

- half – not wanted, full – ok – stay if you want, - overflowing – you are most welcome

overflow of hospitality/generosity – Ephesians 3:20 more than we ask or imagine

overflow of presence of God – Luke 11:13, Acts 2

overflow of abundance of life – John 10:10

Where is my anointing? Is my cup overflowing?

Yes – return thanks and praise and honour to God

No – why not? - what is blocking the flow of anointing and fruitfulness in my life

- am I walking in obedience and submission to God as Lord? listening for his voice?

- have I left no room for God’s blessings – space and time given over to other things

- relationships that tear down, wear down, pull down instead of build up

John 15 – Vine and Branches - are we producing leaves and branches (potential) without fruit (produce)?

- community involvement – without depth of relationship, spiritual connection or invitation

- children’s activities – without character growth and spiritual growth or understanding

- hobbies and leisure – without Sabbath refreshment and renewal

- service and sacrifice – apart from gifting or calling, out of guilt or duty rather than calling

Additional Scripture Readings:

John 15

Discussion Questions:

1. What is a “good” thing in your life that is not bearing fruit – blessing, overflow,
2. Is there a way to change how I do this so that it will bear fruit?
3. Is this something that needs to be pruned or weeded out to make room for fruitfulness?

Nourishment: Restoring Balance - Psalm 23:2-3a

² He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; ^{3a} he restores my soul.

What are the things that nourish and sustain us? What brings life and what is sucking the life out of us? When we eat and drink from the right sources, we will be refreshed, strengthened and restored.

Listening: Waiting on God - Psalm 23:3b

^{3b} He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.

How much of our time, attention and energy are wasted because we are pursuing a path that leads to nowhere, or worse leads to our downfall? God has a path of blessing for us if we will hear his voice.

Letting Go: Facing Fear - Psalm 23:4-5a

⁴ Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff -- they comfort me. ^{5a} You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

How much of our agenda is driven by our fears? Our worries and anxieties (failure, acceptance, conflict, future) can rob us of energy and joy in our daily lives. Knowing we do not face our fears alone can free us to choose paths that bring blessing and peace into our life.

Fruitfulness: Investing in What Matters - Psalm 23:5b

^{5b} you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

A way for us to evaluate what belongs in our lives or needs to be weeded out is whether these activities are bearing fruit or not – both in a practical and spiritual sense. Sometimes the hardest decision is to let go of something good so that there is room for something greater.

Assurance: Eyes on the Goal - Psalm 23:6

*⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.*

Like the first verse – knowing whom we follow - we also need to have a clear understanding of what our ultimate goal and destination is. When our eyes are firmly fixed on the prize of eternity and faithful service to the kingdom of God, then our priorities fall into place naturally.

Questions to Consider:

What are the two most life-giving things going on in your life right now?

What are the two most life-draining things going on in your life right now?

What is one spiritual practice in your life right now that helps you maintain a healthy balance?