

# What Love Looks Like: Real Rest

September 22, 2024

Preaching: Dain Smith, Discipleship Minister



## Psalm 23

1 The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures;

he leads me beside still waters;

3 he restores my soul.

He leads me in right paths  
for his name's sake.

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.

5 You prepare a table before me in the  
presence of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.

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.

## REFLECT & DISCUSS

1. Read the passage slowly. Then take a deep breath and read it again. What word, phrase, or image stands out to you?
2. This is an incredibly popular passage in Scripture. How have you seen this passage used, or what do you think makes this passage so popular?
3. The psalm opens by declaring that God is “my shepherd.” Do you find that metaphor comforting? In what ways have you seen God guide you throughout your life?
4. This Sunday we are talking about “real rest.” In v. 2 the phrase “still waters” in Hebrew is actually “waters of rest.” Is there a moment in your life that you have felt led by God to a place of rest?
5. In v. 4 it mentions a dark valley. Have you ever been in a place that felt like a dark valley and found that God comforted you or your family amid the stress of life? Or, has there ever been a time when you felt like you were in a dark valley and you did not receive comfort from God? How did you get through it, or are you still going through it?
6. In vv. 5–6 the psalm describes a table with enemies, but

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paradoxically, the writer has an abundance. Then the writer is followed by goodness and mercy (usually enemies follow people with badness and vitriol). Has there ever been a time that you found goodness and abundance in a place you wouldn't expect it?

7. How can we as a church community work to bring rest to people who are in dark valleys, and what can we do to bring God's abundant goodness and mercy into our world?

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