**MY CUP OVERFLOWS**

Psalm 23:1-6

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

This morning we will talk of the words of Psalm 23. This passage has only six verses, but Psalm 23 is vital since it explains our relationship with God and God's goodness. The passage teaches us that God will become our shepherd, reward us, and make us dwell in His house forever by His kindness. I pray that you and I can always follow God and experience this goodness of God today and continually throughout our entire lives.

**Part 1: The Lord is my shepherd (1-4)**

Verse 1 reads, “**1**The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.” The great King David confesses in admitting that God is his shepherd. And he says that he lacks nothing. Did David really live a stable and peaceful life without lacking anything? In fact, if you look at David's life, his life was anything but peaceful. He was pursued by King Saul in his youth. In order to avoid being killed by Saul, David had to pretend to be a madman to save his life. Even after becoming king, he stayed in Hebron for seven and a half years without being properly treated as a king by his own people and unable to enter Jerusalem, the capital city. The joy of being a powerful king was short-lived due to his own decisions. He committed adultery with Bathsheba and killed his faithful servant Uriah. He suffered the price of his sin and the humiliation of being kicked out by his son Absalom. In David's life, there was glory as a king, but there were hardships, humiliations, sins, and shame.

However, the reason David was able to say “I lack nothing” was because he knew God's grace and experienced that God deeply loved him. When David turned his heart to God regardless of any situations and circumstances, he knew that God still loved him unchangingly, so David lacked nothing. So, as a king and as a servant of God, he was able to walk step by step through his life. To him, God was a shepherd who loved and cared for him.

Verse 2 reads, “**2**He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters.” David continues his shepard analogy here. Like a good shepherd, God led David to green pastures and quiet waters. Sheep are bad at searching for food and often get picked off by predators in the process. And sheep absolutely need shepherd's guidance when they don't know where the good green pastures are. Since sheep cannot even drink well from bodies of water with fast currents, the shepherd's role in finding good grass and quiet water and then knowing and guiding them is very important. God specifically helps and guides us in our practical life, and his guidance is often much more important than what we give Him credit for.

Verse 3 reads, “**3**He refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name’s sake.” God equally revives our souls and guides us on the right path. When you live, you always get strength, and this strength is important in guiding us through the hardships in life. There are many obstacles in life that are discouraging and despairing. But with God, He will comfort us and give us strength with a living water and His words. But God doesn't raise spoiled children either. He teaches us to become people worthy of His name and guides us to the right path even if the journey is difficult and filled with peril.

Verse 4 reads, “**4**Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.” Like how a good shepherd defends his flock with his shepherd’s staff, God protected and guided David even in times of troubles. In life, seemingly there are times when we have to walk through a dark valley, whether by our own will or not. The dark thoughts that these situations will often continue fill our hearts. But because God is with us, we need not fear. Even after committing a horrible sin, God still sent Nathan to David in order to guide him back on the right path again. There is God to tell us how and in which direction to walk and is there to protect us from dangers and threats.

**Part 2: My cup overflows and I will dwell in the house of the Lord (5-6)**

Verse 5 reads, “**5**You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.” In verse 5, David points out how the background situation changed. Now, David is in the palace where the king resides. David was a soldier who participated in many wars over the years. He went through many dangerous events and experienced many threats. You must have experienced fear like how the many times David’s spirit became small due to fear. How many enemies must have threatened David's life and wanted to take it away?

However in the palace, God protects David regardless of whether there are enemies. He invites him to the palace, sets a table full of food, and lays His hands on him with oil, acknowledges David, and gives him a position. And, acknowledging his hard work, God pours a drink into the cup. He does not pour them stingily, but generously gives drink into the cup to David’s heart's content. David's cup overflows.

In a situation surrounded by enemies on all sides, God who is by our side, prepares a table for us, acknowledges us with anointing, and pours our cup to overflowing, is our strength.

Verse 6 reads, “**6**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.” In verse 6, David is full of confidence about the future.

God is good and full of love. In fact, sometimes it's hard for us to know goodness exactly in a humanistic way. But we find God’s goodness from Jesus. It is at the cross of Jesus that God's good character is revealed. Jesus died on the cross for all of us who did not deserve it. Jesus is the Good Shepherd and laid down his life for the sheep on which he crucified. So, God is much better than we imagine. When we do well or when we do not do well, He takes care of us with goodness and love. Therefore, as verse 6 says, “**6**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.”

The goodness and love of God, that we have held onto and experienced while living on this earth, will continue. And just as playing children return to their homes when the sun sets and the evening comes, so when the time comes, each one of us will go and stand alone before God. It will be the time of death and also the time of resurrection. At that time, regardless of spouse, children, wealth, worldly success, or even the size of the church, you will meet God by yourself. And only the influence lived by faith will remain and will be remembered by men and by God.

My family and I are still walking through the seemingly dark valley of life. But about 2 years ago it was worse. However, the reason why my family and I were able to survive was because of the prayers and spiritual, emotional, and practical support of pastor Paul and M. Mary Choi and my co-workers. And I had a personal realization that God gave me. One day two years ago I was sitting alone on the sofa at home. I couldn't go see my mother in Korea because of the visa status problem. I couldn't even work. Then, suddenly I realized that all of this was the result of what I had lived. So, I immediately contacted two persons who are the school president and my dissertation advisor. And I did my best to work as much as I could.

God accepted my decision and helped me. Even though it was not much, God made my work stand out when I was doing teaching or administrative work at school. Above all, God changed a place that used to be a desolate environment like a cement floor, and now He has allowed me to be recognized by the college President. Also, with my advisor’s guidance and help, I have already published three papers recently. And I have been starting my second book about business leadership by Pastor Paul’s encouragement. Through the confession of David, who said that there is nothing lacking because of God and that God is the one who pours the cup to overflowing, we can know by faith the good God who personally meets and guides us in our lives to the end.

In conclusion, God is a good shepherd. I pray that we follow this God with trust and faith and live a victorious life that enables us to dwell in God's house forever. And I pray that all of us can live a victorious life by overcoming difficulties, taking on challenges, and believing in God who gives us final victory and rewards. Amen.