

## How to Live in the Valley!

Scripture used: [Psalms 23:5 \(NKJV\)](#)

### OVERVIEW

Pastor Hurmon continued in the fifth in our message series "Finding God in Silicon Valley". In this message, we are trying to figure out how to act in our daily lives, despite the stresses, fears, anxieties, and doubts of life - especially the stresses that come from financial pressure. Fortunately, God modeled this behavior for us! We see Him demonstrate service, generosity, relationship by preparing a table for us that is full of everything we could possibly need. Despite being in the Valley, God is with us, providing for us, loving us. If we learn to trust that He will always be there with us, we can focus our energy on blessing others through the same three things: service, generosity, and relationship, and in this way, live a truly contented and fulfilled life.

### KEY POINTS

- 1) **Psalm 23 is about developing a deeper relationship with God.** The chapter begins with a third person description of God. The Lord is "He" for the first three verses, but then becomes "You" for the last three verses. God is getting closer to us. Why? Because we are walking "through the valley of the shadow of death". This is exactly the time when we need Him the most, and God promises that He will always be there no matter what. That is why Jesus describes Himself as "the good shepherd" in [John 10:11 \(NIV\)](#).
- 2) **Being closer to God means taking the pressure off.** Silicon Valley is all about individual achievement. We are forced to be on the treadmill all the time, otherwise we will fall behind everyone else. But that is not the life that God envisions for us! He wants everyone to know that we can always look to Him in any situation. As David writes in [Psalms 121:1-2 \(NKJV\)](#) "My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth." This is a scary kind of trust because it means putting your entire life in God's hands. That is what He asks us to do, and it opens the way for a whole new kind of living.
- 3) **God shows us the right behavior with the way he takes care of us in the Valley.** Even though we are "in the presence of [our] enemies", God still shows up. And more than that, He brings us everything we could possibly need. He laid out a feast on the table, oil to anoint us, and an overflowing cup. This action shows us three key elements of Godly behavior.
  - a. **Service.** God prepared us the table, not the other way around. And yet He is God. What ruler would humble himself or herself in this way?
  - b. **Generosity.** God stocked the table with everything we needed. We can always want for more, but we can also learn to be content.
  - c. **Relationship.** God is right there in the Valley with us. There is no place we can go where He will not be with us.
- 4) **If we trust God to provide for our needs, we can act more like Him.** We love stuff. We want to have lots of stuff. But almost everyone already has everything they truly need. Paul tells us in [Philippians 4:11-13 \(NLT\)](#) how he "learned to be content with whatever [he had]." This was part of his deep relationship with God. Paul learned the secret that "[we] can do everything through Christ, who gives [us] strength." By becoming more intimate with God and learning to trust in Him, we create opportunities to be more like God. How? By serving others, giving to others, and engaging with God.

### DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - Pastor Hurmon stressed the connection between trust and intimacy. We cannot have an intimate relationship with God if we do not trust in Him. Think back over the last year. Do you trust God more now than you did a year ago? Why or why not?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - God modeled the right behavior for us in this Psalm. He goes ahead of us, preparing everything we need. Because of His love and grace, we can trust in Him to provide, and we don't need to become obsessed with always having the latest and greatest stuff. The secret of contentment allows us to have a higher quality, fulfilled life. What impact would contentment have on your expenses? How much could you save and give away if you focused only on needs, not wants?
- 3) **DO** - Change is never easy, even when we know it's necessary. Pastor Hurmon closed his sermon by asking us to pick a single area where we can live more like God in Psalm 23. Start with (1) serving others, (2) giving to others, or (3) engaging with God. Declare your intention and follow through!