**He Restores My Soul**

**Psalm 23**

**Week 2**

**Daily Time With Truth**

As you read these daily scriptures, ask yourself these three questions:

1. What is God saying to me?
2. What do I want to say to God in response?
3. How will I live out this truth?

**Day 1: Psalm 30:11 (TPT)**

Then he broke through and transformed all my wailing into a whirling dance of ecstatic praise!
He has torn the veil and lifted from me the sad heaviness of mourning. He wrapped me in the glory-garments of gladness.

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**Day 2: Psalm 34:18 (TPT)**

The Lord is close to the brokenhearted; he rescues those whose spirits are crushed.

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**Day 3: Matthew 11:28-30 (TPT)**

Are you weary, carrying a heavy burden? Come to me. I will refresh your life, for I am your oasis. Simply join your life with mine. Learn my ways and you’ll discover that I’m gentle, humble, easy to please. You will find refreshment and rest in me. For all that I require of you will be pleasant and easy to bear.

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**Day 4: Isaiah 41:10 (TPT)**

Do not yield to fear, for I am always near. Never turn your gaze from me, for I am you *faithful* God. I will infuse you with my strength and help you in every situation. I will hold you firmly with my victorious right hand.

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**Day 5****: Psalm 40:2 (NLT)**

He lifted me out of the pit of despair, out of the mud and the mire. He set my feet on solid ground and steadied me as I walked along.

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**Discussion Questions:**

1. Read Psalm 23 out loud, paying close attention to Verse 4. “The phrase *shadow of death* is one word in Hebrew, meaning ‘deep darkness,’ It’s a dreary word, used elsewhere in the Bible to describe the impenetrable darkness before creation (Amos 5:8), the thick darkness of a mine shaft (Job 28:3), and the black hole that is the abode of the dead (Job 10:21; 38:17). It’s a word associated with anxiety and dread.” (*Psalm 23: The Song of a Passionate Heart*.) Share a time in your life when you walked through the shadow of death on your life journey.

2. Psalm 142:4 (TPT) describes feelings of deep loneliness and isolation. “I look to my left and right to see if there is anyone who will help, but there’s no one who takes notice of me.  I have no hope of escape, and no one cares whether I live or die.” Psalm 22:1-2 (NLT) describes the depths of those feelings when even God seems far away, “My God, my God, why have you abandoned me? Why are you so far away when I groan for help? Every day I call to you, my God, but you do not answer. Every night I lift my voice, but I find no relief.” Even Jesus felt this kind of despair as He hung on the cross. Have you experienced it? Share.

3. Notice in verse 4 that David begins talking directly to God where earlier he was talking about God. Even Job as he was nearing the end of his suffering, declared to God, “My ears had heard of you, but now my eyes have seen you.” (Job 42:5) Why do you think suffering can deepen intimacy with God? Have you experienced this?

4. The shepherd’s rod is his weapon of power, authority and defense. Moses’ rod was the tool God worked miracles through to convince the Pharoah of His power so the rod speaks of the power of God’s spoken Word and we find comfort in reading His written word in the scriptures. “The staff is essentially a symbol of the concern, the compassion that a shepherd has for his charges. The word ‘staff’ speaks of all that is longsuffering and kind. The staff of God is symbolic of the Spirit of God. In Christ’s dealings with us as individuals there is the essence of the sweetness, the comfort and consolation, the gentle correction brought about by the work of His gracious Spirit.” (*A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23*). How has God’s rod and staff brought you comfort when you have been depressed?

5. “As Christians we will sooner or later discover that it is in the valleys of our lives that we find refreshment from God Himself. It is not until we have walked with Him through some very deep troubles that we discover He can lead us to find our refreshment in Him right there in the midst of our difficulty. We are thrilled beyond words when there comes restoration to our souls and spirits from His own gracious Spirit.” (*A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23*). Share a time in your life when you experienced Your Shepherd in this way as you walked through a dark time.

6. What new understandings about depression did you gain through the discussion Pastor Bob had with his guests? Did you gain any new tools to utilize when you are experiencing depression? What did you learn about how to best support others who are going through the valley of the shadow of death?