

Psalm 23:5
Sermon date: October 11, 2026

Ice breaker

Think of a time someone made you feel truly welcome in their home. What did they do that made the difference?

Unpack It

What stood out to you from Sunday's sermon and why? What was a takeaway or something that left you wondering about?

Historical Context (or just fun facts you may not know)

A host's table meant protection. In the ancient Near East, hospitality was close to a sacred duty. Once you ate at someone's table, the host was responsible for your safety, even from your enemies. You can see how seriously it was taken when Lot tries to protect his guests in Genesis 19:8: "they have come under the protection of my roof." So eating "in the presence of my enemies" isn't a taunt. It's a declaration: these enemies can see me, but they can't touch me. I'm under his roof.

"Anoint" here is a hospitality word, not a coronation word. The usual word for anointing a king or priest is *mashach* (where "Messiah" comes from). Verse 5 uses *dishanta*, from *dashen*, which literally means "to make fat, to enrich, to refresh." This is the oil of a generous host refreshing a dusty, sun-beaten guest. Jesus points to the same custom in Luke 7:44–46, when he gently rebukes Simon the Pharisee: "You didn't greet me with a kiss... you neglected the courtesy of olive oil to anoint my head" while a sinful woman anointed his feet. Skipping the oil was a snub. Pouring it was honor. The oil also protected sheep. Shepherds rubbed oil on sheep's heads to keep off flies and insects (especially nose flies), which could drive sheep frantic. The sermon develops this: God's peace guards the mind (Philippians 4:7).

"My cup overflows" is two Hebrew words: *kosi revayah*. *Revayah* means "saturation, abundance, drenched." The only other place it shows up is Psalm 66:12: "we went through fire and through water, yet you brought us out to a place of abundance." Same word, and the same pattern as this sermon: through first, then overflow.

Diving In

Read together: Psalm 23

Diving Deeper

- 1) Verses 1–4 picture God as a shepherd; verse 5 pictures him as a host. What does the host image tell us about God that the shepherd image doesn't?
- 2) God prepares the table "in the presence of my enemies," not after they're gone. Why do you think God often blesses us in the hard situation rather than removing it first? (Consider Joseph, Daniel, and the fiery furnace.)
- 3) Read 2 Samuel 17:27–29. How does this real moment in David's life help you read verse 5 differently?
- 4) Read 2 Samuel 9:1–13. Mephibosheth expected judgment and got a permanent seat. What does this story teach about who gets invited to God's table and why?
- 5) Read Luke 7:44–50. Jesus notices who honored him with oil and who didn't. What does it say that the "outsider" understood hospitality better than the religious host?
- 6) What "enemy" is sitting across the table from you right now, a person, a fear, a diagnosis, a bill, an old shame? (One word is fine.)
- 7) Do you tend to wait for things to get better before you rest in God? What would it look like to "sit down and eat" before the situation is fixed?
- 8) The pastor described anxieties swarming like insects, causing sheep to beat their heads against rocks. What does "beating your head against a rock" look like for you when you're anxious? Where do you most need God's peace to guard your mind?
- 9) Mephibosheth couldn't walk and didn't think he deserved a seat. Do you ever feel like a temporary guest with God, one mistake away from being asked to leave? Where does that feeling come from?
- 10) Looking back, can you name a valley that "expanded your cup," a hard season that left you with more trust, compassion, or gratitude than you had before?

Closing It Out With Prayer

1. The Table, "in the presence of my enemies." Name (silently or aloud) the enemy you're facing, and thank God that he has already set a place for you right in the middle of it.
2. The Oil, "you honor me." Pray for peace to guard your minds against anxiety (Philippians 4:7).
3. The Cup, "my cup overflows." Give thanks. Each person finishes the sentence: "Lord, my cup overflows with _____."