



## Watering the Seed: Read, Explore, Pray

1/2

Insert for March 29th, 2020

### Read

#### Psalm 133

#### How good and pleasant it is

when **God's people** live **together in unity!**

#### It is like

precious oil poured

on the head,

running down on the beard,

running down on Aaron's beard,

down on the collar of his robe.

#### It is as if

the dew of Hermon

were falling on Mount Zion.

#### For there [in the unity] the Lord bestows

his blessing,

even life forevermore.

---

#### *We're in this Together*

It's hard to imagine the dripping oil as pleasant and good! Can you imagine? Think about it!

Then enjoy this very short video [link!](#)

All that pouring, all that oil; it is messy!

Imagine how many washings it will take to remove it from his hair, let alone his clothes.

However, when this Psalm was written, oil signified holiness. Anointing with oil was a way of turning someone or something holy or sacred, a way of being set apart.

Notice how oil in this metaphor is being poured lavishly - not just a little dollop, this is a whole lot

of oil; so much that it kept running down and down - from head, to beard, to clothes to floor. This is an image of lavish abundance!

What, according to this Psalm, is so good, so beautiful, so holy, so blessed, so sacred, that it is like oil being lavishly poured over a head?

*verse 1:* "How good and pleasant it is ...

When God's people live together in unity!"

What is the good, beautiful, holy, blessed thing referred to in this Psalm? **Our unity :)**

Just in case we missed the power of that first metaphor, the Psalmist gives us a second one: moisture gathering on mountaintops, moving slowly down, bringing dew to the smaller hills and valleys below. It is a metaphor we can understand: moisture gathered up on the mountains beyond North Van makes its way down the mountain and finally to us, falling as dew and rain in our backyards. Again, it is an image of abundance, one that flows outwards, this time not from head to toe, but from mountaintop to surrounding countryside.

Just in case we missed the point, the Psalmist ends by bringing this all together in two pithy lines: "**For there (in this unity) the Lord bestows his blessing, even life forevermore.**"

It is in our unity, in our togetherness that God's blessing is found. Not only do we find blessing and life in this unity, we spread this blessing to others as we extend the unity, as we reach out and include others into this experience of "togetherness".

As we do this, reaching out and connecting to one another with love, we exponentially spread blessing and life. As we do this, the unity spreads, and as the togetherness spreads, God pours more and more blessing into the earth, and gives more and more fullness of life to people and to creation.

This sacred spreading is far-reaching. It is powerful. It diffuses into the air we breathe, like a virus, but it brings life. This is really hopeful news for such a time as this.

For some, the spread of the coronavirus brings death. Circulating throughout our earth is an invisible "enemy", this virus that threatens to undo us. At the same time, we are surrounded by an invisible strength flowing through humanity and even through creation. We are witness to two spreadings right now: the virus, and this "togetherness".

Together, people from all over the world are working to limit the spread of the virus by practicing compassionate separation.

Together, people from all over the world are working to increase the spread of unity by

reaching out and finding creative ways of being in this together. Spanish police are picking up guitars and serenading people from the streets. Italians are singing arias out the window. Young people are delivering groceries to older folk in England. Neighbours are leaving “happy birthday” signs on their windows for neighborhood children in the States. And yes, some folk are hoarding toilet paper, but retired doctors and nurses are going back to work to care for the sick.

God is not in the virus. God is in this flow of love. Our social distancing is actually compassionately retreating, a way of protecting our doctors and nurses and those who are most vulnerable. We are not just self-isolating, we are also simplifying our daily activities so that others might be safe.

Ok. So let’s be honest. We haven’t chosen this. It is an enforced sabbatical from ordinary life full of uncertainty and unknowns, with a very real outcome - hospitalization and loss of life for many. It is hard and it is scary. It is normal if that reality keeps us up at night. But this is also true: we are in this together. I find it extraordinary that everyone on this earth is going through this experience: shared grief, shared fear, shared isolation, shared moments of beauty and consolation. This virus is teaching us that we are one: one body, one family, one creation.

---

## Explore

This virus is forcing us all to change our ordinary rhythms of connection. Our face-to-face engagement has become limited, our activity level is becoming more confined, our work spaces more solitary. In the midst of these changes, how can we continue to be “together”? One simple way is by talking with each other honestly about how we are doing, asking for help, and offering what we are able to give.

Here are some questions for reflection. If you live alone, perhaps you can journal them and share your responses with a friend. If you live with other people, choose one or two questions for now, and then circle back to them during moments of natural connection.

1. Where do I find bits of joy, comfort, or nourishment at home?
  2. What do I find hardest about all of this?
  3. What can I ask from the people with whom I live to make this easier? (Or, if alone, what help can I ask of my support systems?)
  4. What can I offer the people with whom I live to help them get through this? (Or, if alone, what can I offer those in my support systems?)
  5. What am I learning about myself in this season? Those I live with?
  6. What other support am I needing right now? Where can I find it?
  7. What might I offer up to the wider world?
- 

## Prayer

Blessing our space, blessing our togetherness.

### *A liturgy of blessing:*

Instructions In a small bowl, maybe one that is fancy or special, put a tablespoon of oil. Add a few drops of essential oil if you would like.

Think of where in your home you create and make space for relationships: your front door, phone, garden, forest floor, computer, kitchen sink, laundry machine...

Go to those different places “Bless the Space.”

Words of blessing (spoken over each space)

*Holy God, Bless this \_\_\_\_\_*

*Set this aside as a space of goodness & unity.*

(repeat in different locations:)

*Bless all that inhabits this space.*

*Give us imaginations for what*

*interconnectedness looks like in times like this.*

*Help us to trust Your great web of Life.*

*Bless us with courage and strength to live well into this new kind of togetherness.*

### *Sing*

Praise God from whom all blessings flow x2

Praise God all creatures here below

Praise God above ye heavenly hosts

Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

### *Listen*

Video in which Angela & Paul sing:

*The Lord Bless You and Keep You.*

Music by Rob Des Cotes ( [Sheet music](#) )