

SERMON NOTES

SUNDAY 23.06.24

PREACHER: PS JOSH PLUMB

“GOD’S GIFT OF REST”

BECOMING CHRISTLIKE

BEING, THINKING & DOING

Conviction of a Disciple: Engaging the core spiritual exercise of “Rest” is fundamental to our growth as his disciples.

OVERVIEW

As we enter into the practices of stopping, rest, delight, and worship, we move from control to trust in God.

ACTION

Step 1: Reflect on the rhythms of rest in your life. On a scale of 1-10, where would you place yourself in this spiritual practice?

Step 2: Commit to intentionally incorporate one of the spiritual practices—stopping, resting, delighting, or worshipping—into your daily routine this week.

Step 3: Choose a specific activity that brings you joy and peace, and schedule time this week to engage in it, inviting God's presence into that moment.

THOUGHT

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 11:28-30

Our culture is driven by nomadic souls, wandering from one item, experience, or place to the next, searching for a resting place for our hearts—a home for our weary souls. In Matthew 11:28-30, Jesus invites us to find rest in Him, simply by coming to Him. This invitation is His gift to us.

However, accepting this gift can be challenging. Why? Because it requires us to relinquish control over our lives. We far too often fall into the illusion that rest and meaning are things we must earn or manage in our own cleverness and willpower.

The path of a disciple, however, is one of self-denial and following Jesus, moving us from control to trust. This step is one of the most difficult in the spiritual journey. Here, core spiritual practices come into play—not to earn God's gifts, but to position our hearts to rest in God.

To begin, here are a few fundamental (though not always easy) practices to help us trust God more deeply:

Stop: Practice intentionally slowing down and ceasing our constant activity. This helps us relinquish the illusion of control and remember that God values our presence with Him more than our deeds for Him.

Rest: Stopping is a prerequisite for rest, but they are not the same. Rest involves consciously relaxing in the knowledge that God holds our past, present, and future. By entering this state of trust, we can experience the rest Jesus offers.

Delight: Identify activities that naturally bring joy to your heart and draw you closer to God. Whether it's walking, surfing, reading, or quiet contemplation, make time each week for these joy-filled moments.

Worship: Take time to honour and thank God for who He is and all He has done. This practice helps us remember God's greatness and our smallness. Worship can involve singing, but it can also be anything that fills us with a sense of awe and wonder of God.

In embracing these practices—stopping, resting, delighting, and worshipping—we move closer to the rest that Jesus offers. It's a journey from control to trust, where we find our hearts at home in His presence. By opening ourselves to His gift, we allow our souls to be renewed and refreshed, experiencing the deep, abiding peace that only God can provide.

DISCUSSION

1. Our thought today discusses the difficulty of moving from control to trust in our spiritual lives. What are some specific areas in your life where you struggle to relinquish control? How might adopting these practices help you build more trust in God?
2. Among the practices of stopping, resting, delighting, and worshipping, which do you find most challenging to incorporate into your daily routine? Why do you think this is, and what steps can you take to make this practice a more regular part of your life?
3. Today we talked about the importance of finding joy and peace in God's presence. Can you share an experience when you felt a deep sense of rest and peace through one of these practices? How did that experience impact your relationship with God and your overall well-being?

PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father,

We come to You with hearts seeking rest and renewal. Help us to relinquish our desire for control and to place our trust wholly in You. Guide us as we practise stopping, resting, delighting, and worshipping, so that we may draw closer to Your presence. Fill our souls with Your peace and remind us daily of Your unwavering love and faithfulness. May we find true rest in You and live our lives anchored in Your grace.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.