

“Summer Rest and Re-Creation”  
Mark 6:30-34, 53-56  
7/18/2021

*Come away with me to a quiet place,  
Apart from the world with its frantic pace,  
To pray, reflect, and seek God’s grace.  
Come away with me. Come away*

– “Come Away with Me” # 2202

I don’t know about you,  
But for me, it’s been a crazy busy week

For those of you who know what my schedule was  
With the first half of the week  
Graduating with my certificate in  
Non Profit Church Leadership  
from Dakota Wesleyan University  
with the rest of my cohort  
And the last half of my week with Mom’s funeral

Along with the ongoing schedule of the church...

It was crazy busy

It really felt like I was living out today’s Gospel reading.

*<sup>30</sup> The apostles returned to Jesus and told him everything they had done and taught. <sup>31</sup> Many people were coming and going, so there was no time to eat. He said to the apostles, "Come by yourselves to a secluded place and rest for a while." <sup>32</sup> They departed in a boat by themselves for a deserted place.*

– Mark 6:30-32

There is a time for learning  
and improving upon our God given gifts and talents  
There is a time for burying our loved ones  
There is a time for serving our Lord in ministry to others

This is all good stuff

But there is also a time for rest

We were created by God to live in a rhythm  
Of work and play  
Of exertion and rest

It was great that the disciples  
went out to the villages surrounding Nazareth and  
Proclaimed the good news of changed hearts and lives  
Casted out demons  
Anointed those who were sick and healed them  
They did the ministry that Jesus sent them out to do

And when they returned to Jesus,  
I can imagine Jesus smiling his pleased, loving smile  
And saying,  
*"Come by yourselves to a secluded place and rest for a while."*

*Come today with thoughts of the countless ways  
that God’s steadfast love blesses all our days,  
and join with me in silent praise.  
Come away with me. Come away.*

– “Come Away with Me” (verse 3) # 2202

We were created by God to live in a rhythm

Did you ever notice that keeping the Sabbath  
is in the Top Four of the Top Ten commandments?

It’s not by accident

There is a need for rest and renewal in our lives.

It is in these times  
that we can quiet ourselves  
and be listening for God

It is in these times  
that we can stop running around like our heads are cut off  
and notice those little places where God is touching our lives

I remember a year ago last spring,  
(Remember when the schools and everything else seemed to stop?)

Once people started venturing outside  
and talking with each other in the streets in our neighborhood  
The families that lived on our street were telling me  
with deep emotion in their voices  
that they loved this new found time  
that they were spending together as family

They were not rushing frantically from  
School to practices  
To the fast-food drive through  
on the way to next game or concert or performance  
All seven days of each and every week  
Were not packed with back-to-back activities

These parents and children could breath  
And they and their kids could just sit together and talk  
And eat meals together around the dinner table

It was a good thing  
I hope families have not lost what this gift felt like  
Time together and not being in that frantic rush

There is a need for rest and renewal in our lives.

Sabbath rest  
Whether it comes on the original day of Saturday  
Or our more recent practice of the day of Sunday  
Remember “Blue Laws”  
Or another day of the week set aside  
And also set aside times during each day

Rest and renewal and being alone with God is a good thing

The exploration of Sabbath rest is the focus  
Of longer retreats and workshops

We hear repeatedly in the Gospels  
Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John  
The accounts of Jesus’ life and ministry  
Of Jesus going off by himself in prayer time and time again

It’s significant that we hear about these times,  
Because this is not where the “action” takes place  
In these times of rest and renewal there are no  
Healings  
Casting out of demons  
Raising the dead  
Preaching and teaching  
Or other miracles

We just hear that Jesus took this time apart  
We hear no details  
Except at the Transfiguration or Gethsemane

Yet, the Gospel writers tell us about it.  
Why?  
Because it’s important

It what allows all the other things that Jesus does  
To happen

So what about us?

What are our daily and weekly rhythms  
In which we set apart time and place to be with God?

What are the longer breaks that we take from our usual busyness  
To recharge, refresh, rest and help us to be able to re-create?

Ever wonder where we get the word “recreation”?

There is a need for rest and renewal in our lives.  
Rest and renewal and being alone with God is a good thing.

Who here noticed that when Rick read the scripture earlier,  
We skipped over a bunch of verses?

Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

Anyone notice what's missing from today's reading?

In today's reading, we skip from verse 34 to verse 53.  
And what's missing are the miracles of  
The feeding of the 5,000  
And Jesus walking on the water

Those are two pretty big stories to leave out.

So the big question remains,  
Why leave these big miracle stories out?

Well, perhaps if there would have been left in  
We'd overlook the most important point of this passage.

What Jesus and his disciples did  
by going to a secluded place and resting a while  
allowed all these other miracles to happen

Do we want miracles to happen in this place?

We should start be going... slow,  
Spending time with God  
Being on our knees in prayer (literally or figuratively)  
And opening ourselves up to God

*Come away with me to a quiet place,  
to God's loving arms waiting to embrace  
all those who come in hope of grace.*

*Come away with me. Come away.*

– “Come Away with Me” (verse 5) # 2202