

Psalm 23; Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

The Three R's

Today I want to talk about the 3 Rs. Not the ones you learned in school, but a new set. R-Relationship; R-Rest; R-Respond.

## **R – RELATIONSHIP**

God desires relationship with us and that we have right relationships with one another. The first 4 Ten Commandments deal with our relationship with God. Numbers 5-10 are about our relationships with family, friends, neighbors, co-workers – that is, one another.

What is relationship? The definition is a connection, association or involvement. A relationship means you please each other; you show care/concern for each other.

Jesus desires relationship with us and shows us how to have care and concern for others. He shows us the importance of loving others. Verse 31 says Let's take a break and get a little rest. How many times have you said that to someone – "come! Sit down! Rest!" You show care for that person when you do that.

God desires a relationship with us and wants to care for us. Psalm 23:1-3 tells us

I shall not want – or I have everything I need.

He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside still waters.

## **R – REST**

But what is rest? Rest is a break from activity; freedom from activity. The definition is “cease work or movement in order to relax, refresh oneself, or recover strength.” In the busy-ness of our lives, do we really know how to rest? It’s been said that all the time-saving devices we have (like automatic washer/dryer, electric/gas ovens and stoves, microwave ovens, automatic coffee pots, instant pots, etc.) haven’t really saved any time. They have shifted time from one thing to another. But the great promise of those devices – to save time in order to not work so hard – has not happened. But still we are thankful that we can do laundry in a short amount of time – even at night and that we can cook a really nice meal without having to get up at 4 to get started on it. I’m reminded of the book The little prince. The merchant sells things that are supposed to be efficient. In particular, he sells a pill that quenches thirst. By swallowing it, you can save all the time you would have otherwise spent drinking water. According to the merchant,

*“Computations have been made by experts. With these pills, you save fifty-three minutes in every week.”*

The merchant represents the desire to save time at the expense of what’s really worth saving. But the prince doesn’t see any wisdom in this plan. He doesn’t want to save the time—he wants to use it in a meaningful way. He thinks:

*“If I had fifty-three minutes to spend as I liked, I should walk at my leisure toward a spring of fresh water.”*

Do you make time to collect your thoughts about your life, where you are going, your relationship with God, to spend time in prayer? Do you spend a day to worship God and to rest for a while from the pressure of your daily life? Do you enjoy Sabbath rest?

Vincent de Paul said “Be careful to preserve your health. It is a trick of the devil, which he employs to deceive good souls, to incite them to do more than they are able, in order that they may no longer be able to do anything.” Look back at verse 31: For there were many coming and going and they had no leisure even to eat.” They were so busy they couldn’t even eat! That can be very exciting – to be so busy doing good things that there is no time to do anything else. But Jesus knew their needs and called them away to a quiet place to rest. And don’t measure what you are able to do by what someone else is able to do! Be sure to keep listening for God at all times. Listen for what he is telling you.

## **R- RESPOND**

How do you respond when someone asks or suggests something? A lot has to do with how the person asked or suggested as well as what kind of relationship you have with that person. If they demand or whine, you are more likely to resist or dig in your heels even if it’s a good idea! If you have a good relationship you are more likely to respond positively, even if the tone was a bit demanding or irritating.

Think about your relationship with God. How close is it? Do you respond to his ideas or suggestions or ignore them? If we’re honest we probably would say we ignore as often as we follow the request. Have

you ever had someone just ignore something you said? Not because they have a hearing problem but truly ignore you. You know for a fact they heard you.. but there is no response. Irritating, isn't it? And maddening.. and sometimes disappointing and hurtful. That must be how God feels when we ignore him. He only wants what is best for us, and he provides examples on how to go about the life we're living.. REST he says. Jesus says "Come away to a quiet place". Jesus says "Come to me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.: God says to rest 1 day out of 7 (Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God.). "He makes me lie down in green pastures"

To rest, we have to trust that God will take care of things for us. We have to respond to God in all faith and trust.

"He leads me beside still waters" where I can rest and find water. Not a rough, fast-running river; not a wave-crashing rocky beach but still waters.

He prepares a table for me – he provides my every need – I shall not want. I have everything I need.

How is your relationship with God? Do you heed his call to rest? Do you respond to his love?

Jesus calls us – are you listening?

And to God be the glory. Amen.