How to Rest When Life Is a Mess December 31, 2023

*Psalm 4:1-8 Guest Speaker: Christian Clement-Schlimm*

What health is to the heart, that holiness is to the soul. – John Flavel

Intro: The Power of Sleep

1. Remember who God is.
2. God is righteous.

v. 1a *Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness!*

Psalm 11:7 *For the LORD is righteous; he loves righteous deeds; the upright shall behold his face.*

1. God is gracious.

v. 1b *You have given me relief when I was in distress. Be gracious to me and hear my prayer!*

Psalm 145:8 *The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.*

1. True rest starts with meditation and prayer.

Psalm 63:6 *When I remember you upon my bed, and meditate on you in the watches of the night*

Hebrews 4:16 *Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

* If rest is so important, both physically and spiritually, why is it so hard to do?
* When trouble comes your way, what are your typical responses? What are responses you see from others?
* Why should meditation upon God’s attributes be a starting point for true rest? How does meditation relate to prayer?

1. Remember who God says you are.
2. The world oppresses people with shame and lies.

v. 2 *O men, how long shall my honor be turned into shame? How long will you love vain words and seek after lies?*

1 John 5:19 *We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.*

1. Confident rest is based on identity.

v. 3 *But know that the LORD has set apart the godly for himself; the LORD hears when I call to him.*

1 Peter 2:9a *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession*

* What are some of the lies the world tells us? What are some of the lies we tell ourselves? What are some practical strategies to help recognize when something is a lie or not?
* How does keeping our God-given identity central allow us to confidently rest in the face of trouble?

1. Remember what God calls you to do.
2. God will make things right.

v. 4 *Be angry, and do not sin; ponder in your own hearts on your beds, and be silent.*

Exodus 14:14 *The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.”*

Romans 12:19 *Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”*

1. Lasting rest is rooted in an obedient routine.

v. 5 *Offer right sacrifices, and put your trust in the LORD.*

Mich 6:8 *He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?*

* Why is it *sweeter* to not seek revenge but to be silent?
* Why does rest come easier if we are obedient to God?
* How are simple Christian disciplines (attending worship, praying, reading Scripture, etc...) related to lasting rest?

1. Remember what God says He will do.
2. God is the giver of joy and security.

vv. 6-8 *There are many who say, “Who will show us some good? Lift up the light of your face upon us, O LORD!”* *You have put more joy in my heart than they have when their grain and wine abound. In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for you alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.*

Psalm 23:1 *The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.*

1. Look to Jesus, the King of Rest

John 10:11a *I am the good shepherd.*

Luke 6:5b “*The Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath.”*

Matthew 11:28 *Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

* How does the life of David exemplify God’s faithfulness to provide joy and rest?
* What does it communicate about God that He identifies Himself as a Shepherd? What does a Shepherd do for His sheep?
* How does Jesus provide us rest? What has He done for us? Why is our rest so important to Jesus?

Study ahead: Acts 9:1-19

Notes