

WELCOME 18th September 2022 – 15 Pentecost '22 C

Lk 10:38-42 & Gn 1:26-2:3

Welcome! It's great to be together again today! We're continuing our worship/teaching series Spiritual Intelligence as a family of disciples... **Bible Study Qs** are there to equip you so God can lead you deeper into His word/work in your life, & so you can share that w/ someone else. We also use them for our **Zoom Bible Study Catch-ups** on Friday @ 1p.m.

As we move into this week... You're pulling up to a **stoplight**...do you pull into the lane w/ the fewest cars? You're heading to the **checkout**...do you choose the line w/ the fewest people & emptiest trolleys? Do you **multitask** & forget 1 of the tasks? Who said Yes? It's called "**Hurry Sickness**" - yes it is a thing!

John Mark Comer says: "Hurry is violence to the **soul**." Hurry cuts our connection to God, to other people & stops us from living emotionally healthy or spiritually vibrant lives. Hurry is the enemy of love; it is incompatible w/ life in the Kingdom of God because hurry is about command & control which stops us from receiving love as it is given & from giving love as it is needed.

That's why the first human interaction with God was the Sabbath - unhurried time to be fully present w/ God, to receive love from God & the space/time to love him back. So today we explore & experience **Sabbath** in a world of Hurry.'

God blessed the seventh day & declared it holy,
because it was the day when he rested from all his work of creation. "

Mary, sat at the Lord's feet, listening to what he taught.

Spiritual Intelligence is **NOT** how much you know...Bible vss, history or how to say all the names...SI is learning to discern right/wrong, good/evil, beautiful & true/horrendous & false...Spiritual Intelligence is wisdom leading you to what is life-giving & God-honouring. It's walking the pathway of abundant life & impact in Jesus' Name. Spiritual Intelligence is **you** maturing in likeness to Jesus Christ.

Let's pray...

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O Lord, our God, by the work of your Spirit alive in us, still our hearts...quiet our minds...slow our pace so all we hear is you. Stop our running so we can stand in your presence. Cause our wills to bend in obedience to you. Let the one thing you have given us to do...make disciples of all nations...begin here & spread until it reaches the ends of this earth. Cause us to work wholeheartedly for your kingdom's expanse in the places we go each day. In Jesus' Name...Amen.

Let's hear God's Word...

FAITH PLEASE DON'T CHAT:

we're going to do this differently...please don't chat

You are sitting at the feet of Jesus...What do you hear him say to you?

15 PENTECOST '22 C – SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE: SABBATH IN A WORLD OF HURRY

Corrie ten Boom once said: "If the devil can't make you sin, he'll make you busy."

What do you think? T/F? Why? How is sin related to busy? When is that true for you?

Art Rohde was the 1st bishop of the SWT Synod of the ELCA...my 1st bishop. He retired soon after he installed me at my 1st call in Seguin, Tx & at that year's convention we elected Henry Schulte. I'll never forget Henry walking across the stage after the election saying a few words of thanks & then being led off to the side by Art & for a few minutes, while other convention business was being conducted, they huddled over their pastors' pocket calendars...At the big dinner later I congratulated Henry & asked him what all that calendar stuff was & he said, "I'm not even bishop yet & Art just filled up the next 6 months of my calendar. I feel like resigning at the next session." Henry served 1 term & then went back to congregational ministry...he was pretty open about why...The pace was killing his soul. *if the devil can't make you sin...*

OT scholars are quick to remind us that God's 1st interaction w/ his human creation is the Sabbath. What we read today...God designed us like himself for himself. We share God's image. We also share God's intention. God blesses us w/ the management of God's creation...*"Be fruitful & multiply. Fill the earth & govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, & all the animals that scurry along the ground...The Lord God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend & watch over it."*

We're not passive bystanders on this planet. God creates us then God commissions us. We're here w/ work to do...stewards of the earth & all that's in it. But not every day is to be the same...*"God blessed the seventh day & declared it holy, because it was the day when he rested from all his work of creation."*

From what we can gather from the narrative it was an unhurried focussed time of being together...of relationship not ritual...time to dwell together in love & delight...to experience the fullness of what God gives & to reply w/ unsullied devotion. It was also an early casualty of sin. Humans rebel against God's good order...overrule what was not theirs to rule & then hide so God has to search for those he loves.

The Sabbath was meant to be different in the sense that it recognized the in-built goodness beauty & truth of the work God had done. It didn't need us to "fix it" "fancy it up" or develop it into something better. The Sabbath is God's declaration that AS HE DESIGNED...All things are in place. All things are in order. All things live according to his purpose. Not just "good" like every other day, but "very good." *tov meod*
If every day in your diary is the same as every other day something's wrong. If there is not a Sabbath...a rest...a setting aside of space/time...for God...acknowledging you aren't the master of all things...undivided attention...there you see sin's stain.

Into what we all know is work/fun that could go on forever God says you need more than that...you need rest for relationship. Wayne Muller in his book, Sabbath: Restoring the Sacred Rhythm of Rest: "For every living thing there's the necessity of dormancy; the deep rhythm of work & rest. When we're traveling at high speed, there's a subtle sense of undernourishment, because even the good things we're doing don't have time to sink in...We've gotten to the point where the only culturally accepted reason to stop entirely is when we get sick (or die)"

See here's the deal: The solution to an over-busy over-hurried life is not more time. It's to slow down & simplify your life around what really matters. The solution to chaos is not better management/strategy. It's cleave away (say *No to*) the unnecessary unhelpful & downright destructive so that the good beautiful true strengthening satisfying purposeful meaningful can flourish. We live in that bizarre circumstance where we can do more work in less time than ever ^{b/4}...but we are simultaneously more anxious, burned out, stressed, worried, afraid...work longer...die more disconnected...than any previous generation.

Bible says sin makes our work/pursuits toil/tiresome/ultimately unfulfilling. So we work harder & longer & sacrifice & do more to pursue some sort of sweat-induced satisfaction & tell ourselves that if we just did more had more we'd be happier or find some time to take a breather...work/hobbies replaces God in our devotion.

So...Into what we all know is "doing" that could go on forever God says you need more than that...you need rest & w/in that rest you need **ME**. Lev 23:3 says: "You have six days each week for your ordinary work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath day of complete rest, an official day for holy assembly. It is the Lord's Sabbath day, & it must be observed wherever you live." *an official day for holy assembly. It is the Lord's Sabbath day...*

Not only is our life incomplete without rest from our "doing", our lives are incomplete without worship as the foundation of both work **AND** rest. Holy assembly. Lord's Sabbath. At the heart of all life is time set aside to acknowledge our dependence – our gratitude – our devotion – our responsibility & accountability ^{b/4} God.

Luther said the breaking of any commandment is really a violation of the 1st... we'll have chosen an idol for God...When something else always replaces the holy assembly – the gathering of God's people around God's promises...we have chosen an idol for God...Israel was defeated demolished & driven into exile why? The prophets all thundered, "Because you never kept the Sabbath!" Is it possible the church has faltered so badly in the 20th & 21st centuries for the same reason? Not the slavish mandate of this day over that, but the bland boring busy hurried sameness to every day w/ no regard for holy assembly – rest – relationship.

God wants our hearts open to him, so he invites us into the intimacy of his love & promises to respond more abundantly than we could ever imagine... God grants Sabbath to radically transform our lives & align our hearts w/ his... to give life in full, purpose & meaning to every day, & hope & promise beyond & bigger than this world & a joy & delight that saturates everything else we do. Rather than a chore Jesus offers that as a promise: **"Come to me, all of you who are weary & carry heavy burdens, & I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble & gentle at heart, & you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is EASY to bear, & my burden is LIGHT."** – Mt 11:28-30 Remember... Jesus is a Rabbi... this is how a rabbi speaks to his disciples/students... APPRENTICES is a better way to see it. Why? Because as an apprentice the goal is 3-fold: *Every apprentice has the same job... be w/ the master... become like the master... do what the master would do in this circumstance -- Relentless Elimination of Hurry – JM Comer*

1. Be with Jesus
2. Become like Jesus
3. Do what Jesus would do if he were you

A rabbi's "yoke" is simply his way of living in relationship to God & the world as one of God's chosen. The whole point of being a Xn is to live close enough to Jesus – be so consciously & persistently & intentionally aware of & wrapped up in his presence that you allow Jesus to shape you fully into his likeness & you live his life in your circumstances... to allow Jesus to shoulder at your side the sometimes crushing weight of life as you experience it... marriage & child-raising... decline & death... \$\$ woes or plenty... fears thrust upon us by the world... ones rising in our own hearts... burden of our own foolish choices & in doing so... easy... light Not an easy life but yoke

How is that possible? He's already borne the greatest burden & carried the heaviest death-dealing yoke of all: the cross & lives now to invite you to carry yours lightened eternally by his resurrection. So for us the foundation of our holy assembly – day of rest – Lord's Sabbath for us is in fact a triumph that's already ours & is given to be lived so that what comes from here takes root here & bears fruit out there. Is 58:13-14 promises: **"If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath & from doing as you please on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight & the Lord's holy day honourable, & if you honour it by not going your own way & not doing as you please or speaking idle words, then you will find your joy in the Lord, & I will cause you to ride in triumph on the heights of the land & satisfy you with the inheritance I promised to your ancestors..."** God created us to find our joy at its fullest in him. He delights in us – takes great pleasure in giving us his kingdom & wants more than anything that we delight in him – that we receive the life he offers & allow it to shape all we are & all we do. Jesus doesn't promise some trick tip or escape hatch... but to bear us (sin & all) so we can bear him ^b/₄ the world.

The OT gives us a 2 beautiful pictures of the Sabbath's completeness. Ex 20/Dt 5 give 2 complementary reasons for the Sabbath: **For** in six days the Lord made the heavens, the earth, the sea, & everything in them; but on the seventh day he rested. That is why the Lord blessed the Sabbath day & set it apart as holy. --- **Remember** you were once slaves in Egypt, but the Lord your God brought you out with his strong hand & powerful arm. That is why the Lord your God has commanded you to rest on the Sabbath day.

The first is about why we were created... God designed us like himself for himself. God created us to find our joy at its fullest in him. Sabbath is where that happens. The 2nd reason... you were once slaves, but God set you free. We too were once slaves... not to a foreign power like the Egyptians, but to a power that had seized control of our hearts/lives – sin. And by Christ's self-offering his life/death/rez/rule we are set free now to be his people. Remember the Sabbath day – Remember you were once slaves but have now been set free.

Biblically, to remember is to relive the experience in the present so that it impacts the future. To remember is to live like today is the first Easter & you are standing outside the empty tomb awestruck at the risen Jesus... like today is the day you came up dripping wet from the waters of baptism... do this in remembrance of me is to live like that death & rez happen to you right now so that eternity can break into your heart right now & you can live that freed forgiven resurrected reborn life right now & forever. This is not just about showing up to tick one more box but about how we live in relationship with God who saved/redeemed us for his work here & reveal that salvation in everything we are & do.

TAKE IT HOME – to sit at the feet of Jesus... to listen... to be him where you are...
What would have to change in your life for Sabbath to become a part of your regular living & your apprenticeship to Jesus to start bearing fruit?
What steps will you take this week?

Psalm 92 is a Sabbath psalm that celebrates the Father who loves us infinitely & comes to save & redeem us to live w/in us & shape our lives according to his purposes... let's pray part of that together... **"It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to the Most High. It is good to proclaim your unending love in the morning, your faithfulness in the evening... You thrill me, Lord, with all you have done for me! I sing for joy because of what you have done... The godly will flourish like palm trees & grow strong like the cedars of Lebanon. For they are transplanted to the Lord's own house. They flourish in the courts of our God. Even in old age they will still produce fruit; they will remain vital & green. They will declare, "The Lord is just! He is my rock!" -- Amen**