

April 6, 2025

Resting Rhythms

Matthew 11:28-29 The Message

Jesus said, “Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life.

I'll show you how to take a real rest.

Walk with me and work with me- watch how I do it.

Learn the unforced rhythms of grace.”

Psalms 46:10a “Be still, and know that I am God.”

Tired. Bone weary tired.

I can't keep my eyes open no matter how hard I try—tired.

That's been my week...for all kinds of different reasons...

Pastoring, family support, conference work, a breakout of poison ivy,

This sermon...man it was like giving birth to my twins again...

Bone-weary tired.

When's the last time you were that tired?

- Maybe it was after a 12 hour work day,
or 3 days in a row of that kind of work day.
- Or after the 3:00 AM feeding of the baby.
- Maybe you're tired of the constant battle with your teenager.
- Perhaps as a caregiver, you've reached your maximum of giving...
to your family member who is dealing with memory issues
or who is in the midst of significant medical needs,
or a financial crisis.
- Maybe it's the constant news feed cycles that just keep coming,
and that batter our hearts, minds, and souls.

I'm talking TIRED.

- So tired of waiting for the call back for another job interview.
- Tired of the excuses you hear over and over again from your spouse,
or best friend, or your boss.
- Just tired of the pain that won't go away in your body.
tired of the meds, the testing, the waiting for results & procedures.

There are so many ways to be tired—

~Physically... ohh yeah we get that one.

~Emotionally/mentally... I think we all know what that feels like.

~And yes spiritually...when we feel like we've got nothing left in the tank,
And are feeling deeply drained and empty.

And when all 3 are involved, boy I know that's when I feel bone tired...

So tired that I can't keep my eyes open, or my mind on the task at hand
as I try to faithfully walk each day the path God has placed before me.
I'm Tired friends.

And Jesus says to me today...

to each of you today who may be feeling that deep weariness too:
“Come to me. Get away with me and recover your life.

I'll show you how to take a real rest.

Walk with me and work with me- watch how I do it.

Learn the unforced rhythms of grace.”

Learn the unforced rhythms of grace.

You know last week the Rev Dr Drew Dyson's sermon
was so powerful for me, the challenge we all face
balancing our lives of personal and social holiness—

Meaning the balance we need to pay attention to:

of our inner spiritual health and wellbeing AND

our outward spiritual impact upon a hurting and needy world.

How it's a constant, intentional “balancing” rhythm of life.

As a very visual illustration of this,

he preached his entire message while on a balance board at both services!

Talk about core strength of mind, body, Spirit!

I encourage you to ck it out on our website or YouTube channel!

Well, I decided to try out that board between services.

Now hear me, I have terrible balance issues.

~I could never learn how to use a skateboard,
despite one of my BFF's best efforts to teach me.

~Youth ski retreats... ohh heck no! I simply could not stay upright.

~Roller blades, ice skating...all traumatic experiences in my childhood,
teenage years, & yes even in my youth leader years serving in church.

~I even have trouble staying upright on my old school Wii Board. TRUTH

So friends, it was with fear and trepidation,

and a readiness to be humiliated,

that I stepped upon Drew's balance board and... nailed it!

There were witnesses!

I felt empowered and it was quite freeing...and fun!

Now while I am not going to preach today while on a balance board,

it became for me a very practical means of grace—

revealing and reminding me of the gift of learning

the unforced rhythms of grace.

Reminding me that life is sometimes exhausting & chaotic. Yes!

And that life **IS** constant movement—forward stepping, side tracking,

detouring, self correcting, leaning one way, then shifting back,

frequently overcompensating, falling, getting a little lost,

And finding our way back...

Often with the help of friends, God, a balance board,

the baptism of a beautiful child,

through a small piece of bread and cup of juice,

or taking a time of rest...following the advice that Jesus gave

his friends so long ago.

Balancing all the stuff around us,

The things that exhaust us, fill our days and “to do” lists, the drama

from family, friends, work, school, and the national & global news...

Balancing all this begins with balancing what's inside us.

You know...Jesus's teachings are full of action words
and heavy-loaded imperatives like: "Go... teach... heal... baptize...
come... get away... walk... watch... learn... rest."

And if like me you're bone-weary tired,
that can feel like just more "to do's"...
When there's nothin' in the tank.

BUT we must remember that Jesus's practice of ministry,
while so outward focused...
also included rich, deep times of personal prayer, extended rest,
time away, dinner with friends, long slow walks, fishing trips,
stopovers at water wells, time in the temple,
and Sabbath Days of resting...being still and at one with God.

Jesus's life required constant balancing,
So what makes us think we can work our lives out in this crazy,
But wonderful...exhausting, but hope-filled world we live in...
with success and joy—without intentionally making time
for what counts and engaging those unforced rhythms of grace
that feed the soul & fill our cup so we can live faith-filled lives?

Today I want to challenge each of us to hear Jesus's plea
and to take it personally—that Jesus is saying to you and me
as we begin the 5th week of our Lenten journey.

"Gina, Brad/Donna, Mike, Karen, Diane, John, Nico, Carol, Jeremiah—
All who are here in this space, all who are worshiping online:

Jesus is saying, "Come on! Get away for a while from the crazy of life.
I know you're tired. I'm going to show you how to take a real rest.
Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it.
Learn the unforced rhythms of grace."

And you know I love that Jesus says **rhythms** here
Its not just a singular rhythm of grace.
Because there are so many ways to rest and experience
God's grace in our lives.

The psalmist says it simply,
Be still, and know that I am God.” Ps 46:10

When we find the time...make the time...to rest...to be still...

That’s when we know God...that’s when we learn...

~When we are invited to slow down enough and notice God
in the most profound, surprising ways.

~To notice the people God places before us and all around us,

~To notice the opportunities waiting to be discovered for peace...joy.

~The spiritual practice of rest, of being still creates an openness to God.

~Coming up to receive Holy Communion this morning is a time to rest
as we kneel or stand to receive the sacrament of the bread and cup.

Our liturgy reminds us how Jesus did it:

“This is my body broken for you...this is my blood poured out for you...
Come to my table of grace. Where you will find real rest.”

~Trisha and Levi brought Riley Grace to the baptismal waters
that flow in & through this life-giving sacrament of life in Christ.

Today they and Riley’s sponsors paused amidst the crazy of life,
And said vows on Riley's behalf—to help her discover God grace,
And love and faith as she grows,

Then we too as a faith family pledged to help raise this little one in Christ-
to live as examples for her to see,
to help her grow inwardly and outwardly in His love,
to pray for her as she walks in the way that leads to life.

To experience that sacred moment...

as water dripped down her beautiful head...

To be still and KNOW God in **that** moment,
in that sacred beautiful moment...is a gift of grace for Riley, her family
and for each and every one of us who are part of her church family.

Learn the unforced rhythms of grace.

Oh friends, spiritual practices like prayer, simplicity, service, fasting,
worship, praise, reading scripture, devotions...
the sacraments of grace received thru the life-giving waters of baptism
and the sustaining bread and cup of life thru holy communion...
ALL provide opportunities to rest...

To find a real rest from the bone-tiring grind of life
we face each & every day.

So whatever that looks like for you...and for me...
May we find the resting rhythms of God's grace, power, strength, love
and hope to fill each of us with enough...enough of the sacred holy,
that spark of grace, of the inpouring Spirit,
for just this moment...then for the day as it unfolds...
then for the week to come.

“Come to me again and again and again”, Jesus says.
“I’ll help you find rest...oh yeah I’m talking REAL rest.

And I got you...holding you as close as I was holding and filling Riley
this morning with my love.

I’m right here that close and intimate.
Walking with you...working within you and through you.
Let’s get away for a while...and you will recover your life.”

May it be so, in the name and power of Jesus.
Amen and amen.