

072218

- I. My Notes... WWC message 072218
- II. Series – A Summer of Psalms
  - a. Title: Stillness, The Key to Living Well
  - b. Text: Psalm 46 CBB
  - c. Quote: Rest – Allow God to restore, replenish, and refocus your heart and mind
- III. Introduction
  - a. I had a migraine the other day. I have dealt with them periodically for the last several years. It is interesting how our lives change. I don't remember (oh gosh, is that an indication of age???) that headaches or minor issues had much of an impact on me in the past. Anyway, I need to get off this and get to my point. The way I deal with a migraine is to stop, get to a quiet place, and rest. Slowing down, acknowledging I need something different, and trusting that the Lord created these marvelous bodies to accomplish some amazing things. Often, in the stillness, I can find some pretty amazing things. Answers to questions I have been pondering on seem to be easily found. As I rest in the darkness, I get clear on issues that have concerned me – some may have contributed to the migraine 😊. It might make you wonder why I don't do it more.
  - b. I read something that may help with the answer... I read this quote by Max Lucado, *"We live in a culture where speed is king. I find myself in a hurry even if there is no reason. We are an uptight generation of compulsive activists. There are ten times more things to do in a day than anyone can do, and so we feel we are always behind and failing to do all that we could. All we do is respond, respond, respond to stimuli. We want peace, but it just does not fit into our agenda. Peace calls for doing nothing sometimes, and*

*we can't handle that. Pascal the great Christian philosopher and scientist said, 'Most of man's troubles come from his inability to be still.'"*

- c. Busyness – how many people will tell you they are busy, that they have very little time???. And do you know anyone that is looking for something to grab their attention? They seem to be doing all kinds of things and yet never accomplishing much except for telling you how busy they are. Having a lot to do and accomplishing a lot are two different things. It seems that we have learned if we are good enough – if we do enough – if we sacrifice and deny ourselves – we can not only prove our worth to the Lord, but we can get in a little better, we can be His favorite. Trying hard sets us up for feeling worse when we eventually stumble. When we base our worth on effort and then we fall short it wreaks havoc with our self-worth. So, the result becomes one of deception, we hide the truth of our failure so that we can appear “good”. Rather than asking why we are miserable and have no deep peace and joy in our relationship with God, we continue to harder to earn our way to that depth of relationship we desire with God. The attempt we make to accomplish this is through busyness in the church, prayer, or acts of compassion in the world. It doesn't work and we don't have any rest or peace.
- d. John Wesley, grounded as he was in the Bible, was certain that salvation and deep connection with the Lord God could not be bought in this way. He was convinced that no one could ever earn a place at God's table...We can never justify ourselves, be reconciled to God or earn our way to heaven on our own. But the marvelous good news is that God offers it all to us as a gift. We are saved, in this world and the next, by grace through faith.
- e. Let's find out what we CAN do to gain a depth of companionship with the Lord.

a. Psalm 46:1-11 (CSB)

God is our refuge and strength, a helper who is always found in times of trouble. Therefore we will not be afraid, though the earth trembles and the mountains topple into the depths of the seas, though its water roars and foams and the mountains quake with its turmoil.

Selah

There is a river — its streams delight the city of God, the holy dwelling place of the Most High. God is within her; she will not be toppled. God will help her when the morning dawns. Nations rage, kingdoms topple; the earth melts when he lifts his voice.

The LORD of Armies is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

Selah

Come, see the works of the LORD, who brings devastation on the earth. He makes wars cease throughout the earth. He shatters bows and cuts spears to pieces; he sets wagons ablaze.

"Stop your fighting, and know that I am God, exalted among the nations, exalted on the earth."

The LORD of Armies is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

Selah

- b. There are times we need to be encouraged... I know that sounds simplistic but it's a needed reminder
- c. I think that there are daily battles that can wear us down
- d. Our daily struggles can get in the way of happiness and even distract us from what the Lord wants for us in life
- e. And being people, we try to fix things on our own- in our way.
- f. There is where the trouble begins.

- g. It's a good thing that God is God and I'm not – my solutions fall short of God's perfect will.

## V. Safety

- a. In life, there are times that things seem unstable – that it feels like everything is falling apart
- b. Job, in his trouble, stated “Everything I feared and dreaded has happened to me. I have no peace or quietness. I have no rest, only trouble.” (Job 3:25-26 NCV)
- c. Job was struggling with life and his purpose. He was devastated and deeply hurt
- d. He was asking similar questions to what many of us have asked
- e. Later, Job even struggled with knowing that God was there, with him.
- f. Job 9:10-11 (NCV)  

He does wonders that cannot be understood; he does so many miracles they cannot be counted. When he passes me, I cannot see him; when he goes by me, I do not recognize him.
- g. I don't say all this to depress or upset you. Let's be honest, we all struggle – we have hurts
- h. Our attention, our hope, should be on the Lord. Crisis approached Jerusalem and the Psalmist pointed the people to look toward the Lord
- i. (vs. 1) “God is our refuge and strength, a helper who is always found in times of trouble.”
- j. We must stop living in the false security of our effort and abilities and learn that trusting the Lord, turning to Him, takes us to the place of comfort and joy

## VI. Note

- a. You've heard me say this... we live behind enemy lines
- b. There of all kinds of dangers and disasters we can face. Trouble may be around the corner
- c. Another Psalm reminds us, that those who live close to God will be protected when facing the difficulties life brings.
- d. Psalm 91:1-6 (TLB)

We live within the shadow of the Almighty, sheltered by the God who is above all gods. This I declare, that he alone is my refuge, my place of safety; he is my God, and I am trusting him. For he rescues you from every trap and protects you from the fatal plague. He will shield you with his wings! They will shelter you. His faithful promises are your armor. Now you don't need to be afraid of the dark any more, nor fear the dangers of the day; nor dread the plagues of darkness, nor disasters in the morning.

- e. The Lord God is... our protection, our place of safety, our rescuer, and our support

## VII. Presence

- a. When Jesus told His Disciples "I am with you always" (ref. Matt. 28:20) it was reminiscent of God's assurance to Israel (see. Deut. 31:8, Joshua 1:9, Is. 41:10)
- b. The truth is that we can feel protected and secure
- c. God is with us...no matter what
- d. I think that many of us feel that when life gets difficult God has pulled back – He has stepped away or doesn't care.
- e. That's not the way He works

- f. God is trustworthy – He is there. He wants us with Him. He wants to protect us.
- g. The river in Psalm 46:4 brings to mind the scene in Revelation 22 (is it supposed to? I don't know)
- h. Revelation 22:1-5 (Phillips NT)

Then he showed me the river of the water of life, sparkling like crystal as it flowed from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of the street of the city and on either bank of the river grew the tree of life, bearing twelve fruits, a different kind for each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. Nothing that has cursed mankind shall exist any longer; the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be within the city. His servants shall worship him; they shall see his face, and his name will be upon their foreheads. Night shall be no more; they have no more need for either lamplight or sunlight, for the Lord God will shed his light upon them and they shall reign as kings for timeless ages.

- i. God is going to protect us, take care of our needs, and show us His compassion and mercy for eternity
- j. We get to drink of the "waters" of His grace and mercy

#### VIII. Relax

- a. Psalm 46:10 (NASB)

"Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."

- b. The psalmist is addressing conflict and assuring us that the Lord is there, with us, and He is more than capable of dealing with any circumstance that may arise
- c. We can rest and trust in the truth that we are valued and protected
- d. Zephaniah 3:17 (ESV)

The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.

- e. We can stand quiet in His love
- f. We can invest in knowing Him and letting Him know us (at our best or our worst)
- g. We can fight, we can work ourselves into a frenzy, and our efforts will leave us exhausted and unsatisfied
- h. God is going to rescue us

#### IX. Last Words

- a. When we don't rest physically we injure ourselves
- b. James Bryan Smith (Professor, Author) writes, "The number one enemy of spiritual formation today is exhaustion. We are living beyond our means ... physically. And as a result, one of the primary activities of human life is being neglected: sleep."

In the 1850's, the average American slept 9.5 hours. By 1950, that had dropped to 8 hours and today the average American gets only 7 hours of sleep a night.

James Bryan Smith continues, "Neglecting our bodies ... impedes our spiritual growth ... If our bodies are not sufficiently rested, our energies will be diminished and our ability to pray, read the Bible, enter solitude or memorize Scripture will be diminished."

- c. It's the same way in our spiritual lives. When we don't rest, when we don't trust the Lord and grow in our relationship with Him, we cease to grow, and we struggle spiritually

- d. Jesus tells us to come to Him and rest – He will bear our burdens and we can learn to live (the way He wants us to) with peace and proper perspective (cf. Matt 11: 28-30)
- e. The Apostle Peter tells us to rest (cast our cares) on the Lord and we won't have reasons to be anxious or stressed (cf. 1 Pet. 5:7).
- f. It seems that all agree, that as we slow down – chill – and turn things over to the Lord God, something marvelous in our life will happen.
- g. Are you ready?
- h. Let's pray
- i. Today, may you be true to the purpose that the Lord has put within you. May each day and every step contribute to the masterpiece that the Lord is forming in your life. And may you find the relationship you need as you rest in His strength.