

**“Rest in What the Lord Has Done”**  
**Stewarding the Presence Series, Part 20**

I was reading a story about a pastor who was getting ready to deliver a sermon as a guest speaker. The problem was that a couple days before the event, he injured his back randomly. The pastor put ice on the area of pain and made sure not to move too much as to not make the injury worse. But he kept getting worse and worse and thought he wouldn't be able to preach. As a preacher the worst feeling in the world is your physical body preventing you from operating in your gift. He called a friend who happened to be a physical therapist and asked if he would come over and evaluate him. The Physical therapist brought his portable table, laid the pastor out and found the root of the problem. The therapist asked the pastor what he had been doing about the problem. He said icing it and not moving. The therapist said, “Well for this injury you need to be using heat and move as much as possible.” Sure enough, when the pastor started applying heat and doing lots of movement, he healed up and was without pain.

Sometimes, you and I do things with good intentions thinking it is going to help a situation. We find out later that all we have done was make it worse. Ever been there? Today We are going to finish our series through the Gospel of John. We started this series almost six months ago and it is the longest series I have ever done in twenty years. I am going to combine the last two chapters of John today and speak to you on the topic of “Resting in What the Lord Has Done.” Last week we talked about the crucifixion and the power of the blood of Jesus. Today, as we look at His resurrection, we are going to see that there is power when we rest in the finished work of Jesus. The pastor I just mentioned thought he was doing something good to help his back but was only making things worse. You and I do the same thing when we fail to rest in the finished work of Jesus and instead rely on our good works to see various breakthrough in our lives. **Ephesians 2:8** speaks about our salvation being a result of the grace of Jesus and not our works so that no man can boast. Everything that you and I will ever need has been given to us on a cross. The grace of Jesus provided it, our faith responds to it. There is such freedom when we decide to let go of trying to figure everything out on our own and trust in the finished work of Jesus.

I heard that there are 365 times in the Bible where it says, “fear not.” We know that fear is not a good thing. Don't ever let someone convince you that a little bit of fear is healthy. They will say, “Oh, fear will keep you from falling off a cliff because you are *afraid* of falling.” Well, intelligence will also keep you from falling. Logic will tell you if you get too close too close to the edge you will fall off. You don't need fear. Fear is a bad thing. But there is another type of fear in the Bible that is more like respect and reverence. And there is one place in Scripture that tells us something very important that we must fear. Take a look with me to the screen as I read Hebrews 4:

***“Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it. 2 For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard. 3 For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, “As I swore in My wrath, They shall not enter My rest,” although His works were finished from the foundation of the world.” – Hebrews 4:1-3 NASB1995***

The “therefore” in this passage of Scripture is pointing back to chapter three which spoke of unbelief keeping the Israelites out of the Promised Land. The “come short” aspect here reflects Grecian games in which it didn’t matter if you were behind the first-place runner by an inch or a mile...you were still coming up short. It denotes that we don’t just want to be close to God’s rest, we need to fully experience it.

The author of Hebrews challenges us to fear coming short of fully walking in the finished work of Jesus. God created everything in existence in six days and on the seventh He rested. God didn’t rest because He was tired. God rested because it was finished, complete, and perfect. Have you noticed how God created mankind last? God created everything in this Universe that you and I would need before He created us. That means from the very moment Adam took his first breath, he had everything he needed in this world. When Jesus went to the cross, He provided everything you and I would need, not only in the physical world, but in our spirit. In the New Covenant, you and I can rest in the finished work of the cross.

Let me give you a little example of resting in the middle of stress. I was a horrible high school student. I don’t know how it is possible, but I graduated with a 1.8 GPA. Praise the Lord I graduated with my master’s degree with a 3.9 but in high school I was a horrible student. I rarely did homework and never studied for tests. But I remember one day in history class we had a quiz at the end of the week. I thought to myself (this is so sad), I wonder what it feels like to actually study and get a good grade. So, you know what friends? I studied. When Friday came and the teacher passed out the quiz I wasn’t stressed or praying that the Lord would show me mercy. I was eager to get going. I sat there saying to myself “Oh I know that answer, I know that answer...wow this is easy.” I was the first student done and I got an A on the quiz. Something that should have brought me fear and stress actually became fun. Why, because I did what I was supposed to do. When you try to take God’s place and fix something that only He is responsible for fixing, you find yourself with the same stress. I want you to remember that God created Adam in the Garden of Eden. The Garden was heaven on earth, perfect in every way. Remember that in that perfection Adam had a job. God gave Adam the job of tending to the garden. It was only *after* the fall, after the first sin that the work became *toil*. I believe the Second Adam (Jesus) gave us the grace for today to work without toil if we rest in Him. You see you can walk in total peace and rest not matter what you face when you walk in the rest that is a result of the finished work of Jesus. You can have peace and rest in the middle of a stressful situation because you trust that God is bigger and that the cross overcame it all.

Now, you and I stumble and fail from time to time. Thank You Lord for Your grace. Today in chapters 20 and 21 we are going to see two examples of people who were restored in the grace of Jesus so that they could walk in peace and rest. If you have your Bibles go with me to John chapter 20 and we are going to begin in verse 11:

***11 But Mary was standing outside the tomb weeping; and so, as she wept, she stooped and looked into the tomb; 12 and she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been lying. 13 And they said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him.” 14 When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. 15 Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you***

*weeping? Whom are you seeking?” Supposing Him to be the gardener, she said to Him, “Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away.” 16 Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to Him in Hebrew, “Rabboni!” (which means, Teacher). 17 Jesus said to her, “Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.’” 18 Mary Magdalene came, announcing to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord,” and that He had said these things to her.  
– John 20:11-18 NASB1995*

Scroll down with me to verses 30-31:

*30 Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.  
– John 20:30-31 NASB1995*

I will comment on Mary in just a minute, but I wanted to include verses 30-31 here because it is the thesis of the entire book of John. The whole point of John’s Gospel was to reveal Jesus in a way that you would believe that He is the Lord, the Son of God. 90% of John’s Gospel is not found in the other synoptic Gospels. It is almost like the other Gospel writers are giving us a bird’s eye view while John is zoomed in. Why didn’t John stop writing here? Chapter 20 is such a perfect place to stop and end the Gospel with this thesis statement. This is just a guess but what if John who ironically always talked about how he was Jesus’ favorite, didn’t want the readers to see Mary and the disciples in a negative light. What if John wanted to show the grace and restoration of the Lord. Let’s look in chapter 21 beginning in verse 15:

*15 So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Tend My lambs.” 16 He said to him again a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love Me?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Shepherd My sheep.” 17 He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love Me?” Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, “Do you love Me?” And he said to Him, “Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.” Jesus said to him, “Tend My sheep. – John 21:15-17 NASB1995*

I love the picture of how Jesus extends grace to Mary and Peter. What is interesting is that both Mary and Peter did not recognize Jesus physically. Maybe it was because Jesus’ glorified body was so much more glorious than before. Maybe the last image they saw of the Savior was so bloodied and raw it seemed impossible that He came back to life. It is so cool though that Mary didn’t recognize it was Jesus until He spoke. The moment Jesus said “Mary,” she recognized Him. Then Jesus appears to Peter as he comes up short from a night of fishing. I wonder if Peter was out fishing for his next meal or if he returned to his previous occupation. Sometimes when you fail in the faith you go back to what you used to know. Jesus shows up and performs a miracle. It is in this miracle that Peter recognizes that it is Jesus. Jesus then has breakfast with the disciples. How amazing would it be if the Creator of the Universe made you breakfast. I bet it was probably the best Mediterranean Sea Bass and Eggs they have ever had. But why was this

important? Because to eat a meal with someone was an intimate event. To eat with someone who wronged you was a display of forgiveness. Jesus restored Mary from her sorrow and Peter from his failure. Peter denied Jesus three times and three times at breakfast Jesus asked “do you love Me?”

One thing was certain; after this encounter with Jesus all the disciples walked in the finished work of the cross and turned the world upside down for the Gospel. I want to encourage you today with a few things to help you walk in the finished work of the cross. If you are taking notes, please fill out point number one:

### **#1 – Are you seeking God?**

You all know I love cooking and all things food related. So naturally when we were planning our kid’s ministry movie night, I wanted to make the popcorn and do it the movie theater style. I spent most of the week leading up to the movie night testing out different ratios of the butter oil and popcorn salt. My family really loved my experiments because they got fresh popcorn every night. Now, I worked hard perfecting the ratio. Some nights it was way too salty and other nights it was bland. Gabriel comes in one of the nights and started making his own bowl. I said, “whoa, whoa, whoa...this is a science buddy.” He didn’t listen and took the very salty popcorn salt and didn’t realize it poured out really fast. In his pride he still ate the bowl. 30 minutes later he comes in the kitchen looking like a dehydrated sponge. I said, “Boy you should have listened to me. I could have told you how much butter oil and salt to put.”

You and I have done this to God a million times in our lives. We got ourselves in trouble because we thought we could figure it out on our own. We thought if we just did more good works God would have to answer us. If we read our Bibles and prayed more than everyone else we would be blessed and freed of our problems. How many times have we forgotten to even go to God at the very beginning of the problem? I can’t stand the phrase “I’ve done everything I know to do; all I can do now is pray.” Prayer should never be a last resort; it should always be a first priority. The God is the Universe, Who has infinite wisdom wants to speak to you if you would simply seek Him first. **Matthew 6:33** says, “Seek first the Kingdom of God and all these things will be added to you.”

There was a time in Israel’s history where the Ark of the Covenant was stolen and did not reside in the Temple. The presence of God was not in the Temple and yet all the religious traditions continued. David wasn’t content with this and took back the Ark. He made his own tent to house the presence of God and established 24/7 worship. Look to the screen with me and see the song of thanksgiving offered when the Ark was set up in this tent.

***Oh give thanks to the Lord, call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples. 9 Sing to Him, sing praises to Him; Speak of all His wonders. 10 Glory in His holy name; Let the heart of those who seek the Lord be glad. 11 Seek the Lord and His strength; Seek His face continually. 12 Remember His wonderful deeds which He has done, His marvels and the judgments from His mouth.” – 1 Chronicles 16:8-12 NASB1995***

## #2 – Are you trying to do God's job?

The first reason why we are not walking in the rest of the finished work of Jesus is that we do not seek God first. The second reason is that we try to do God's job. **Isaiah 55:9** says, "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts." I think the greatest example of getting in God's way is Peter telling Jesus He will never go to the cross. Jesus then says, "Get behind me Satan." Jesus said Peter was a stumbling block and had his mind set on man's ways not God's. Now, Peter was sincere. Peter loved the Lord Jesus. Peter didn't want to see Jesus crucified and left alone. But it was God's will. It didn't make logical or human sense, but it was still God's will.

When a loved one is sick, when you are faced with a difficult financial situation, or when you face a severe trial, it is so tempting to try and do everything you know how to do to fix the problem. Instead of having faith that God is able, we stress ourselves out trying to find an answer. Let me encourage you with this: **before you go into action, go to God in prayer.** Your first response should not be "what am I going to do?" Your first response should be "God what do You want me to do?" There's a big difference. Sometimes God will say "fight" and other times He will say "Be still and watch the salvation of the Lord." Prayer brings you the discernment to understand God's will in the moment.

## #3 – Are you trusting God or worrying?

Have you noticed that in **1 John 4:18** it says, "perfect love *casts* out fear?" Or in **1 Peter 5:7** it says, "*cast* all your anxiety on Him?" You don't cast out an emotion, you cast out a spirit. Now I'm not saying if you struggle with worry or anxiety that you are demon possessed. But what I am saying is you may need to cast out the *influence* of the enemy in your thoughts and heart. C.S. Lewis once said, "Life with God is not immunity from difficulties, but peace in difficulties." You can't wait for your emotions to feel good to start obeying and trusting God. You in your authority need to come in alignment with the will of God and follow Him. Let me ask you a question to think about. When you look back in your life and think about all the times God got you through something do you remember God telling you every step beforehand? For most of us the answer is no. We want a map in life, but the Lord gives us a compass.

So, how do you trust God more? I think there are many ways but two ways you can trust God more is by first reflecting on His track record and second, magnifying His goodness. Think about it...you won't trust a human if they seem sketchy right? If something is off about their character or something doesn't settle right, you are less likely to trust them. On the other hand, there may be someone in your life who has good character and is a nice person. You are more likely to trust them. God is good and His lovingkindness is everlasting. The more you are convinced of God's love and goodness, the more you will easily trust Him.

## #4 – Are you pouring out more than taking in?

**Luke 5:16** and other places speak about Jesus withdrawing often to lonely places to pray. After ministering to crowds, or after John the Baptist was killed, Jesus got away to be with the Father in prayer. Many times, you and I fail to rest in the finished work of the cross because we are not

resting in the physical. As much as your body needs nourishment to thrive, your soul needs spiritual nourishment.

Let me close with this. Many of you have heard my testimony on burnout. A couple years ago I hit a wall because I never took a sabbath and never slowed down. I entered into a deep depression, began seeing a counselor, and most Sundays I would be dressed for church and couldn't get off of the couch. It took every ounce of energy to get off my couch and get to the pulpit. I learned through my counselor that I suffered from adrenal fatigue and needed to make drastic changes. So, I allowed myself to get up as early as I wanted but around 6pm every night (other than church services) I would stop everything and relax. Every Sunday after lunch I take a 24-hour sabbath. I have been pretty good and sticking to these rules and it has been a game changer. Now when I feel a little extra stressed or a little bit more exhausted, I make sure to get away for a night with Nikki or ask one of my pastors to step in and preach for me. Here's the thing, the more I take care of my physical body, the easier it will be to take care of my soul. It will be easier to rest in the finished work of the cross and trust the Lord in all things.