

Matthew 11:25-30

In the name of Jesus, the Son of God

I haven't been sleeping well. At first I thought it was my pillows. (It's not that). Then I thought, "Maybe I'm drinking too much caffeine too late in the day." (It's probably that.) But the biggest reason I think I haven't been sleeping well is just life. Life sometimes feels like you're running in quick sand. You're working so hard but you're not getting anywhere. Have you ever felt like that? You spend three hours cleaning the house and it looks just as messy as when you started. You work for eight hours and at the end of the day there's still ten things that you didn't do. And the worst part is there's no end in sight. You moms, you must feel this way. I'm sure sometimes it feels like your life has three songs: Cook, Clean, drive to baseball practice. And they are stuck on repeat. So I was lying in my bed feeling crushed by life. But then a thought struck me and it honestly made my heart glad. "I get to follow Jesus tomorrow. Tomorrow I get to spend the day with Jesus and he'll teach me a little more about what it means to be his disciple."

I can look forward to tomorrow because Jesus will be there. Tomorrow if I become poor, Peter and the other disciples were still poorer, and yet they had everything because they had Jesus. If I become sick then Jesus will heal me. If I die then Jesus will raise me. I can look forward to tomorrow because Jesus will be there.

In a special way Jesus is here with us right now in worship. Jesus said, **"Wherever two or three gather together in my name there I am with them."** Jesus is in the room with us right now. There are 168 hours in the week, but for one hour on Sunday morning the world stops and it's just you and Jesus.

I wrote that last line in my sermon and I was feeling proud of myself because I thought it was a pretty good line but then I thought "O no! What about the mom's in the back with the three and four year old kids. It'll be pretty hard to sell them on the thought that worship is the most restful hour of the week. For you moms, worship is the most stressful hour of the week because you have to somehow keep your kids quiet in church!"

You moms, I just want you to know that Jesus cares a lot about your little children. Remember when Jesus fed the 5,000? There were 5,000 men NOT COUNTING WOMEN AND CHILDREN. As Jesus taught there were women there in the crowd holding little children probably trying to keep them quiet. And Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me." Especially in Matthew Jesus loves to talk about the **"little ones."** In chapter 18, he says, **"Unless you change and become like little children, you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven."**

Here in the Bible passage we are looking at today Jesus says, **"I praise you Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure."** And when Jesus talks about the little ones he's not just talking about those who are little in age, he's talking also about those who are little in strength.

Are you feeling weighed down in life? That's perfect! That's perfect because those are exactly the kind of people whom Jesus helped. I invite you to read the Gospel of Matthew and you will find a paralytic and a leper and a cripple and man who was blind and Jesus healed 'em all. Jesus came to help those who need help. He came to help the dad who is stressed at work and the mom in the back of church. **"Come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest."**

If you've been a Christian for a while and you know the Bible pretty well, "rest" makes you think of the "Sabbath day." In the Old Testament (that means the time before Jesus came) God told his people: do work for six days, but on the seventh day you can't do any work, you need to rest. And they were supposed to remember

two things on the Sabbath day. First, that God made the universe in six days and then he rested on the seventh day. The other thing they were supposed to remember on the Sabbath day was that God had rescued them from slavery in Egypt. Listen to Deuteronomy 5: **“Observe the Sabbath day. Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.” (Deut. 5:12-15).**

The Israelites were slaves. They never got a day off. They had to work and work and work and work. Until God sent his deliver Moses to Pharaoh and said “Let my people go.” God sent plagues on Pharaoh until Pharaoh finally let God’s people go. But then Pharaoh changed his mind and ran after the Israelites. He had them trapped up against the Red Sea. But then God’s mighty hand parted the sea and the Israelites passed through on dry ground. And when they reach the shore they were free at last.

God’s people celebrated their freedom every year with a festival called the Passover. Jesus celebrated the Passover with his disciples the night before he died. And at that meal Jesus said with his actions, “There’s a new exodus. And I’m the new Moses, delivering you from the Pharaoh of sin.” And this new exodus is so momentous that we need a new festival to celebrate this. So Jesus took bread and said “Take and eat. This is my body which is given for you for the forgiveness of sins.” And then he took the cup and said take and drink, “This is the new covenant in my blood, poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins.” Jesus has delivered you from the Pharaoh of sin. We don’t always realize how big a deal that is. But we will realize it on the day of God’s wrath, when God’s wrath passes over us. On that day we will realize what an enormous thing Jesus has done for us.

Three days after Jesus died God raised him from the dead. Jesus had his same physical body only it was glorified and transformed. That’s what gives me the most rest. God is going to give us a resurrection life in a resurrection world. He’s going to raise our physical bodies and renew creation (Jesus talks about the renewal of all things). And it’s interesting in 1 Cor 15 Paul spends a whole long chapter talking about the resurrection and the at end he says **“Therefore your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”**

So I’ll remember that the next time I can’t sleep and I feel like I’m running through quick sand. In the resurrection God is going to somehow make it so that my labor was worth it. I wasn’t running through quick sand when I wrote an email and made a visit and preached a sermon. Moms, you’re not running in circles when you make dinner night after night after night. In the resurrection God is going to make it so that all your work was worth it. **“Your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”**

So sleep well tonight. And don’t worry about tomorrow. Jesus will be there.

Amen.