

Jesus Doesn't Rest

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Pastor Matthew Ude

INI - SDG

John 4:5-26 NKJ ⁵ So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. ⁶ Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from *His* journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. ⁷ A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." ⁸ For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. ⁹ Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. ¹⁰ Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." ¹¹ The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water?" ¹² "Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?" ¹³ Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, ¹⁴ "but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." ¹⁵ The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." ¹⁷ The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' ¹⁸ "for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly." ¹⁹ The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. ²⁰ "Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you *Jews* say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship." ²¹ Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. ²² "You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. ²³ "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. ²⁴ "God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." ²⁵ The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming " (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things." ²⁶ Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am *He*."

Next week we are going to hear Jesus tell his disciples **"I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work."** John 9:4

We see him doing that in our text this morning. Its evening in our text, around 6pm. Jesus is tired from a long day of walking and maybe preaching along the way. He stops by a well to rest while his disciples go into town to buy bread. But he doesn't rest, does He? A woman comes to the well and Jesus reaches out to her to preach the Gospel. "He works while it is day." That is to say, when there is opportunity, He takes advantage of it.

Jesus came not to rest but to give rest. Even His request for water was only a prelude to offering her the water of life. The day is far spent but even at this late hour when Jesus meets someone who is in need of rest, He does not rest until He has given to her the rest He came to give to all.

Matthew 11:28-29 "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Here Jesus promises to carry our heavy burden and give to us his light burden, which is in fact not any burden at all. He promises to give us rest.

Receiving rest in Jesus means laying down our sins.

When the woman asks Jesus for this living water, He immediately confronts her with her sin. This may seem like a sudden change in conversation to us, but Jesus is attempting to do exactly what He promised. He is attempting to take her sin upon himself as the Lamb of God who carries the sin of the world and give to her His burden which is no burden at all.

Receiving rest from Jesus begins with that laying down of our sin. It is only when we lay the burden of our sins down at His feet that we can receive the rest He promises us.

About ten years ago some of my family including my sister Mandy and her family, went hiking up Mount LeConte. The hike is long and slow but not difficult. It is a little less than seven miles and about 4,000 feet in net altitude change and takes about 8 hours. A couple hours into the hike my nephew who was young at the time began to complain about the weight of his backpack. There was really nothing in his backpack except some clothes and some snacks, so Mandy didn't understand what he was complaining about. Eventually she stopped to look and found that his backpack was full of rocks that he had been collecting along the way because they looked neat. She convinced him to leave them in a pile by the path and we would pick them up in two days on our way back down.

We can hardly expect to find rest if we keep carrying our sins. Jesus came to give us rest, to carry our sins for us.

This is why Jesus himself instituted the ministry of the keys and private confession. In this way those of us who are called to serve in Jesus' name are able help His people to lay down their sins and find rest in His forgiveness

James reminds us "**Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed.**" James 5:16

Private confession is not a law that you must do but is a gracious gift from Jesus given through the church and its pastor. In this gift Jesus works through the Pastor to help people lay down the burden of those sins which irritate their conscience and keep them from having the rest Jesus wishes to give them.

Just as Jesus encourages this woman to confess her sins, so He encourages us to come to our pastor and confess those sins which trouble our conscience. We can do this without fear because we know what Jesus will say to us through our Pastor.

Matthew 9:2 Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you.

Even though we know what Jesus will say to us through our pastor, still Jesus promises to work powerfully through the spoken word. In the same way He works through the sacraments and the general confession and public preaching of the Gospel.

John 20:22-23 And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

If something is bothering our conscience, even if it is a little thing it is obvious that we need some help laying down that sin. It is for this purpose that Jesus instituted private confession.

Do not be like my nephew carrying unnecessary burdens. Come to Christ and receive the refreshing water of life which He has promised to us all.

Rev 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

Receiving rest in Jesus means receiving Jesus

There are two parts to confession the first is that we confess our sins, the second is that we receive Christ and the forgiveness that He brings.

After leading the woman to confess her sins, Jesus reveals himself as her Savior from sin, as the Savior who has come to give her rest.

Next week we are going to hear once again how the Pharisees condemn Jesus because of something He did on the Sabbath day. They use the fact that He worked a miracle on the Sabbath as proof that He is a sinner and not from God.

In part the pharisees were right to highly value the Sabbath day. Repeatedly in the Old Testament God stressed how important the Sabbath was. Not only the Sabbath day but the Sabbath year as well. He threatens to punish those who do not keep it.

Isaiah 58:13-14 ¹³ "If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, *From doing your pleasure on My holy day, And call the Sabbath a delight, The holy day of the LORD honorable, And shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, Nor finding your own pleasure, Nor speaking your own words,* ¹⁴ Then you shall delight yourself in the LORD; And I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth, And feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father. The mouth of the LORD has spoken."

The Pharisees were right to value the Sabbath day. The problem is that they did not value it correctly. They saw it as a law they had to follow, rather than treasuring it as a gift from God. If they had truly treasured the day of rest in their hearts they would have received Jesus. If they had received it joyfully as a gift from God and come to it every week desiring the rest which God promised them they would have recognized Jesus for what He was: the fulfillment of the Sabbath. They would not have rejected Him but rejoiced in him.

Once again with regard to the man born blind Jesus himself did not rest in order that He might give us rest.

Those who like the Pharisees come to Jesus in order to fulfill the law receive nothing from Jesus. But those who like the Samaritan woman come to Jesus looking for the gifts of God receive from Jesus the rest that He came to bring.

He himself did not rest in order that we might receive rest in Him.

There are two parts to confession, the first is that we confess our sins, the second is that we receive forgiveness from Christ himself. Whoever does these two things has the water of life which Jesus speaks of here. Remove the rocks from your backpacks. Lay down your sins and receive the rest Jesus brings.

Amen