



“Restlessness: Reframed”

Theme: Are You Restless?

Scriptures Mark 10:35-45; Matthew 6:19-21; Philippians 2:1-7;

Weekly Memory Verse: “Whoever wants to be great among you will be your servant. ⁴⁴Whoever wants to be first among you will be the slave of all, ⁴⁵for the Human One didn’t come to be served but rather to serve and to give his life to liberate many people.” --*Mark 10:43b-45*

Family Activity for the Week: Unprepared means, “not ready or able to deal with something” (Google Dictionary). Can you think of a time that you and your family were unprepared to deal with a situation? Did it go well? Were you frazzled, angry, anxious? Now think of a time when you were prepared. Did you get a good grade? Were you confident, successful, worry-free? Get out a dictionary and thesaurus and spend some time looking up synonyms for unprepared and prepared. Which would you rather be? When we spend time with God and hide His Word in our hearts, we can be prepared for the world to throw crazy things our way. He is the rock upon which we stand!

Monday, November 9 – The Way of the Cross – Humility

Read Psalm 139:13-14, Ephesians 2:4-10; Philippians 2:1-11

We all know that person who walks around as if they were puffed up with air, proud of their bank account statement, their title, their looks, their ability. Sometimes, if we are honest, we’re even those people! St. Augustine once said that pride is “the love of one’s own excellence.” This goes beyond simply healthy self-esteem. This is a perspective that says we are somehow superior. Take comfort in the fact that you are valuable and precious to God. But so is everyone else.

- ▲ What are your strengths, from God’s perspective? Are you ever tempted to think and act as though those strengths make you superior to other people? Are there places in your life where you are masking insecurities with pride? Are you able to be happy when someone else succeeds or gains praise, or does it make you feel threatened?
- ▲ What’s the difference between healthy self-esteem and pride? Can you recall a time when you successfully overcame a sense of unhealthy pride? If so, what helped you to do that? Do you have anyone in your life who can honestly challenge you on pridefulness? Or if anyone challenges you, do you immediately become defensive?

Prayer: *Creator of the universe, thank you for the gift of life you’ve entrusted to me. Help me find security in you and free me from the need to feel superior. Amen.*

Tuesday, November 10 – The Way of the Cross – Discipline & Rest

(Message Notes and Meditation Moments for November 7-8, 2020 – For more, go to www.summitdurango.org)

Read Genesis 2:2-3, Psalm 3:3-6

John Wesley posed a question to others, “Do I go to bed on time and get up on time?” Yes, this question is about being rested for the work of God in the world. However, his question also points to our willingness to live a disciplined life in general. “Do I go to bed on time and get up on time?” is like code for “Are you rested and at your best to meet the challenges of the day, and ultimately represent God well and help make the world a better place?”

- ▲ Think about a time you’ve felt exhausted and depleted. What was your behavior like at that time? How good were the decisions you made when you were in that state of exhaustion? How would you answer John Wesley’s question, both on the surface level (adequate hours of sleep) and on its deeper level (rested enough to make the world a better place)?
- ▲ Choose a reasonable bedtime this week, one that will provide you with a good amount of rest, and stick to it. Perhaps it’s a half hour before you usually go to bed, or perhaps it’s a lot earlier than that. Don’t allow emails, television, or anything else that really can wait until the next day to interfere with that time you’ve set.

Prayer: *God, help me be disciplined in my sleep and in my times of rest and recreation. I pray that I’ll be willing to stick to a schedule that allows me to be my best for your Kingdom’s sake. Amen.*

Wednesday, November 11 The Way of the Cross – Gratitude

Read Philippians 2:14-16

Are you a constant complainer? It’s easy to find out: ask the people around you. When we complain, we think we are just making observations about reality. But constant complaining creates an alternative reality that leads us to shirk responsibility and blame others for our discontent.

Wesley called us to ask ourselves and one another this question so that we can replace negative with positive thoughts, and start developing new habits marked by hope and optimism.

- ▲ Do you think you are optimistic or pessimistic by nature? What kind of feedback have you received from people in your life about this aspect of your personality? Do you believe it is possible to reframe your approach to circumstances to view them in a positive vs. negative light? What could help you do this?
- ▲ While the way of the world often sees the glass half full, which leads to restlessness, can you take a moment to write down all the things you are grateful for? When we regularly take time to remind ourselves of all the good in our lives, even in the midst of a global pandemic, we can find joy.

Prayer: *Holy God, you always work for my good. May I honor you by avoiding complaining and replacing it with rejoicing, even when things do not go my way. Amen.*

Thursday, November 12 The Way of the Cross – What motivates us?

Read 1 Timothy 6:7-9; Matthew 6:19-21

John Wesley once posed the following question: “Am I a slave to dress, friends, work, or habits?” The underlying principle behind this question is simply: Who or what owns us? What consumes us? Who or what do we allow to control our life? When we are a slave to something or someone, it clearly means that we take our direction from a controlling person or object that is not God. We are called toward a healthy, balanced life of serving the Kingdom virtues we see in the life of Christ. Also, where we put our time, energy, or thoughts is ultimately what motivates us.

- ▲ What controls your life? Be honest with yourself. What is the focus of most of your thoughts? What preoccupies you? How much time, effort and focus would be available for your participation in the mission of God if this factor did NOT preoccupy your life? Ask your spouse or a trusted friend to alert you when they notice you “feeding” this preoccupation in a way that limits your ability to allow God to control your life.

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- ▲ One of the best ways to control or curb your enthusiasm for things in your life that consume you other than God's mission is to consistently serve others. Find a place to serve regularly, to help rebalance the priorities in your life. It may be difficult to do this during COVID-19, but do you have a neighbor or family member you can help? Perhaps think about ways your family might be able to serve others during this Thanksgiving season.

Prayer: *God, help me resist the desire to collect things I do not need, to resist the temptation to allow my impulses and obsessions to direct my decision-making. Help me to give you all I am and have. Amen.*

Friday, November 13 The Way of the Cross – How do I spend my time?

Read 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13

A 2014 Bureau of Labor Statistics survey said that, on average, employed Americans age 25-54 with children sleep 7.7 hours a day. Of the remaining 16.3 hours, people in that group average 2.5 hours of leisure time.¹ It is essential to determine where in your day you have spare time. You must also find what you should do with that time. This is not a time to answer emails you didn't get to during your hours of work! This is a key question for Christians so that we can determine which activities help us be refreshed, renewed and refocused on the essential priorities of our lives.

- ▲ What activities bring you the most enjoyment and make you feel the most refreshed and energized? How much of your spare time do you spend on these pursuits? If it's less than you would like, how can you restructure your time so that you are spending it in ways that bring you life?
- ▲ Make a spare time "map" of your week. For one week, record everything honestly, (for only your eyes). Be specific enough so that you can spot spare time patterns to help you evaluate your map. Use the calendar or notes functions on your phone to help you, or jot down notes in your desk calendar or portfolio, if that works best for you.

Prayer: *God, may I use my spare time in way(s) that please you. Help me develop the consistent practices needed to use the time I have wisely. Amen.*

¹ <http://www.bls.gov/tus/charts/>

Saturday, November 14 The Way of the Cross – Loving Others

Read Philippians 2:3-4; John 13:31-35

It is healthy to be self-aware. However, being too aware of self can make us self-absorbed if we're not careful. John Wesley invites us to reflect on the question, "Am I self-conscious, self-pitying or self-justifying?" in order that we can confront our human penchant to be so concerned with "self" that we lose sight of the "others" in our lives.

- ▲ How often do you think about yourself compared to thinking about others during the day?
- ▲ How often do you attempt something you will be "bad" at? If your answer is "rarely," why do you think that is? Are you afraid of being embarrassed or looking foolish to others? Are you worried about criticism, or is it because you have an excessive need to always be the "best"? Has anyone ever told you that you are self-absorbed, self-pitying, or self-justifying? What were the circumstances of that encounter? What, if anything, did you learn about yourself as a result?
- ▲ What is one act of love that you can do today to love someone else? (Send an email, letter, or phone call)

Prayer: *God, teach me to serve you first and to seek your kingdom. Help me to be less concerned about myself and more about you and your mission for this world. Help me not to be so concerned with myself that I forget your purpose for me. Amen.*