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All Saints Day
INI - SDG

The Rest We Need Is Jesus

You look like you could use some rest!

If that's true about you, you've come to the right place. Sunday morning service is a good place to get some rest. Sometimes because you can nod off and take a quick nap while no one is looking. But hopefully Christ can offer you better rest than that.

Matthew 11:28-30 ²⁸ "Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ "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. ³⁰ "For My yoke *is* easy and My burden is light."

My wife and her three sisters ran a half marathon yesterday. After 13.1 miles they were a little tired. When they got home they didn't want to go outside and play football, or kabadi, or tag. Instead, they were arguing about who gets to take a nap.

The well-earned rest after a hard race or a hard day's work is a wonderful blessing. Jesus promises us that same rest after our race of faith. We heard about this rest in our reading from revelation. In a little bit we are going to give prayers of thanks to God for the rest some of our loved ones now have in him. We look forward with joy to finishing our race and basking in the rest of Christ with all the saints.

It is this rest the writer of Hebrews reminds us about.

Hebrews 4:8-10 ⁸ For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. ⁹ There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. ¹⁰ For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His.

Christ promises us rest at the end of our race, but the rest after the race is not the only rest that matters. Rest before the race and even rest during the race is important if you want to get to the finish.

One of the hardest things to do when it comes to running a race is learning to find that perfect pace. The pace that uses up all your energy just as you cross the finish line. If you run too fast you will burn out before you get very far.

When Kaylee was still in the hospital in 2016, her therapists told Vanessa and I again and again. "It's a marathon not a sprint." All the care that Kaylee needed and still needs, it is important to take it at the right pace. It's important to get rest so that we can keep going

If we are going to run the race that Jesus has set before us we need rest. The rest after the race is not the only rest Jesus promises us. Jesus promises us rest now as well. The rest we need to run the race ahead of us.

What does our text say? **"I will give you rest"**

The word for "rest" here does not necessarily mean a nap or sleeping at night. It could also mean "I will refresh you." Those who run may grab a little cup of water at the stand and receive some refreshment from it. Christ is here promising you such refreshment.

Hebrews exhorts us to consider the saints that went before as an example for us. Paul reminds us to run the good race. But it is Jesus who gives to his saints the rest that is needed without which we will never cross the finish line. We know the rest that is waiting for us when we finish the race, but what about the rest that is needed now as we run.

In Exodus 33:14 the Lord promises Moses

Exo 33:14 And He said, "My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest."

This is a promise that he gives to us as well. A promise that we receive every Sunday when we hear the benediction.

"The Lord lift up his countenance upon you."

When we are children, we have to be told when to rest. We have a bedtime and sometime a waking time too. You must go to bed at this time. You are not to get up before this time. Take a nap at this time. As adults we must make these decisions for ourselves, but we are not always so good at making that decision and getting enough rest.

In the Old Testament God treated his people like children, giving to them the command to rest

Exodus 20:10 ¹⁰ but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates.

He has not treated us as children but as adults, the New Testament emphasizes the need for such rest but it leaves it up to us to choose when and how.

Romans 14:5-6 ⁵ One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶ He who observes the day, observes it to the Lord;

Yet even though the Lord has called us friends and treated us as adults we often act like children, not taking the time to get the spiritual rest we so desperately need. We always have a good excuse, "I'm too busy doing this. I'm too busy doing that. I don't have any choice. My boss is making me work on Sunday." We always have a good excuse but all the excuses in the world aren't going to change the fact that our souls need rest and the only place they can get it is in Jesus.

"Come to me and I will give you rest."

Yesterday one member here mentioned, "I had more time in my day when I was studying God's word."

Luther also said once that he was so busy there was no way he could ever get everything done without spending an hour in prayer.

We usually think, "I'm too busy to spend time with the Lord."

Luther thought, "I'm too busy not to spend time with the Lord."

Our life is not a sprint it is a marathon. We are not going to make it without the rest that Jesus promises

Jesus has indeed given us rest

Jeremiah 31:25 ²⁵ "For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul."

And

John 4:14 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."

Here we have come to Jesus. Here we have come to a place where we don't have to worry about how we measure up and if we have done enough. Jesus tells us that he came to save sinners, adulterers, liars, even tax collectors, and people named Matthew. We aren't enough in ourselves, but Jesus died for our sins and loved us anyway.

Here we come to Jesus. Here one come to a place where we don't have to work hard or go hungry. Our salvation is the free gift of God, given to us by God's grace.

Here we have come to Jesus a place to receive rest for our souls.

Sunday morning service is a good place to get some rest. Hopefully not the kind where you nod off in church and your wife pokes you in the ribs, but a better rest than that, the peace of God that gives refreshment to our souls.

"Come to me and I will give you rest." AMEN