

Last week we discussed silence and solitude and the need to spend time with God with both 1. External silence and 2. Internal silence. Jesus came out of his solitude with “clarity”. Were you able to spend some time with God this week in silence? How was it? If not, what kept you from doing it?

Sabbath

Desire – a strong feeling of wanting to have something or wishing for something to happen.

But just as we have what we desire, we want something else. “Desire is infinite. It has no limit.” But we are finite. We have limits that frustrate our limitless desires. Do you have desires that you are striving for? Can you see that you may not reach some of your desires in your life? How does that make you feel?

Restlessness - the inability to rest or relax as a result of anxiety or boredom.

Have you ever felt like you were a chained dog, just waiting to be released and able to accomplish your full potential in this world?

Why do you think God made us this way, having dreams, ambitions, and desires?

We are to place our hopes, dreams, and desires in two places: 1. On God and 2. Below God

What are some examples of your hopes that should be placed on and below God?

How are we to know if we are placing them in the right place?

“Ultimately, nothing in this life, apart from God, can satisfy our desires. Tragically, we continue to chase after our desires ad infinitum. The result? A chronic state of restlessness or, worse, angst, anger anxiety, disillusionment, depression – all of which lead to a life of hurry and overload.” Do you know anyone like this? How does this effect their life?

We have two false gods that are prevalent in our society today: 1. Accumulation and 2. Accomplishment

What are some examples you see of this around you today? Which false God do you in particular have a problem with?

What does Jesus teach us in order to deal with this in our lives?

The Sabbath

Shabbat – the Hebrew word that means “to stop”.

The Sabbath is simply a day to stop: stop working, stop wanting, stop worrying, just stop.”

Exodus 20:8-10 – “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates.”

“People who keep sabbath live all seven days differently.” – Walter Brueggemann

What does this mean to you?

Luke 13:14-16 – after Jesus had healed a woman in the synagogue – “Indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, the synagogue ruler said to the people, “There are six days for work. So come and be healed on those days not on the Sabbath.” The Lord answered him, “**You hypocrites! Doesn’t each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or donkey from the stall and lead it out to give it water? Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?**”

What lesson is Jesus teaching the people, the religious leaders, and us?

The Sabbath was designed and created by God as a gift for us. A gift to be enjoyed from the Creator to the creation.

When God created the universe, He rested. He created the seven-day week. To rest on the seventh day is to accept a gift from God and get into a rhythm of life. The rhythm of life that Jesus was in.

We are commanded to keep the Sabbath for rest and worship. Moses said to “observe” the Sabbath. What does this mean to you?

Slaves don’t get a Sabbath. They work all day, every day. Egypt owned God’s people, just as our world owns us today.

Can you see the correlation between the days of Egypt and the days of today for God’s people?

Heb. 4:9-13 - “There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.” Here is referenced the people of God who escaped Egypt but refused to believe in the true God.

Why do you think they would not keep the Sabbath? What is meant by “fall”?

“For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.” Where is your heart when it comes to observing the Sabbath?