

**JOKE:** Bubba's boss was getting tired of Bubba proclaiming that he "knew everybody" in the world.

"Okay Bubba" his boss said one day, "Prove to me you know everybody in the world. Do you know Tom Cruise?"

"Oh, me and Tom go way back," said Bubba.

So the boss bought airline tickets to Hollywood, and pretty soon Bubba was knocking at Tom Cruise's door, and was shortly admitted by the butler. Tom rushed to greet Bubba and invite him for lunch, and they had a good time discussing movies and things.

"Well, I'm impressed," said the boss when they left. "But I bet you don't know the President. "Aw, sure do," said Bubba and with that they were off to Washington, and pretty soon, the White House guard was escorting the two men into the Oval Office.

"Hiya Bubba!" said the President, warmly embracing him.

After a nice visit and a chat with the Cabinet secretaries they left. The boss was suitably impressed, but not giving up.

"Okay, Bubba, I'm going to ask you if you know the ultimate celebrity - the Pope."

"Why, for sure I do!" said Bubba, and pretty soon they were on a plane to Vatican City.

They found themselves in St. Peter's Square in a crowd of thousands, and Bubba said, "Heck, I can't see nothin' from here," and so he went right to the Swiss Guards and the doors opened to him.

The boss waited outside in the square. Pretty soon the door to the upstairs's opened and out comes the Pope and Bubba. They began to smile and wave at the crowd, with their arms around each other. Shortly thereafter Bubba decided to return to the Square. When he got there, an ambulance was loading his boss into the back.

Bubba rushed up and said, "what happened Boss?" The boss says, "I was doing fine until you came out on the balcony and the guy next to me says, "who is that guy on the balcony with Bubba?"

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## Living by the Spirit lesson 7 – Enter His rest

We have been looking at a series of messages called Living by the Spirit, and the bottom line of this whole series is that we are created in the Image of God and that means several things. One of the things that it means is that we are Spirit, Soul, and Body. And there are not Godly parts and wicked parts they are all God given they are all important. God makes nothing wicked. Everything He creates is good. As a matter of fact when He created man He said it was very good.

Last week in our study on self-control, I know silly me talking about self-control. I used the analogy that our soul is like a thermometer it kind of lets you know how things are going in your life. It's important to listen to the thermometer, we don't deny our emotions.

Jesus even said that my spirit is troubled; my soul is troubled when He was facing Calvary. He said I'm troubled inside. Jesus understands that. So, as I mentioned last week even though we listen to our soul we don't allow our soul to govern our behavior.

We take the thermometer and we attach it to the thermostat. The Spirit is the thermostat. The thermostat is what is needed to get the right atmosphere in the room. So you listen to your emotions and then take it to the Spirit and let the Spirit be the governor of your life.

The Spirit has to be King, when your soul is king you are in control of your life and you mess everything up. You let your emotions govern your behavior and it will cause a bunch of chaos.

We can't do that we need to allow the Spirit to govern our behavior.

So last week we talked about how we have to listen to our soul, listen to that thermometer but we need to allow the thermostat to set and change the atmosphere and bring the temperature where it needs to be.

And we talked about self-control which is a fruit of the Spirit and we reinforced once again that you cannot in your own will control your soul. Only the Spirit can control the soul. Only the Spirit can change the way we behave. Only the Spirit, it is not by our might, our effort, our will power, but it's by His Spirit.

So today I want to finish up this series and talk about Entering His Rest. Because there is a rest that you and I can abide in on a daily basis that is available to us.

And church I am convinced that if there has ever been a day that we must not only enter but abide in His rest it's today. I believe that we may have been hand selected to be the greatest generation in all of human history to see a great harvest and ushering in of the Glory of God.

The Bible says in Daniel 7 that the enemy shall speak great words against the Most High. Listen to me church the devil is no threat to Jesus he's a limited angel that got kicked out of heaven. All he can do is speak accusations against God and God's children. And this is one of the tactics of the enemy and we dealt with this earlier in this series, but the enemy is weaponless he has no authority all he can do is lie, he is the father of lies.

And so the bible says in the last days he will bring great words against the Lord, and he will keep hitting you with the same lie over and over and over again, until you begin to question rather God really is good. You begin to question rather God really does care about you. You begin to question the Word of God because he speaks great words trying to wear you down.

This is the reason why church it is important for us to be in the Word often. Not because of a religious duty, but to counteract the lie of the enemy. And you need to understand that often those lies come through media, your co-workers, and even family and so it is important for us to know the Word. Because he will wear you down, and he wears us out not just by constantly speaking lies against the Lord, but also by keeping us busy. So busy that we spend time on everything else but God.

It dawned on me that if we could ever learn to be one of those people that just learn to sit in God's presence and just wait upon

Him in our private time with the Lord, I believe as you're waiting before Him He will enlighten you with great vision, because he has awesome plans for your life.

Use 2 jars of sand and water.

See this is what the enemy will do to you, he will start messing with you get you all stirred up, he'll get you confused, he'll come and stir all the things up and you're thinking I thought I knew the will of God but all of a sudden I'm not sure any more, I'm so confused, I'm all anxious, I'm all worried, I'm all frustrated that's exactly the tactic of the enemy.

He wants to get you all stirred up, he wants to wear you out. He's all the time stirring up trouble. The moment things start clearing up he begins again stirring things up in your life.

Listen church I need you to listen to me, we have got to learn to enter into His rest. We have got to learn to abide under the shadow of the almighty.

Hebrews chapter 4 verse 9 says this:

Hebrews 4:9 (NIV) - <sup>9</sup>there remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God;

Remains a Sabbath-rest, but it is not available to everyone the Scripture says it is for you and I, the people of God. There is a rest that is available to you and it is not available to those that don't have a relationship with Christ. There is a rest that God offers us that we can step into and when the devil shakes us up we don't have to be like that jar that is constantly stirred for a long time we can be like this one.

There's a reason and you don't have to be like this person right here, that when things don't go the way you want them to you are upset for months. Listen you can slip right back into his presence and within moments everything is settled in your life. Same dirt, same water, but there's a difference.

He says verse 10 - Hebrews 4:10 (NIV) - <sup>10</sup>for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his.

Listen I know way to many church people that love God, but they are working themselves to the bone trying to find some inner peace. Listen works of religion and works of the flesh will never bring you an inner peace. But there is a prince of peace, who can bring you peace that passes all understanding if you will enter into it. And you can rest from your own work. I know its good works and bless your heart, but your good works will not give you peace. It will wear you out.

Listen I'm not saying we do nothing, I so appreciate all the work that some of you have being doing here on this building. But I'm saying that in and of itself will never bring true peace.

Hebrews 4:11 (NIV) – “. . .rests from their works, just as God did from his.” <sup>11</sup>Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest. . .”

Can I tell you something church you are going to have to fight to stay there. Because the devil is going to constantly come back the moment he sees things settle down, he's going to come back and he's going to stir things up again and try to get you side tracked, try to get you confused and you're going to have to fight to stay in that place of rest.

Make every effort to enter into this rest why? So that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience.

In this passage of Scripture this is one of those that have a double fulfillment, the rest here actually speaks of two different kinds of rest. There is a Spiritual rest and an eternal rest. Listen truth be told when we are six feet under we will be at rest. I have never seen an agitated dead person. But there is a rest that remains that we can enter now. There's a rest of grace here, and a rest of glory there. There is a rest in Christ on the earth, and a rest with Christ in heaven. Its two different rests.

Don't think church that you have to live a life of anxiety, worry, fear, and frustration. That is not the will of God for you.

I find it interesting in Mark chapter 2 it says that on the Sabbath Jesus was walking through a grain field and His disciples began to pick some of the heads of grain and the religious leaders of the day were getting all frustrated because they were breaking the law. And Jesus rebukes them and tells them a story about David, and then he says this:

Verse 27: Mark 2:27 (NIV) - <sup>27</sup> Then he said to them, **"The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath."**

I think it's sad when God gives us things for our good and we twist them around and make them bondage. I know pastors that will ring their people out because they missed church on Sunday because they went on a family vacation. That's religion friend.

Listen I also believe that that some church folk want to call control what is really just shepherding. One thing a pastor is to do is

protect the sheep, and sometimes, to some that looks like control, but it might just be protecting them from the wolves.

Sabbath was made for man, if you think about it man was made first. Man was made on the sixth day and on the seventh day God rested. Man was not made for the Sabbath, the Sabbath was made for man.

God made the Sabbath so that our bodies could relax and be refreshed, our souls could be restored and renewed, and our Spirits could be revived and rejuvenated. God knew how we were made and listen if you have a battery toy, you have to plug that in order to get it recharged. And let me tell you something we are the same way.

I find this interesting in Genesis 2 that after he made man on the sixth day God rested on the seventh. Why did God rest? Did He need the rest, was God tired? No God never sleeps never slumbers, He doesn't get tired. Why did He do it, He did it for us, do you realize that the very first experience that man had with God was spending a day of rest.

Never looked at it that way did you? I mean He created man and then says to Him were going to rest today, Adam's like rest, rest from what I haven't done anything.

I think maybe God was saying I know you are going to be prone to working all the time and I want to establish first in your life to sit with me and rest. The very first thing that man experienced is actually spending a day at rest with God.



I also find it interesting that when Jesus is leaving, he's about to be crucified and he says this in John chapter 14 and verses 25 - 27:

John 14:25 - 27 (NIV) - <sup>25</sup>“All this I have spoken while still with you. <sup>26</sup>But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. <sup>27</sup>Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

Listen if I get all upset it's my problem it wasn't the traffic on my way to work. If I get frustrated because they are not driving like I think they are supposed to, I'm letting my heart get troubled. Jesus said I give you a peace, don't let your heart be troubled.

I know what some of you might be thinking so let me address it for you in Matthew 10 He says: I did not come to the earth to bring peace, but a sword. Is He contradicting what I'm saying no that's not what He's saying. He's saying listen if you think I have come here to overthrow the Roman government and set up peace here, you have missed it. I haven't come to bring peace on the earth, because as long as there is sin there will not be peace, but I have come to bring peace to you in the midst of all the storms.

I have come to give peace to you while you are in the midst of this turmoil on the earth. This is what Jesus said in John chapter 16 verse 33: John 16:33 (NIV) - <sup>33</sup>“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

See we can have peace even when everything is going crazy. When everything is going wrong we can still have peace.

Paul said it this way in Romans chapter 8

Romans 8:6 (NIV) - <sup>6</sup>The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.

Romans 8:6 (NLT) - <sup>6</sup>So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace.

See there's the key right there the soul is brought into submission to the Spirit.

Look what Paul said to the churching Philippi.

Philippians 4:4 (NIV) - <sup>4</sup>Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

Rejoice church, stop worrying about the situation around you rejoice! Again I say rejoice!

He goes on to say: Philippians 4:5 (NIV) - <sup>5</sup>Let your gentleness be evident to all. (And here is the reason you can rejoice) The Lord is near.

How many realize He said I will never leave you or forsake you. He is always there regardless of your circumstance or situation he is always there you can rejoice why? Because God is near.

See it's when we take our mind off of Christ and place it on the circumstances that fear comes flooding in. You need to remember that God is near.

So listen to verse 6 - Philippians 4:6 (NIV) - <sup>6</sup>Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Why thanksgiving? Because I know it will be alright, I can thank Him in advance, because He is faithful.

He goes on in verse 7 - Philippians 4:7 (NIV) - <sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Can I tell you the time in which you give God the most glory, it is when you are going through trouble and yet there is a peace upon your life. God gets the most glory when in the midst of trouble there's a peace. Why? Because there is a confidence in your faith that God is near and I don't have to be afraid.

And then he says: Philippians 4:8 (NIV) - <sup>8</sup>Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

The KJV Says it this way “. . . if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.”

Not all truth is worth dwelling on. Let me explain that this way, if a murder happens it's not worth dwelling on because it has no virtue, no praise, it isn't excellent or praiseworthy. But pastor its true. So What!

Thinking on all those types of things will trouble your soul.

If there is virtue and praise than dwell or think on these things.

We need to learn what the Psalmist did, all of us have self-talk all the time. Even when I'm preaching some of you are talking to yourself because you can think faster than I'm talking. The problem is what are you saying to yourself? If you agree with what

God says you will have peace, but if you agree with what the enemy says your life will always be stirred up and peace will be hard to come by.

You have got to learn to speak to yourself God talk. This is why the Psalmist would repeatedly say stuff like this: Psalm 62:1 -

Psalm 62:1 (NIV) - <sup>1</sup> Truly my soul finds rest in God; my salvation comes from him.

Notice it says you need to find it, we are not going to stumble on it. If you want this peace you have got to purposely seek it. You have to purposely schedule in your calendar time to shut the door on your prayer closet.

Later in the same chapter verse 5 he says: Psalm 62:5 (NIV) - <sup>5</sup> Yes, my soul, find rest in God; my hope comes from him.

Listen you will not find true rest in anything except Christ alone.

In Psalm 91

Psalm 91:1 (NIV) - <sup>1</sup> Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.

We have got to learn to get in His presence and be still and know that He is God.

Psalm 116:7 - Psalm 116:7 (NIV) - <sup>7</sup> Return to your rest, my soul, for the LORD has been good to you.

Listen church if God has been good to you in the past He will be good to you now and in the future because He's the same yesterday, today, and forever. He is always good.

I just shook this up see the difference there's a reason (shake both jars).

Isaiah 26:3 - Isaiah 26:3 (NIV) - <sup>3</sup>You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you.

Church I'm telling you there remains a rest. I don't fully understand this but I think it was Martin Luther who said this: "I have so much to do today I must spend three hours in prayer."

So busy that I must spend time with God.

Colossians 3:15 (NIV) - <sup>15</sup>Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.

Let me tell you something church His peace is not going to dominate your will, he is not going to violate your will and make you experience peace. You have to let Him. He will not violate your will, but if you will let Him He wants to come. The Prince of Peace wants to live in you take residence in you and if He's the Prince of Peace and we are supposed to be like Him guess what we should be growing more and more in peace every day.

(Shake jars again)

In Mark chapter 6 the Apostles came to Jesus and they were reporting all the things they were doing they were really busy doing ministry and they were teaching people about the kingdom of God and they were so busy that they didn't even have a chance to eat (have you ever been that busy) and the last part of verse 31 says:

Mark 6:31 (NIV) – “. . . Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.”

Jesus said OK boys glad you're healing the sick, ministering the Word, that's good news, but do you know what, I see a weariness settling in we need to get away for a few minutes and find some rest.

(Can you already see the difference)? I just shook this one a minute ago and it's already clearer than this one. Why?

Want to know the difference? Same sand, same water from the same faucet. Here's the difference. This one I sat it under the water faucet for a couple of minutes and let the water run washing away all the looser particles that stay afloat for a long time there were washed out.

I believe there's a Scripture that says there's a washing of water by the Word. And there's a faucet of the Spirit called the Holy Spirit and if you and I will learn to sit under the spout of the Spirit it will remove the little agitations that want to hang on.

See listen to me we think that daily prayer is not that important and it really doesn't make a big difference, but you let the devil come and shake your life up and you know how it is when we just sit in His presence, because it all settles down quickly.

And those that just have an appearance of godliness but deny the power thereof and they don't sit under His presence regularly they can become agitated over the smallest little thing and weeks later it is still floating around clouding up their life because they haven't learned how to sit in His presence and let that offense, let they agitation just wash away.

Listen I'm not saying you will never be confused or that the devil isn't going to mess with you, as a matter of fact he may do it more often. But regardless he can do it more often and you will still have clearer sight, you will have more peace in your heart.

The only difference is one sat under the faucet and the other one didn't.

Joy come.

Let me close with this from Matthew chapter 11 Jesus says this and he's speaking to us as the church he says in verse 28:

Matthew 11:28 (NIV) - <sup>28</sup>“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

You can't earn it He gives it but it requires that you come to Him.

He continues: Matthew 11:29 (NIV) - <sup>29</sup>Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup>For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

Listen there remains a rest it's available, but it requires us to find it and we find it in His presence.

I want you to close your eyes stay seated, I want to ask you a question, “what are you going to do this week that is going to allow you to find rest?”

Holy Spirit teach us maybe it's just five minutes here and there , but teach us to find rest.