

7/19/2009

**THE PRAYER OF THE DAY** Almighty God, we run back and forth with all the busy-ness of life, and forget that you are the way and the truth and the life. Point our hearts, our lives, and our faith toward you, and give us peace and rest. We pray through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON** Jeremiah 23:1-6

*(I will restore My flock and they will be fruitful and multiply, says the Lord.)*

1 "Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of my pasture!" declares the LORD. 2 Therefore this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says to the shepherds who tend my people: "Because you have scattered my flock and driven them away and have not bestowed care on them, I will bestow punishment on you for the evil you have done," declares the LORD. 3 "I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and will bring them back to their pasture, where they will be fruitful and increase in number. 4 I will place shepherds over them who will tend them, and they will no longer be afraid or terrified, nor will any be missing," declares the LORD.

5 "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. 6 In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness.

**THE EPISTLE LESSON** Ephesians 2:11-22 (*Christ Himself is our peace.*)

11 Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (that done in the body by the hands of men)-- 12 remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.

14 For **he himself is our peace**, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, 15 by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, 16 and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. 17 He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. 18 For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. 19 Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

21 In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. 22 And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

**THE GOSPEL LESSON** Mark 6:30-44

*(Jesus feeds the multitude with a few pieces of bread and a couple of fish.)*

30 The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. **31 Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest."** **32 So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place.**

33 But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. 34 When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things. 35 By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. "This is a remote place," they said, "and it's already very late. 36 Send the people away so they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat."

37 But he answered, "You give them something to eat." They said to him, "That would take eight months of a man's wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?"

38 "How many loaves do you have?" he asked. "Go and see." When they found out, they said, "Five-- and two fish." 39 Then Jesus directed them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. 40 So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. 41 Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to set before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. 42 They all ate and were satisfied, 43 and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish. 44 The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand.

**THE HYMN OF THE DAY "The King of Love My Shepherd Is" 709**

**THE SERMON "God's Help When we are Stressed and Worn Out" Mark 6**

### **PARALLEL PASSAGES**

Mark 1:32-38 **32 That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. 33 The whole town gathered at the door, 34 and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was. 35 Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.**

36 Simon and his companions went to look for him, 37 and when they found him, they exclaimed: "Everyone is looking for you!" 38 Jesus replied, "Let us go somewhere else-- to the nearby villages-- so I can preach there also. That is why I have come."

Matthew 11:28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

Exodus 20:11 11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Psalm 62 1 My soul finds **rest** in God alone; my salvation comes from him. 2 He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will never be shaken. 3 How long will you assault a man? Would all of you throw him down-- this leaning wall, this tottering fence? 4 They fully intend to topple him from his lofty place; they take delight in lies. With their mouths they bless, but in their hearts they curse. Selah 5 Find **rest**, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from him. 6 He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will not be shaken. 7 My salvation and my honor depend on God; he is my mighty rock, my refuge. 8 Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.

INTRO - Did you know there was an organization called, "The American Institute of Stress?" Their website has articles on Job Stress, Stress and Heart Attacks, and Stress and Cancer. Does that sound familiar.

I. We live in a world of stress.

A. Our world is going faster and faster.

1. I think that we have a Frankenstein syndrome.
2. We have created machines and technology to help us do more, so we can work less. But, because we can do more, we are required to do more in less time. Our technology has come back to hurt us.
3. There are few people I know who are not fighting stress because of job demands, financial demands, family demands.

B. To a certain extent stress is a result of sin, a failure to live with priorities.

1. God has given us the commandment, "**Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. . . 11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.** Often we forget to remember the Sabbath and rest, and we suffer.
2. God has told us, (Matthew 22:37-9) "**Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'** He has given us priorities to love God and love others, but sometimes we become so taken with this world, its possessions, its accomplishments that we love things other than God and others, and this causes problems, which causes stress.

II. Not all stress is caused by our sin however, listen to today's Gospel lesson,

A. Mark 6:31 says, **31 Then, because SO MANY PEOPLE WERE COMING AND GOING THAT THEY DID NOT EVEN HAVE A CHANCE TO EAT, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest."**

1. Does that sound familiar? Not even time to eat?
2. We used to bring Vasiliy Dobriev over to America from Russia for training to lead a church in Lavrentiya, where there had never previously been a church. One year when he was here and I was training him, we took him on a youth outing to Alyeska. He actually did alright. But the thing that really shocked him was what happened on the way home. We stopped at a fast food restaurant and ate our food in the car on the way home. He couldn't believe that we didn't just sit down and take time to eat. I guess we did that to ourselves.

B. Jesus had attracted attention by performing miracles.

1. Last week we heard about the attention that Herod gave Jesus.
2. Here we are told that crowds were around Jesus so there was no time to eat.
3. This isn't the first time we hear about this. In Mark 1, after Jesus had performed miracles we are told, **32 That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. 33 THE**

**WHOLE TOWN GATHERED AT THE DOOR, 34 and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was. 35 Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.** Actually, being overwhelmed, Jesus did the same thing in Mark 1 as he did in our Gospel lesson for today from Mark 6. He went to a solitary place. In Mark 1 he prayed.

C. What do you do when life is moving too fast to do anything well? When the demands of life are overwhelming? When you can't see the end of the to do list?

III. Jesus gives instructions in today's lesson. **because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "COME WITH ME BY YOURSELVES TO A QUIET PLACE AND GET SOME REST."**

A. When you are stressed, when you are overwhelmed, when you are burdened, where do you go for relief?

1. Some watch TV. Others exercise. Some listen to music. Some just veg out. Some become anxious.
2. What do you do?

B. Jesus says, **COME WITH ME BY YOURSELVES TO A QUIET PLACE AND GET SOME REST.**" Jesus, His love, His forgiveness, His salvation, Jesus is the source of rest and peace.

1. Our epistle lesson for today says of Jesus when Jews and Gentiles are at odds, **he himself is our peace,**
2. Psalm 62 says, **1 My soul finds rest in God alone; my salvation comes from him.** You should read the rest of the Psalm. It is a beautiful description of how God is our source of peace.
3. In Matthew Jesus tells his disciples, Matthew 11:28 **"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.**

C. The bad stress of the world comes from our sin, and from the sin in the world around us.

1. Jesus brings forgiveness from sin, and peace between people.
2. Jesus brings love, and assurance when the world is against us.
3. Jesus brings salvation, and purpose, when our life is so busy we don't know where we are going.

CONCLUSION - In the summer many travel. Jesus went off by himself to solitary places for rest. The mistake we sometimes make is we go away, but forget Jesus.

I have a series of pictures about a man's life by American artist, Thomas Cole. In the beginning life is bright, but as the man gets older clouds gather and life is dangerous. In the end however, there is peace again. The thing that brings peace in early life and in old age in these pictures, is that the man is looking to God.

When you are stressed, Jesus says, **COME WITH ME BY YOURSELVES TO A QUIET PLACE AND GET SOME REST."**

