

Text: Matthew 11:25-30  
Theme: Rest Wanted

July 9, 2017

How many times have you seen a “Help Wanted” sign or a sign that reads, “Now Hiring” or “Help Wanted. Apply Within?” Regardless of the type of business, “Help Wanted” signs appear from time to time. But when was the last time you saw a “Rest Wanted” sign? Although we don’t see the sign, it’s something we want, something we need. In today’s text, Jesus offers us rest, emotional, spiritual and physical rest. As we consider His invitation, we focus on our theme: Rest Wanted.

I. Jesus offers us rest for mind, body, and soul. A. And each one of us need the rest He offers. 1. We need rest because the world continues to expect more. Have you noticed? Could anyone not notice? Every year, the world expects more, demands more of us. Twenty years ago, employers weren’t expecting what they’re expecting today, and twenty years ago, our world wasn’t spinning out of control like it is today. Worst of all, there’s no end in sight. The world will continue to expect more because we continue to offer more. Until we stop running at the world’s pace, the world will continue to drive us to exhaustion all in the name of greed.

2. We need rest because we’re trying to do too much. In simple terms, the expectations are exceeding our capabilities. Today, logic has become distorted. “If he can do it, I should be able to do it. If he can have a new house and a garage full of toys and drive a new car every year, why shouldn’t I?” Do you see what we’re doing to ourselves? We’re trying to do more than we are capable of doing, more than God expects us to do. At the end of the day, we are killing ourselves mentally, emotionally, spiritually all in the name of “If he can do it, I should be able to do it!” Until we deliberately choose to slow down, our expectations will continue to exhaust us.

3. We need rest because the mind and body require rest. How many people a year see a doctor or go to the walk-in clinic because they weren’t allowing their body sufficient time to rest? Hospitals make millions every year from our foolishness and pharmaceutical companies make billions from prescriptions that could have been avoided if we had only learned to give the body the rest it needs. When God designed us, did He design us to go twelve, fourteen, sixteen hours a day? Was that kind of workload ever part of His plan? Jesus offers rest because He knows we won’t take the time to rest physically and that we can’t obtain spiritual rest without Him.

B. How, then, do we find rest? 1. We find rest by believing Jesus can give us rest. How many of you would go to Ace Hardware for a new light switch if you didn’t believe they would have a light switch? Or how many of you would go to the Medford Cafe for breakfast if you didn’t believe they served breakfast? We know we need rest. Our bodies and minds tell us that every day. But to find needed rest, we must believe Jesus has that kind of rest, that His rest will relieve our mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical fatigue. Until we believe He has what we need, we will continue searching for what is already available.

2. We find rest by accepting His invitation. Jesus says, “Come to Me all you who labor and are heavy laden,” or in another translation, “all you who are weary and burdened.” Those words describe us perfectly, don’t they? We are weary; we are burdened. We are tired, worn out, worn down, weary, fatigued, exhausted. We are

all those things. So this looks obvious! We are all those things and Jesus offers a solution. But there's a problem. We want to try to fix it ourselves. Yet to find rest, Jesus says, "Come to Me now. Come as your first option and I will provide exactly what you need!"

3. We find rest by learning from Jesus. "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me." Life is a learning process and every day offers us a new opportunity to learn. To find the rest we desperately need, we re-enroll ourselves in His school of learning. As we allow Him to teach us, we discover ways to slow down, ways to create less stress on the mind, ways to find spiritual relief through His assurance of forgiveness. Time spent in prayer is productive time. Those are moments where we allow God to teach us what we need to know about rest, moments that open the door for God to step into our weariness and set us on a new path.

4. We find rest by believing Jesus actually cares about our needs. How many of you have gone to the doctor and it was obvious that he or she didn't care about your needs? It's frustrating, isn't it? When we finally decide to do something, we need the other person to care about us. Jesus describes Himself as gentle and lowly in heart. In other words, Jesus has a heart for you. Jesus has your number. He understands your problem. Silence on His part isn't an indication that He doesn't care. It's a indication that this isn't the right moment, that if we will hold on a bit longer, He will demonstrate His care by giving us rest in His perfect moment.

5. We find rest by believing His kind of rest is possible. Look at the words of Jesus. "I will give you rest." Which word gives that statement its power? Does Jesus say, "I'll think about; Maybe I'll follow through. Let Me check My records and I'll get back to you"? As we search for rest, we need a solution, not a lengthy list of things other people have tried that you found on the internet. In our weariness, we need an answer and that answer is Jesus. "I will give you rest." It will happen. Maybe not instantly, but when we listen and follow His guidance, He will give us physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual rest all in the same package deal.

6. We find rest by recalling our eternal rest. When you get the flu, how comforting is it to know that it will go away? When you cut your finger, how beneficial is it to know that it will heal? So often, we take such things for granted, but, given some thought, we're grateful healing occurs. As we face our weariness, we find comfort and encouragement as we remind ourselves that all this is temporary, that in a little while, we will step into eternity and our search for rest will end forever. The hope, the confidence of that eternal rest, of eternity with God, of that crown of life, those realities motivate us to look to Jesus and press on.

7. We may never see a "Rest Wanted" sign, but we know it's what we need. So as you hang out your mental "Rest Wanted" sign on His heart, expect Him to say to you, "Rest provided. Carry on!" Amen.