

THE FIRST 15

Tuesday, June 25, 2024

Today is Tuesday, June 25 and we are studying what the Bible says about rest and renewal.

OPENING PRAYER

Holy and loving Lord, amid the pressures of another busy day with the many plans, activities, appointments, and demands, I pause to find a place of rest. I close my eyes and seek the calming peace of your abiding presence. I breathe deeply, in and out, allowing myself to relax in a quiet space of serene stillness. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. 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." So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. Mark 6:30-32

REFLECTION

Jesus sent out his twelve disciples in pairs to do the work of ministry. Two by two they went around Galilee traveling to one village after another. They shared the good news of Christ, taught the truth of the Kingdom, preached repentance for sins, healed the sick and cast out demons (Mark 6:6-13). Upon their return, they gathered around Jesus to tell him who they encountered on their journey and what they accomplished through their work.

Jesus, the Good Shepherd, cared for the welfare of his "undershepherds." On hearing his disciples' enthusiastic report on all they had done and taught in the surrounding villages, Jesus was keenly sensitive to their need for rest. Jesus likely had his own weariness. The weariness arose from the constant needs of the people surrounding him and the crowds that pressed in on him. The comings and goings were so persistent that he and the disciples had not even eaten (Mark 6:31). He invited his weary friends to come with him to a quiet place and get some rest. I hear his invitation alongside the disciples. In a demanding world of constant expectations and mounting pressure, Jesus invites me to come with him to a quiet place and get some rest.

God has empowered and equipped me to live a life serving others, working to earn money, laboring to maintain a home, and striving to raise a family. I run errands, tend to chores, calendar my time, check off my to-do list and care for myself and my loved ones. I fulfill my responsibilities to my employer and those in my care. God knows I need time for rest. Time away to recharge, find refreshment and renewal. Time alone with him. I hear the words of Jesus spoken directly to me this morning. He calls my name and says, "Come with me by yourself to a quiet place and get some rest." How will I respond to the invitation of the Good Shepherd?

Ask: What would it look like for me to join Jesus today in a quiet place to rest? Where would I go and what would I do?

Pause and Pray

CLOSING PRAYER

Holy Lord Jesus, thank you for caring for me and recognizing my places of weariness. I am busy loving and serving others and am anxious to do good work in the world that honors you. Sometimes the demands are time consuming, the pressure is great and I feel inadequate. Help me hear your voice speaking into my life. Tell me when it is time to go and do and when it is time to stop and rest. Invite me to join you in a quiet place for rest and renewal. Show me the solitary space where I can go to spend quality time alone with you. Amen.