

Fifth Day

"The Way of Jesus is the Way of Life and the Way of Life can change the world." Bishop Curry

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7

Much like searching for peace, the search for rest had always been elusive. I remember the lure of that peace which passeth all understanding. I looked for that peace most of my life to calm the voices in my head. I thought that peace could be purchased with money – a nice home, maybe a deserted island with a vacation home, or comfortable retirement. Each attempt to “purchase” peace was met with disappointment.

The same is true with rest. So often we try to buy rest – maybe time at a spa, employing someone to do the unpleasant chores, or even sleeping in late. Each attempt at acquiring “rest” is short-lived.

Peace and rest as things can't be acquired or purchased. They are both things that must be experienced spiritually.

As Bishop Curry spoke about during this third podcast – “Rest – ‘At peace with the one who made you’”, rest is spiritual time with God. Rest is being in this place that you could let go of the trials and tribulations of the world and rest in God's arms. It must be a deliberate act on your part to set aside time to be with God. Your life may still be in turmoil but a sense of rest will still be felt when you are with God.

Part of our spiritual journey is to be entuned with our own spirituality – our strengths and weaknesses. We need to be aware of how respond to the world around (where we put our trust) and constantly work to respond in spiritual ways.

For most of my life when I began to dread doing something that had a spiritual component, I would typically make an excuse for why I couldn't do it. Whether it was going on a Cursillo weekend, leading a Sunday school class, or serving as a lay reader, I would get nervous and make excuses for not doing something. About 20 years ago, I realized that these excuses were preventing me from doing some incredible things. So, when I started dreading spiritual things, I begin to push through the dread and began to notice that incredible things started to happen. I went on a Cursillo weekend and my life was changed. I led a Sunday school class and it was meaningful. I began to lay read and heard scripture in ways I had never heard it before.

Now, when a sense of dread overcomes me, I say to myself, "Something incredible is getting ready to happen!"

To find Rest or to find Peace, we must be deliberate in setting aside time with God. I would encourage you to set aside time to reflect on your spiritual life. When do you turn to the material world and when do you turn to God?

When you become overwhelmed by the world, do you close yourself off or do you set aside time for prayer to be with God?

When you have financial struggles are you consumed with worry or do you set aside time for prayers to be with God?

When illness challenges you, family members or friends are you overcome by despair, or do you set aside time for prayers with God?

Your problems aren't immediately resolved but that rest you've been seeking is found more easily. By setting aside time with God, you can spiritually rest and spiritually be at peace. What once seemed daunting is now more manageable with God's help.

The more you practice this spiritual discipline, the better you will become.

You might say to yourself – "I'm beginning to feel overwhelmed! The last time that happened I was lost for a couple of weeks until I took my problems to God. Maybe if I go to God right now rather than waiting two weeks, I will find rest in God."

When we deliberately set aside time for rest with God, God is there and we experience that rest that the world can't provide.

Begin to know yourself spiritually, respond spiritually, and see where God takes you.