

**Mark 6: 30-34; “Come Apart and Rest”, Sermon # 35 in the series –  
“Astonished at His Teaching”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall  
on October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015, in the Morning Worship Service.**

To come apart, or come aside as our translation has it, is to come away from what we are usually doing in our duties and responsibilities and routine, in order to find rest and refreshment. The rest and refreshment of the Christian will differ from that of the unbeliever because it is not only the rest and refreshment of the body that is being sought; it is the rest and refreshment of the soul; that eternal part of our being, that needs to be renewed and strengthened. As we think of the connection between this section and the previous verses that we studied last week, we find that there were two reasons which motivated our Lord to issue this command for His disciples to come apart. The first was the death of John Baptist. There was a deep and real grief that had come not only to John’s disciples at the death of their prophet-teacher; but that same grief was working in the life of our Lord Jesus and his disciples as well. Grief is something for which Christians ought to come apart for awhile. And then secondly, we find here, that there was also the problem of the incessant demands of the work of the ministry that had come to Jesus and His disciples. They were so encompassed about with this good work that they did not even have time to eat, the text says. These same kinds of situations exist today in the lives of God’s dear people. We are no different from them. Our duties and responsibilities may be different from theirs, but the principles of truth that we need to learn are the same things that they needed to learn. And therefore, it is good for me to preach to you this morning about this subject. It will be good if you will listen.

Because we are living in a day when people are moving at faster and faster speeds in their lives, and at times it seems to all of us that there is simply not enough time to accomplish everything that we would like to see accomplished. The demands of school and work, and all of the duties of caring for our life, and the lives of others, are upon us every day. And they are often so great that we cannot find rest. We cannot find physical rest and sometimes we cannot find spiritual rest and refreshment either. And so this is the subject that I want to focus on this morning. How does the Christian find a true rest, a rest which God approves of, and would give to His people in this hectic world that we live in? I think that we are given three indications from our text of what the Lord would have us to do to find the true rest and refreshment that we need to go on, in our service to Him. 1st – We need to deliberately come apart from other people. 2nd - We need to rest for a while. And 3rd – We need to remember the goal of all our labors and duties in that time of rest. The real question that we need to ask ourselves this morning is; will I be able to do these things , when I should do them, and not put them off?

**1<sup>st</sup> of all – In order to find rest, we need to deliberately come apart from other people.**

We need to understand that it is important to come apart to pray and to take counsel with our Lord Jesus Christ. We find that this is what the Apostles did when they had come back from the mission that the Lord had sent them on. In verse 30 we find that they gathered to Jesus and told Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught. I am confident that this was rest to them; their taking this time to report these things and to commune and take counsel with Jesus. You and I do not have this particular privilege of being able to get together with Jesus physically, in this life. But we do have the wonderful privilege of getting together with Him spiritually in prayer. We need to avail ourselves of this privilege. We need to see it as a privilege that will bring us rest and refreshment; to come apart from the World and all the people and things of the World, in order to commune with our Lord spiritually, and to tell Him all things; the things that we have done and what we have taught. This will indeed bring strength to our weary souls after all the labors that we have engaged in. A Christian’s labors are

both physical and spiritual, and you as a Christian must think of those labors in regard to what has been done and what is to be done for the Lord. What we have labored at may have made us weary, and what is coming causes us to feel tired already. In the week that has passed you may have done many things, whether you are a father or mother, pastor or teacher. And you, like the apostles, have taught many things with your lips and with your life. Now, after all that pouring out of strength; you, you the weary one, need rest. How are you to find it? The Christian finds his rest by taking counsel with his Lord. And further, the Christian finds his rest by rightly considering the Sabbath commandment for his good. "Come ye apart" for us, relates to us first of all in terms of the Lord's Day.

When you are weary from your labors, you will find rest, not by staying in bed of a Sabbath morning, but by going to attend the services of worship. This kind of thinking and reasoning is the very opposite of how an unbeliever would think. They would first consider the physical way that they feel. The Christian knows, however, that their strength is found in the presence of Christ. It is true whether you realize it or not; the Christian who is seeking to find a true rest will find it in the sanctuary of God. It is the spiritual rest that you need first, and then the physical, usually. I can remember many times, when I went to Wednesday night prayer meetings at Sycamore Baptist Church, tired and exhausted, but having heard the Word and having joined in prayer, I found my strength renewed. But to know the reality of this truth, it is necessary that you really come to know the Lord. And this is entering into a spiritual rest which you may be unaware of.

Turn with me to Matthew chapter 11, verse 28. Here are the words of Jesus to those who are very weary with their labors spiritually, to find rest. "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Take my yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." Now, you can see here that there is rest which is offered to you in Christ; even for the person who has in the past been trying to justify themselves by their works. But these works they have been trying to do, are dead in the sight of a Holy God. Instead of trying to merit favor with God in this way you must come to Jesus. When you come to Jesus you will find rest for your soul; the forgiveness of all of your sins. Have you found this rest? And when you come to Jesus there is also rest also for the people of God which the Lord Jesus promises to those who take up His yoke. Taking up His yoke is coming to Him for grace for every good thing that you would do. Taking up His yoke does involve a burden and that burden is that your greatest desire is to do all things to the glory of God, and not simply to please yourself. But this burden is light, Jesus says, in comparison of the weight and the load of sin, and doing all of your labors to turn a profit to yourself. The Lord Jesus has a better and lighter yoke than that of the world, and worldly wise men. It is to do all that we do to the glory of God by the grace of Christ. If you come to Christ you shall indeed be saved from the yoke of sin. and be given a yoke of wonderfully light duties. The Lord Jesus becomes our yoke-fellow and helps us by His grace.

Sometimes even when we are a Christian it still takes us awhile to learn this good way of coming to Christ for spiritual strength to do, and to become, all that we can be for God. But if we take His yoke upon ourselves, He promises us that we will find rest for our souls. How does this work out practically? Turn to Jeremiah 31, verses 23-26 with me. Here we find the Lord giving promises to the prophet Jeremiah to give to all those who would look to God in faith. He would raise them up out of their sorrowful, languishing, and tired condition. These people had brought themselves into a spiritual captivity because of their sins, but they would be brought out of their captivity; and here are the blessings that God would give them. "Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: "They shall again use this speech in the land of Judah and in its cities, when I bring back their captivity: "The Lord bless you, O home of justice, and mountain of holiness!" "And there shall dwell in Judah itself, and in all its cities together, farmers and those going out with

flocks.” “For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul.” “After this,” he says, “I awoke and look around, and my sleep was sweet to me.”

Now here is the promise of New Testament grace for Old Testament hearts, but you and I certainly can, and we should, lay hold of it now. How many of us want to see the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ grow stronger? How many of us would like to see His kingdom advance so that the Church could be called the “home of justice, and the mountain of holiness? Who are these farmers and those going out with their flocks in this passage? Are they not pastors with their congregations and the Christian parents with their children? It is God who promises to fully satisfy the weary soul, and replenish every sorrowful soul. He does this by the grace of Christ; the grace of the New Covenant. I hope that each of us here today will come to find what the Sabbath Day was designed for, by God. It was designed for weary men and women and young people to find rest. But many have not come to see it this way. They are not taking the Sabbath day to find their rest. Some people think about their work on this day. Some will apply themselves to their studies on Sunday evening instead of devotional reading and spiritual fellowship. Some would think it permissible to watch worldly movies or television on the Lord’s Day. They are more interested in sports than they are in the cultivation of their eternal souls.

So instead of growing stronger as Christians they are becoming weaker. Instead of glorifying God, they become more weary and more tired because they are full of thoughts of the many things that have taken place in the last week, and the many things that will take place in this week that they have just come into. Their souls are not being fully satisfied and replenished with the strength they need to continue to do what God has called them to do? Why is this? It is because they have not obeyed the injunction to come apart and rest awhile. Your rest is not found first of all in physical sleep. Your rest is not found in the World and its activities; in sports and the competitions of men. It is found in spiritual rest and refreshment. It is found in God Himself. It was after Jeremiah’s soul was satisfied and replenished, and his sorrow was taken away that he could say, “After this I awoke, and looked around, and my sleep was sweet to me.” Is this the way that it is for you beloved? If it is not, then learn the lesson of coming to Jesus in prayer. Come apart and rest a while.

**Secondly – In order to find true rest and refreshment for our soul and body, we need to rest only for a while.**

“Come aside yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.” Just for a while. The words “a while” do not convey a strict length of time, but rather the time that is necessary to find the rest that you are seeking; the rest that is good and necessary for you. The rest that is being spoken of in verse 31 was the rest and refreshment which the bodies and spirits of these apostles needed because of too much activity and work. Verse 31 says, “For there were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.” The Lord knew that they needed this break and so he gave it to them. You and I must learn when to take a break from all of our work and activity. If we are parents, we need to see when our children need a break. If we are employers, we need to know when to give our employees a break. If Jesus thought in this way about the needs of his apostles and disciples, then we also need to think in this way. Certainly, the major weekly break from work and labor is the Sabbath Day as we have seen. But I believe that there is also room for an occasional vacation here as well. Verse 32 says, “So they departed to a deserted place in the boat by themselves.” Here we have a short vacation planned by the Lord Jesus for the disciples. They went by themselves. There is a time and a place for this kind of planned get-away. It certainly does not look like they took a long vacation, but rather a get-away. I have taken longer vacations and shorter vacations in my time, and I have most often found the shorter ones to be the best ones.

But let me not give you the impression that there are hard and fast rules for vacations. May you pray about it and plan your way according to your need and your ability. If you are around

people all of the time and they are insistently making demands upon you, as was the case with Jesus and His disciples, you can see that the way that rest would be obtained for them would be to depart to a deserted place where they would not have that kind of pressure upon them. It is good to get out in a boat on occasion and see God's creation and do a little fishing. Just get away for a while. They got away, "by themselves". It is good to get away, just you and your family at times. Do not plan on taking others outside the family with you. It is good to have family times together. It is good to make plans together, and if you cannot think of a lot of things to do, then plan to do nothing together until you agree as a family on what you want to do. The parents obviously ought to take the initiative in this. And employers ought to provide time for a yearly vacation and some personal days off, if possible.

The reason that I am preaching about this is because there are some people who are workaholics. They know how to work, and to work hard, and this is very commendable. But they do not know how to rest and this is not only not commendable, but it is unprofitable to God and men. It actually can and does become sinful in some people. They not only will not observe the Sabbath day of rest for worship, but they will not take sufficient rest for themselves. And, they will not let others who are under their charge rest either. A good example of this can be found in such companies as Alcoa Aluminum down in the Quad Cities area. I have been told that they work their people seven days a week, with mandatory overtime. This is a positive evil in regard to the workers and their families, and it should be changed. It leads to the destruction of the health of the worker and the destruction of the family through the divorces that take place because a husband and wife and children cannot spend quality time together.

It is good to come apart and rest awhile. It is good to have time enough to sleep well, to spend time together as a family, to give the Lord His day, and to take occasional vacations. There is a time and a place for each. See to it that you preserve these precious times. It is not good for families if they can never sit down and eat a meal together because of the many sports activities which the parents and young people commit themselves to; or because the father is always working late. If these things are taking place in your family, you ought to consider changing it. Ask yourself if you are making time for your family to be together; to worship together and read the Word together? Do you have time to play together and relax together? If not, you need to deliberately sit down and plan to have a time to come apart by yourselves.

**The 3<sup>rd</sup> thing that we should think about in terms of our finding real rest is this: The goal of all our labors and duties during that time of rest.** (Verses 33 and 34)

Verse 33 shows us how very difficult it was for the Lord Jesus and his disciples to find rest, or to even come apart for a short time. "But the multitudes saw them departing, and many knew Him and ran there on foot from all the cities." "They arrived before them and came together to Him." The reaction of the Lord Jesus to all of this frantic scrambling to get at Him is very interesting. It says in verse 34 – "And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and He was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd." "So He began to teach them many things." You know, if the Lord Jesus had tolerated sin for one moment in His being, He could have reacted in this way: "O No; not more people!" "Can't we find any place to get away and be alone?" "Why can't the people just realize that my disciples and I are exhausted and tired and need a break?" He could have told them to just go away; that they were bothering him. But His reaction was very different. The text says that He was moved with compassion.

And this is what we should remember in closing. We need to remember that the goal of all that we are doing, even when we rest, is that God might be glorified and that He might be served. But He is often best served by our having compassion on people around us and thinking about their needs. The goal of "coming apart" is to find rest and refreshment for ourselves. But that goal is only sought so that the greater goal of glorifying God through our service to Him, and

to other people, might be attained. Let's keep that goal in mind. The interruptions to your personal peace and quiet, and obtaining rest, are ordained by God so that you might learn patience, and so that you might learn to show compassion to those who need what you have to give them. Christ showed his disciples the way to find rest. It was to come apart for a while. But He also showed them the way to advance His kingdom, and that was by showing compassion to those who needed a Shepherd. Let's you and I do the same.