

Jesus, I Am Resting, Resting

A few months ago Sarah Hughes and Terra Dickinson sang a beautiful old hymn, *Jesus, I Am Resting, Resting*, written by an Irish lady by the name of Jean S. Pigott, in 1876. Just recently I viewed a video of them singing it in our church. I had been missing the Dickinsons who have moved to Pennsylvania and decided to drop them a line and found the video of their special at our church. I enjoyed every aspect of it. It was taken March 1 of this year and as our custom has been for three decades, we sit together at the Lord's Table on the first Sunday night of every month of the year. In the video we see the beautiful Lord's Supper set on the communion table. The ladies are standing behind our Bible-shaped pulpit and on either side I see Pastor Dennis and Pastor Jerry in the background. Terra and Sarah are singing and my wife is playing the piano. As I watched the video I was overwhelmed with love for our church -- Christ's Church at Christchurch.

Jesus, I Am Resting, Resting was the favorite hymn of J. Hudson Taylor, the missionary to China. His biographer says, "He had learned that, for him, only one life was possible – just that blessed life of resting and rejoicing in the Lord under all circumstances, while He dealt with the difficulties inward and outward, great and small."

As I listened to the song, I found myself praying that all of the people in our church would own these words:

Jesus, I am resting, resting,
In the joy of what Thou art;
I am finding out the greatness
Of Thy loving heart.
Thou hast bid me gaze upon Thee,
And Thy beauty fills my soul,
For by Thy transforming power,
Thou hast made me whole.

Refrain:

Jesus, I am resting, resting,
In the joy of what Thou art;
I am finding out the greatness
Of Thy loving heart.

O, how great Thy loving kindness,
Vaster, broader than the sea!
O, how marvelous Thy goodness,
Lavished all on me!
Yes, I rest in Thee, Beloved,
Know what wealth of grace is Thine,
Know Thy certainty of promise,
And have made it mine.

Refrain

Simply trusting Thee, Lord Jesus,
I behold Thee as Thou art,
And Thy love, so pure, so changeless,
Satisfies my heart;
Satisfies its deepest longings,
Meets, supplies its every need,
Compasseth me round with blessings:
Thine is love indeed!

Refrain

Ever lift Thy face upon me
As I work and wait for Thee;
Resting 'neath Thy smile, Lord Jesus,
Earth's dark shadows flee.
Brightness of my Father's glory,
Sunshine of my Father's face,
Keep me ever trusting, resting,
Fill me with Thy grace.

I love this type of hymn! Some hymns sing about the Lord and about His work, but this song is a prayer to the Lord. It would serve us all very well to make this our prayer as well. In this song, five verbs capture my attention: rest, gaze, know, wait and trust. Did you notice these verbs don't require strenuous physical activity? Even the word "work" is coupled with the word "wait." Let's observe three of these verbs found in our song:

1. Rest

Galatians 3:3 says, "*Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh.*" Hebrews 4: 9 and 10 says, "*There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.*" The rest that Jesus gives us is not perfected by our efforts; it is a gift of His grace. I Corinthians 15:10a says, "*But by the grace of God I am what I am....*"

2. Gaze

In A.W. Tozer's book, *The Pursuit of God*, he points out in chapter 7, *The Gaze of the Soul*: "When we lift our inward eyes to gaze upon God we are sure to meet friendly eyes gazing back at us, for it is written that the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout all the earth. The sweet language of experience is 'Thou God seest me.' When the eyes of the soul looking out meet the eyes of God looking in, heaven has begun right here on this earth.... Now, if faith is the gaze of the heart at God, and if this gaze is but the raising of the inward eyes to meet the all-seeing eyes of God, then it follows that it is one of the easiest things possible to do. It would be like God to make the most vital thing easy and place it within the range of possibility for the weakest and poorest of us. Several conclusions may

fairly be drawn from all this. The simplicity of it, for instance. Since believing is looking, it can be done without special equipment or religious paraphernalia.”

Hebrews 12:2, says, *“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith....”* Psalm 34:5 points out that those who gaze upon Him will not be disappointed: *“They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed.”*

3. Know

Philippians 3:10 says, *“That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.”* Understanding this verse will be aided by that one small, but very important, coordinating conjunction “and.” If we do not know Him, we will not be connected to the power of His resurrection. Knowing Him brings the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His suffering.

“Wait” and “trust” are the two other outstanding verbs that we will not elaborate on further, however in closing, they should be contemplated. If we know the Lord, we will wait rather than waste time with activity that causes us to spin our proverbial wheels in the sand. And when we trust we will bring to pass the truth of Isaiah 12:2b, *“...I will trust, and not be afraid....”*

-Pastor Pope-