

“The apostles gathered around Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, ‘Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.’ For many were coming and going and they had no leisure even to eat.” Mark 6:30, 31.

Dear Christian friends:

Summer has arrived, and many people are working diligently to finalize tasks, so that some vacation time can be enjoyed. Our whole being can remind us about the need for Sabbath rest. I write this article while checking my “to-do” list wanting to finish many tasks before my summer vacation begins. Ministry has been busy through the Spring season and I know that my body, mind and soul are indicating a need for rest and rejuvenation! I hope that most of you are able to get some rest and relaxation during these summer days also. When we live in a culture like ours it is often difficult to keep self-care as an appropriate value. Many people are going in constant overdrive. Few people have any time to waste. In fact the reality is that everyone is constantly trying to make up for lost time.

So it is good for us to pause and reflect upon our LORD’s words. Jesus called the disciples away from the crowds and their demands in the busiest time of their lives. The reality in the Gospel text is that the disciples were really pumped up about the ministry. They had just returned from a session of being sent out into mission work. They came back totally amazed and ready to tackle the world. Jesus told them something different. The disciple’s master was ordering them away. They were to take a rest period.

So it is good for us to remember God’s goodness in the intention of Sabbath rest. We should not feel guilt about taking vacations. God has intended these for our well-being! It is a time to recharge our whole being. I remember in university days, the annual mid-winter break would come in February. Many classmates would take off for ski vacations. I didn’t feel I should fritter such time away. So I would continue to pour over my studies. In the end, I lost out. My friends would come back refreshed and invigorated and would accomplish in one day what I spent all week muttering on. The Sabbath rest did that for them.

So I have learned to heed God’s good intentions for us. I have learned through my mental breakdown to heed my body’s warning signals when my life or schedule need to slow down or be adjusted. So I cherish vacation time. I also find a few minutes puttering in my garden can calm a restless soul. God gives us wisdom and knowledge through the Commandments; Jesus gives us an example of that wisdom in action.

I hope that all have time for a rest. I thank you for your many ways in which you have been active participants in the ministry of Shepherd King Lutheran. We know that ministry opportunities will be present as we return from summer vacations. The LORD will use us. As God acts graciously to us again, may the LORD bless you in these days. May the LORD keep you as you journey or just vegetate. May the LORD make his face to shine upon you and give you his peace.

Have a blessed summer all!

In Christ forever, Pastor Kevin.