

Feeding On The Author Of Life

by Todd Atkinson

This sermon focuses on the concept of soul weariness and the need to find true rest in Jesus. It emphasizes the importance of coming to Jesus in times of weakness to receive His strength, highlighting personal weaknesses as assets in our faith. The sermon encourages spending more time in Holy Scriptures than in worldly distractions, acknowledging the need for a Savior and the transformative power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Scripture: Matthew 11:28, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Psalm 119:28, Romans 8:26, James 4:8, 1 John 1:9, John 6:53, Hebrews 4:16, 1 Corinthians 11:23, Revelation 3:20

Topics: "Soul Weariness", "Finding Rest in Jesus"

Description

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Transcript

I began to realize that I did everything I knew how to rest physically, but I was experiencing tiredness on a different level called soul weariness. And the ways I was resting or the ways I was trying to cope were not designed to alleviate soul weariness. I was resting well, I was sleeping well, eating well, exercising well, enjoying my family, but I had a weariness on a deep level.

And there's only one true solution for soul weariness. And it's the words that Father Stephen preached today, the words of Jesus. Come to me all you that are weary or heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Where? Where? I will give you rest. In your soul. So I've had to learn to rest in new ways.

To actually claim this promise. Not just hear it, but to receive it. It's odd, but one of your greatest abilities you have in order to step in and receive that promise, it's not how strong you are.

It is times of weakness make you more able to receive the strength of Christ. I always thought that personal weakness was a great liability. Only to find that in our faith it can be an asset.

That when we learn how to come to Christ in our weakness, whatever weakness you might feel besieged by, it is then that you begin to step into the strength of the Lord. It's true. And so right now as we come to

the Lord, in the Eucharist, come to me.

Why don't you bow your head for a minute. First of all, tell them about the deep soul weariness that you feel. Because it affects all of us different.

For some of you it could be insecurity about your work. It plagues you. You can't turn it off.

It could be deep concern for your children and school and their future. Again, it's just hard to not obsess over. Maybe you have a love-hate relationship with the media.

You know that you should probably only take in so much and yet can't turn it off. And so this week, I give you this challenge that was in Fr. Stephen's message.

Spend more time in Holy Scriptures than you do in media. Spend more time listening to the Lord and reading Holy Scripture than in reading anything else. So Lord, we bring you our soul weariness.

We do what you've asked. You asked us to come to you. So I'm coming to you in prayer.

I'm coming to you in worship. I'm coming to you in the Holy Eucharist. Where your presence is assuredly found.

I also bring to you my weakness. Where I feel mentally weak. Where I feel emotionally weak.

Where I feel morally weak. I come to you in my weakness. My weakness helps me again realize my need for a mighty Savior.

I need a Savior. I need a Savior. I didn't used to need a Savior.

I daily need a Savior. And so my weakness casts me on you in a wonderful new fresh way. I need you, Jesus.

I can lose everything, but I can't lose you. I need my Savior. And anything that casts me on my Savior.

These prayers are not only for this morning, they're for tomorrow, they're for Tuesday, they're for Wednesday, for the rest of the week. The Holy Spirit will be your discipler. He disciplines us in the midst of things that seem out of our control and beyond our control.

But the Holy Spirit will be our teacher and discipler. We will see dynamic spiritual growth if we allow the Holy Spirit to lead us and guide us and teach us. We'll establish new patterns.

New ways of leaning into God. The Lord is here. His Spirit is with us.

If there's someone here today and you're thinking, well, it's always been easy for me. I've always just known what to do next. And I don't know.

Press into the Lord. Wait upon Him for those decisions. It's okay to feel a greater need of Him.

Lord, open our eyes to see that our poverty of spirit can be our greatest asset in turning us to You. Who do truly and earnestly repent of your sins. A key word, remember? Pastor Stephen Christen.

Are reconciled and at peace with your neighbor. And intend to lead the new life. Following the commandments of God.

And walking from henceforth in His holy ways. Draw near now with faith. And make your humble confession to Almighty God.

Please take a moment for private confession. And now with humble hearts, let us make our confession out loud together. Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against You.

In thought, word, and deed. By what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart.

We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry. And humbly repent.

For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Have mercy on us and forgive us. That we may delight in Your will.

And walk in Your ways. To the glory of Your name. Amen.

Receive the cleansing of the Lord. Sometimes we have more faith to confess than we do to receive forgiveness. Receive the cleansing of the Lord by faith.

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, who in His great mercy. Has promised forgiveness of sins. To all those who sincerely repent.

And with true faith turn to Him. Have mercy upon you. Pardon and deliver you from all your sins.

Confirm and strengthen you in all goodness. And bring you to everlasting life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

If you will receive from Christ. The full absolution and cleansing of your sins. Then together we proclaim.

Thanks be to God. Thanks indeed. Thank you.

Jesus paid it all. I left a crimson stain. He washed it white.

Jesus paid it all. Jesus paid it all. All to Him I owe.

And saved. He washed it white as snow. This life found from the dead.

All to Him I owe. Washed it white as snow. Jesus paid.

Jesus paid it all. All to Him I owe. And saved.

He washed it white as snow. If you could just bow your heads for a minute. Just ask the Lord that you might encounter Him in new fresh ways.

In this holy meal. When Jesus met with the apostles. In that Passover meal.

He said this is my body which is given for you. He said how I have longed to eat this meal with you. It was an intimate time.

So intimate, so impactful. That it was instituted as the primary way of remembering Him through all the ages. And so ask Him now, Lord help me to meet with you in the Eucharist.

Show me how to meet with you in the Eucharist. Many years ago when we first began to teach the Eucharist we taught a lot. As people heard the word of the Lord, what was possible here, their faith grew.

Faith cometh by hearing. Hearing the word of the Lord. As their faith grew their expectation grew.

As their expectation grew their encounters with Jesus grew. And so we never let anything that we do regularly become rote or mundane. But we stir ourselves.

To freshly discover Him. Him who is anything but rote and mundane. The author of life.

And so we check ourselves. Oh, to encounter Jesus afresh. Why do we gather on Sundays? Because it's Jesus' day of His resurrection.

We gather because it's Christ's church. Why do we hear the word? Because it's Jesus' word. Why do we worship? Because we worship unto Him.

Why do we do the Lord's work? Because He instituted it. He meets us in it. It's all about Jesus.

The only one who truly knows our soul. Loves us to the depths. And can meet us in those places.

So Lord, we ask that the author of life would meet us in this holy Eucharist. And thereby we would be fully alive in Him. And that this would be part of our glowing testimony in this city.

When the world seems to be falling apart. Why are you so fully alive, you people? Because we feed on the very author of life. The Lord be with you, saints of God.

Lift up your hearts. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. For He is risen from the dead.

Holy and gracious Father. In your infinite love you made us for yourself. When we had sinned against you and become subject to evil and death.

You in your mercy sent your only Son into the world for our salvation. By the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary. He became flesh and dwelt among us in obedience to your will.

He stretched out His arms upon the cross. And offered Himself once for all. That by His suffering and death we might be saved.

By His resurrection He broke the bonds of death. Trampling hell and Satan under His feet. As our great High Priest He ascended to your right hand in glory.

That we might come with confidence before the throne of grace. On the night that He was betrayed. Our Lord Jesus Christ took bread.

And when He had given thanks. He broke it and He gave it to His disciples saying, Take, eat. This is my body which is given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me. So even just at the thought of the offering of His body. We reverence Him.

Likewise after supper. Jesus took the cup and when He had given thanks. He gave it to them saying, drink this.

All of you. For this is my blood of the new covenant. Which is shed for you and for many.

For the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink this. Do this in remembrance of me.

Someone asked me, why do you kneel? And I said, how could I not? Before the cross. We celebrate the memorial of our redemption. Oh Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

And we offer you these gifts. Sanctify them. By your word and Holy Spirit.

To be for your people the body. And the blood of your Son. Jesus Christ.

Sanctify us also. That we may worthily receive this Holy Sacrament. And be made one body with Him.

So that He may dwell on us and we in Him. In the fullness of time. Put all things in subjection under your Christ.

And bring us with all your saints. Into the fullness of your heavenly kingdom. Where we shall see our Lord face to face.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By Him and with Him and in Him. In the unity of the Holy Spirit.

All honor and glory is yours almighty Father. Now and forever. Hallelujah.

Christ our Passover Lamb has been sacrificed. Once for all. Upon the cross.

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