

Sunday Celebration (November 9, 2008)
"Come to HIM"

Welcome to Lakeview (Pt. 1)

INTRO

The Welcome Plaque - a Reflection of our Pastoral Passion for all who would ever consider participating in the life of this church

Matt 11:28-29

THE PROBLEM COMMON TO MAN – A RESTLESS SOUL

“ I have had few difficulties, many friends, great successes. I have gone from wife to wife and from house to house; visited great countries of the world, but I am fed up with inventing devices to fill up 24 hrs a day.” **Cartoonist Ralph Barton’s Suicide Note** [Ralph Barton was a world famous cartoonist who committed suicide in 1931 at age 39]

“ There are few passages in the four Gospels more important than this. There are few which contain in so short a compass, so many precious truths.— May God give us an eye to see, and a heart to feel their value!” **J.C. Ryle**, “Expository Thoughts on Matthew”, p. 116

- Have You Lived Long Enough to Realize that Some Things in Your Life Were Far More Valuable than You Realized at the Time?

What is this "Restless Soul" Problem?

Context (Matt 11:28): "labor and are heavy laden"

"labor"

In secular Greek kópos means a. "beating" or the "weariness" caused by it,
(from Theological Dictionary of the New Testament)

To be worn out, weary, faint, (from The Complete Word Study Dictionary)

'come to me all of you who are tired from carrying heavy loads' Matt 11:28.
(from Greek-English Lexicon)

"heavy laden" is from a word used to describe a ship loaded down with freight

Restlessness is the Condition Created When Sin is Operating in the Soul

“ Sin is the despairing refusal to find your deepest identity in your relationship and service to God. Sin is seeking to become oneself, to get an identity, apart from Him. ... Everyone gets their identity, their sense of being distinct and valuable, from somewhere or something. ... human beings were made not only to believe in God in some general way, but to love Him supremely, center their lives on Him above anything else, and build their very identities on Him. Anything other than this is sin.” **Timothy Keller**, “The Reason for God”, p. 162

– Why Are You Doing What You’re Doing? Why Do You Choose the Goals & Dreams that you Choose?

“ According to the Bible, the primary way to define sin is not just the doing of bad things, but the making of good things into ultimate things. It is seeking to establish a sense of self by making something else more central to your significance, purpose, and happiness than your relationship to God.” **Timothy Keller**, “The Reason for God”, p. 162

- Good things like a TALENT your MARRIAGE a JOB/CAREER your HEALTH being APPRECIATED/ADMIRER RETIREMENT or FINANCIAL RESOURCES

“ Suppose my god is sex or my physical health or the Democratic Party. If I experience any of these under genuine threat, then I feel myself shaken to the depths. Guilt becomes neurotically intensified to the degree that I have idolized finite values... Suppose I value my ability to teach and communicate clearly... If clear communication has become an absolute value for me, a center of value that makes all my other values valuable ... then if I [fail in teaching well] I am stricken with neurotic guilt. Bitterness becomes neurotically intensified when someone or something stands between me and something that is my ultimate value.” Theologian **Thomas Oden** [quoted in “The Reason for God”, p. 164]

“ If anything threatens your identity you will not just be anxious but paralyzed with fear. If you lose your identity through the failings of someone else you will not just be resentful, but locked into bitterness. If you lose it through your own failing, you will hate or despise yourself as a failure as long as you live.” **Timothy Keller**, “The Reason for God”, p. 165

The Problem with Man Seldom Lies in his "Things" but rather in what has become his "Ultimate Things"

When the Wrong Things become Ultimate Things, man Loses His Freedom and takes on a Yoke of Slavery

THE SOLUTION – “COME TO ME”

“COME”

- This implies **MOVEMENT** from where you are to a different place.
- **Who is Included in the Invitation?**

"... ALL who labor and are heavy laden"

Come Where? to Education? to the Right Crowd?.... to the Right Political Candidate?.... to a Higher Paying Job? to a Better Neighborhood? to Therapy? to Church?

“To ME”

Matt 11:29

Ps 63:1 “O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; ... 5 My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food, and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips, 6 when I remember you upon my bed, and meditate on you in the watches of the night”

Ps 62:1 "For God alone my soul waits in silence; from him comes my salvation"

Ps 73:25-26 "Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. 26 My heart and my flesh may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."

Is it wrong for our souls to have Other Interests and Desires?

What's the ULTIMATE THING for Man? God Himself!! ["Come to ME"]

My Great Passion as a Pastor is NOT that you "Come to Church" – but that you Come to HIM!!

“ Preachers can say dozens of true and wonderful things about the gospel and not lead people to where the gospel is leading. People can hear the gospel preached, or read it in their Bibles, and not see the final aim of the gospel that makes the good news good. ... What makes all the event of Good Friday and Easter and all the promises they secure good news is that they lead us to God. ... And when we get there, it is God himself who will satisfy our souls forever.”
John Piper, “God is the Gospel”, p. 42

How Can You RESPOND to Matt 11:28-29?

“ We are very like an honest man paying his taxes. He pays them, but he does hope that there will be enough left over for him to live on.The Christian way is different— both harder and easier. Christ says, “Give me ALL. I don’t want just this much of your time and this much of your money and this much of your work— so that your natural self can have the rest. I want YOU. Not your things. I have come not to torture your natural self... I will give you a new self instead. Hand over the whole natural self— ALL the desires, not just the ones you think wicked but the ones you think innocent— the whole outfit. I will give you a new self instead.” **C.S. Lewis** [quoted in “The Reason for God”, p. 171]