

FAITH

“Be still and know that I am God.” Psalm 46

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We have recently had new windows installed on our home, on the highway side of our home that is. This installation has resulted in a new appreciation of stillness, of quietness, of contemplation. From the early beginnings of the movement that we now call Christianity people have been working at trying to “get away” from the busyness of life, the mundane tedium of everyday movements, the demands of what it means to live to the world’s standards. It is hard to do and yet it is also necessary.

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I was at a pastoral conference a few years ago and one of the main speakers reminded us all that even Jesus sometimes slept in the back of the boat, even Jesus went away on mountain tops to pray, even Jesus sought to find times to be alone. The implicit question was about whether we too sought to find times to find Sabbath, prayerful rest.

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More recently I’ve been working my way through Sabbath, a book by Wayne Muller. Muller presents different ways of approaching and understanding Sabbath in our lives. In one chapter the book describes the second stage of dormancy for trees like Douglas Fir during which the tree will seek to rest not in response to cues from the outside world but from cues it takes from within itself. The book later states that though we can function and sometimes function quite well as we work faster and faster, making artificial day out of night we are to remember that “no living thing lives like this.”

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Right now many in their faith life are living in the afterglow of Easter. This is the season of the year in which we affirm and celebrate that God has indeed raised Christ from the dead and thus accomplished what we could not accomplish on our own, eternal life with God. The catch in this is that eternal life, truly living life, is not meant to be something that only happens once we die, we are to actually live it here and now. And therein lies one of the ironies – living life with God necessarily involves rest.

Which is why, after all, Sabbath, rest, stillness in our lives is to be seen as a gift from God. Whether we read about it from the Ten Commandments or see it in the model of Christ’s faithfulness, or in any other place, we are to remember that one of God’s many gifts to us is the gift of expecting that we will rest.

So before the summer swings into full motion, before boats are rushing about on the lake, before Hwy 93 becomes a thoroughfare with service trucks and tourists alike, may you find time to “be still and know that I am God.” May you find time to rest in the delight and love of God in your life. May you find time to revel in the stillness that can be found in our busy world.

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