

This is the Day...Wednesday

January 12, 2022

Healing Rest

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28)

It was one of the scariest times of my childhood. I had never seen my dad in a hospital bed. As a seven- or eight-year-old, I had watched Dad as he was constantly on the go. It seemed like Dad never sat down. He always had a project to do. Always fixing something or building something. Always helping Mom get something done or helping one of his boys with a project. Dad was a rock and seemed capable of doing anything. But now, we were in a hospital room at Gaston Memorial Hospital. Dad has just come back from having hernia surgery and he is in obvious pain. I can remember fearfully asking my mom, over and over again, “Is he going to get well? When can we go home?”

Two days later, I was relieved when Dad was back home with us. And I was amazed at how quickly he was back working on his projects. Mom kept telling Dad, “You need to rest! You can’t heal if you don’t rest!” But Dad kept right on working, just a few days after his surgery. Unfortunately, Mom was right, and Dad was not healing. A week later, Dad had to go back to the hospital because his incision was opening up and was getting infected. And I clearly remember hearing Mom say to Dad, “I told you! You can’t heal if you do not rest!”

I think we all have a bit of my dad in us. Typically, we do not give ourselves time to heal. We tend to see it as a waste of time. We are constantly pushing to get things done and are driven by our daily agenda and list of “to-dos”. Stopping long enough to allow our body and spirit to heal seems like an unnecessary expenditure of time that could be used for accomplishing something else. But, as my dad learned, if you do not give yourself an opportunity for rest, you will not properly heal.

Our Lord certainly understood the importance of rest. Often, Jesus would go off into the mountains to spend time resting. And through that time of rest, His spirit was healed and strengthened. We all need an opportunity to heal at times. Life can have a way of beating us up. The stresses and challenges each normal day may bring can take its toll on your body and spirit. Then if we add losing a loved one, receiving a difficult diagnosis, or other struggles to the rest of the challenges of life, there comes a time when we need to rest and heal.

Our Lord makes it clear that we always have a place to go for rest. On this day God has given you, give yourself the opportunity for rest and healing. Take time each day to get away from the relentless struggles and stresses of life and find that healing rest with the Lord.