

## **Rest for the Soul**

**Text:** Psalm 62: 1-2 (**Readings:** Psalm 62; 1 John 3:16-24)

Is there anything that excites a teenager more than sleeping in?

Dr Karl S. Kruszelnicki (Age Good Weekend, February 10, 2007)

“You may think that the infinite ability of teenagers to sleep in on weekends is all down to attitude, but this altered sleep pattern isn't about being bone-lazy or antisocial, it's about biology.”

He reports on studies done that show that the average teenager needs more sleep.

They need around 9.5 hours/night.

While the average 9-10 needs 1-2 hours less (about 8 hours).

Yet studies also show that teenagers generally get an average of only 7.4 hours.

So when a teenager refuses to get out of bed in the morning, grumbling that they are too tired to go to school, they are probably not making things up.

Karl reckons the average high-school student sleepwalks through their school day, in a semi permanent state of sleep deprivation.

This means that on weekends and holidays teenagers will try and make up for lost sleep.

What's the solution?

Dr Martin Ralph, a psychologist at the University of Toronto, recommends starting university and high-school classes at 11am.

How good would that be!

You sleep because you need rest.

Spiritually the same thing is true...we need our rest.

Whether we are young or old.

The great enemy of our relationship with God is overworking, busyness, spending too much time on things that really don't matter.

We can end up in state of semi-permanent spiritual rest deprivation.

I think we can all relate to that!

Those times when we are only half aware of our relationship with God.

God wants us to get spiritual rest.

David draws our attention to that rest in this Psalm we read together...

To those things which will keep us firm in our walk with God.

A Reminder of where our security really lies.

A reminder and encouragement to PoF people (and all of us).

Ps 62:1 My soul finds rest in God alone; my salvation comes from him.

Ps 62:2 He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will never be shaken.

The most important thing to keep in the back of our mind as we look at these opening verses is that David makes God his only object of trust.

In the Hebrew text the word 'only' or 'alone' occurs 5 times in the first 8 verses!  
He does not trust something other than God,  
nor does he trust God plus something or someone else.

His trust is in God alone, and that is where he gets his confidence...  
That is where he finds rest...in God alone.

My dictionary meaning for alone has the idea of:  
Without other's help  
Only, exclusively.

So David says his rest is only in God...a good starting point!

The 'rest' that David talks about is literally of silence before God.  
David lived a stress filled life  
Had constant warfare with surrounding nation  
Had problems with Saul, and later his own family.

Yet instead of powering ahead in his own strength we read, time and again, how he brought these concerns before God.  
He sought God's will and direction for his life.  
He trusted that God would lead him in the right way.  
That God would protect him.

How often do we just race around and work at overcoming our stress and problems in our own strength.  
(I know that I do...to my own detriment).  
David knew who to turn to and trust...we should do the same.  
He drew his strength and assurance from God and so turned to him for salvation.

When we look at the word rest in this Psalm it draws out two attitudes that should attract us...  
Two attitudes that will strengthen our walk with God.

***Attitude of Silence:***

A Wise old owl sat in an oak, The more he saw the less he spoke; The less he spoke the more he heard; Why aren't we like that wise old bird?

It is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord. Lam 3.26

There is a time for you and I to walk in silence.  
God wants to remove the noise of your life and create a place in which he can speak to you and encourage you.

If you are constantly on the go physically you will wear out,  
It is no different spiritually.

Take time, have a personal retreat with the Bible, notepad and some worship music,  
and listen for the Lord.

It is difficult.

But Jesus secluded himself from the distractions and noises of his day so that he could spend some effective time with God the Father.

"Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." Mark 6.31

That attitude of silence means you can rest in God when the storms of life come.  
The storms of life that cause us to worry.

Do you see what Phil. 4.6 really says? "Don't worry about anything..."  
That is easy for God to say right.  
But really we do not need to worry about anything.

To rest in God means that I will rest from the attitude of worry,  
and develop an attitude of faith and rest.  
I will not let worry control my mind or my spirit.

***Attitude of Stillness:*** "And after the earthquake there was a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire there was the sound of a gentle whisper." 1 Ki 19.12

In his book Fuzzy Memories, Jack Handey writes: There used to be this bully who would demand my lunch money every day. Since I was smaller, I would give it to him. Then I decided to fight back. I started taking karate lessons. But then the karate lesson guy said I had to start paying him five dollars a lesson. So I just went back to paying the bully.

Too many people feel it is easier just to pay the bully than it is to learn how to defeat him.

At times it easier to continue to live our lives at a fast pace than to fight the bully of busyness.

God wants us to be still.

He says in the Psalms that we should, "Be still and know he is God."

The Lord wants us to be still before Him.

Do not be afraid of slowing down and getting to a place to hear God.

**So why does David want to find that rest in God?**

Because his salvation is from God.

Salvation is defined as:

The act of saving or being saved

This 'salvation' in OT terms had to do with deliverance...

Deliverance from earthly dangers and enemies (David's concern).

David's conviction is that God could and would act to deliver him.

This conviction came from the fact that God had done so in the past and so would do it again.

This was not on the grounds of his being good, or deserving...

But his special place as chosen by God.

God would be and is faithful to his people.

In the light of the NT...we too have experienced salvation.

Not from earthly enemies and dangers...

But from death and Satan.

This was done...not because we deserve it...

But because God, in his grace and mercy,

has chosen to love, care and save his people.

On God rests my salvation.

He has done all the work.

He provided salvation from sins by dying on the cross.

He provided resurrection from spiritual death by rising from the dead Himself

He gave us His Holy Spirit, so that we could be regenerated, renewed.

None of this could be accomplished by us;

God had to do the work, man only needs to trust Him to be saved.

In verse 2 David gives the grounds, the reason for his salvation.

They are the expression of rock and fortress, that point to utter confidence in God.

Rock is defined in the dictionary as: (besides geological terms)

a firm and dependable support

David's rock was God...

Symbol of security and defense.

Fortress has the same idea as rock.

In the Medieval times, the fortress was the walled part of the city...

With the turrets and towers, drawbridge and moat.

Once you were in there...nothing could shake you out.

This was how David saw God

In NT terms:

Jesus is the rock (I Cor. 10:4) our foundation.

Israel drew near to the Red Sea.

Pharaoh and his army followed close behind.

All of Pharaoh's army, his horses and his chariots, encamped around Israel.

They saw Pharaoh marching toward them and in fear they cried out to the Lord.

Moses said to the people, "Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to be silent;" Exodus 14:13-14.

Just as the Red Sea was divided and the people crossed over on dry ground, so too the curtain of the temple which separated us from God was torn in two the day Christ hung on the cross.

He secured for us our salvation;

He worked for us and we only stand and behold the salvation of the Lord.

Anyone who looks on Him will be saved according to John 6:40.

He is our rock.

The Israelites could pass through the Red Sea with boldness...

we can pass through the curtain of the temple which once separated us from God  
we enter into fellowship with the Lord

fully trusting Him to give to us what He has promised:

peace with Him because of Jesus Christ.

If we all know we need physical rest...and we now know we all need spiritual rest...

What does that look like?

How do we go about that?

**It takes time & effort**

It takes time and effort to have a regular quiet time.

There are many ways that the Bible speaks about spiritually rest.

You need to find the one that fits you!

The Bible talks about:

**Singing** - Ephesians 5:19 - Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord.

### ***Praying***

This might seem obvious, but I used to be scared to tell people about my prayer life.

I heard about other Christians who got up at 5 AM and prayed for 3 hours!

I'm a pastor, how am I supposed to top that!?!

What I realized is that praying every day is not a competition,  
nor should you judge your prayer life according to others.

All it takes is starting where you are at...

maybe try 5 minutes a day and then increase the time after a week or a month.

We just need to start somewhere.

You'll end up finding that you never have enough time to pray for all the things you want to pray about.

### ***Listening to God's Word***

In order to listen to God's Word, you have come in contact with it, really listen to it, and try to live by it.

This should be a daily exercise,

whether by audio CD or tape, the internet, e-mail, computer programs,  
or the old fashioned way: picking up your Bible and reading it!

### ***Spending Time in Nature***

Psalm 19:1 - The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

Use your times out fishing, or bush walking or camping as times with God.

There is nothing like the night sky, the grandeur of nature that shows us God's glory.

### ***Last, but not least: Gathering with others***

This means going to church, or joining a small group.

Going to Church can be a time you come before God and allow Him to talk to you.

Joining a small group could be a time when God speaks to you through the group, a mentor, or friend.

Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit. (Eph 2:19-22)

When you gather with others, God is there!

God want you to be with other Christians so that He can talk to you through them!

### ***Taking baby steps*** – one step at a time

Sometimes we think Christianity is about being super-religious all at once.

Some think they shouldn't do Profession of Faith their lives because it means they have to be super-Christians if they do.

What you need to realize that faith is a growing process that goes step by step...  
going slow, baby steps.

Otherwise, we become overwhelmed, and don't change anything at all.

You see God loves you so much that He'll take you the way you are,  
but He also loves you so much that He won't leave you that way.

As you go about giving chunks of your life to God...  
Amazing to see how much of it is changed...bit by bit.

So just as teenage bodies need plenty of rest,  
So we spiritually need rest...rest in God.  
We live busy, noisy, non-stop lives...  
Stress overwhelms us; we get frustrated.

Learn to spend time with God  
Satisfaction  
Peace beyond understanding.