

## I. Intro

- a. Good morning, my name is John Seago, I'm a partner here at City Life, and glad to be looking into Psalm 30 with you this morning.
- b. We're closing out this series on rest and play, its been a rich time for us.
  - i. We've talked about the need and call for Sabbath, that its ingrained in creation and we're designed to have these systematic breaks from labor to worship God.
  - ii. We talked about play, and how the goal of play is joy; and the goal of rest is contentment.
  - iii. We've been dealing with this dilemma of how do we find this joyful contentment in our busy, stress-ridden lives.
  - iv. We've seen that we don't need to spend more time taking off of work, but taking deliberate time to reflect on God's sovereignty, and resting in his faithfulness.
  - v. If you've missed any of these Sundays in this series, I recommend you go to the podcast and catch up. Its very relevant for the culture, trends, and pressures we feel everyday.
- c. But before we get too far, I have to confess something. I've been sucked in, I'm part of the crowd now. One of us has probably bumped into you on the street or made you wait longer at a traffic light. I'm sorry. I've been playing Pokemon Go for the last few weeks. I'm tempted to blame it on my children, who I do play with, but I also play without them. It's a fun game. We're totally hooked. We go on what we call Pokewalks at least daily, passing the phone around to take turns catching pokemon.
  - i. This conflicts with another preference of mine, not to have a case on my phone. I really like the simple, slick design and look of a caseless iPhone. I've made it years without any problems...until now. All those pokewalks and turns passing the phone between me, my 6 year old son, and 4 year old daughter...well you know where this is headed. It was inevitable.
  - ii. After the drop, that shattered screen serves as a constant reminder of 'the incident.' Its happened that we'll be in the middle of a fun light hearted discussion of which character on the game is our favorite and I'll pull my phone out to show the kids and bam. Mood killer. We'll go to plan our next pokewalk and then, ouch, we see the phone and remember what happened.
  - iii. On a much more serious and deep level this points to a similar dilemma we have when it comes to rest and play that we're going to walk through this morning.
- d. Prayer.

- e. We're going to look at three activities this morning? Weeping, Rescuing, Dancing.
- II. First, **weeping**. How can we rest/play now in a broken world?
- a. But this call to rest and play can be a difficult one. Many of us today have heavy hearts, troubled consciences, and disordered minds about what going on around us.
    - i. We can't avoid the high profile tragedies and injustices. Its on our twitter feed, our facebook, the news, being discussed at work and school. We're bombarded with the fallenness of our world and the wreckage left behind by sin.
    - ii. Maybe its not so much your sensitivity to current events or the news, but you're facing pain and hurt in your personal life. A strained marriage, broken relationships, or conflict at work.
    - iii. There is so much brokenness and uncertainty in our world right now that to talk about rest and play seems inappropriate.
    - iv. Trying to reflect on 'play' seems disrespectful, even foolish.
    - v. How can we rest, play, or leisure, right now?
  - b. We see in Psalm 30, this is where David was, too. He points to a myriad of trials and suffering in all aspects of his life:
    - i. Vocationally (Work, moms, students).<sup>1</sup>
    - ii. David had spiritual trials.<sup>2</sup>
    - iii. He even suffered in his Physical Life and Health.<sup>3</sup>
    - iv. David was falling apart. Verse 6 tells us he was weeping during the night.
  - c. However, even with all of that, this is a Psalm of Thanksgiving, it's a song of praise.
    - i. David's whole point of Psalm 30 is that God delivered him and drew David closer to himself in his dismay.
    - ii. Look at verses 4 and 5: He says, "Sing praises to the LORD, O you his saints, and give thanks to his holy name. For his anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning."
    - iii. David found that the joy of the Lord came in the morning.

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<sup>1</sup> He had political and military foes seeking to destroy him (v1). Lost his financial stability (v7)

<sup>2</sup> He felt like God's anger was directed at him (v5). He felt like his soul was in Sheol, the grave, or where the dead dwell (v3)

<sup>3</sup> He got to the point where he pleaded for the Lord to spare his life (v8-10)

- d. We may think, ‘well, that’s good for David, however I’m still in the middle of the night right now,’ ‘Our country, my marriage, job or lack of a job, its all dreadful right now, so I’m just waiting for the morning to come.’
  - i. I work in politics and so, for me I feel that way about this presidential election. The political scene feels worse than just midnight right now. Its like multiple tornados in the dead of night, well worse...how about multiple sharknados? Yeah, it feels that bad. So I’m waiting for that morning to come right? What can I do?
  - ii. Do you feel like you’re in the middle of the night waiting for the sunrise? In these seasons we may respond in a few ways:
    - 1. We may turn to distractions to just ignore that broken relationship, I’m just not going to think about it. Filling spare time with constant entertainment, seeking out ways to divert your attention, maybe even food or that extra drink to relieve that stress.
    - 2. Another way we respond to feeling like we’re stuck in night waiting for the morning, is just to spiritually hold our breath (no joy, rest, or play today, but that's okay, because eventually in future I’ll experience it). We’re tempted to just hang on tight and grit through it remembering ‘things stink here, but new creation is coming, King Jesus will be the best president eventually.’
  - iii. Is this where you are right now? Whether you’re distracting yourself from the pain and suffering, or just trying to hang on until its over, you’re are missing a beautiful truth today.
  - iv. You may just be a naturally happy person. Its easy for you to be positive and keep things light. Question for you is are you seeking joy in the right things.

III. **Rescuing:** The truth is we have already witnessed the Morning Star and the dawn. The night is over.

- a. This formula of nights of weeping being followed by mornings of joy applies on several levels just like the doctrine of Redemption
  - i. At the lowest level we see the grace of God in specific episodes of our life, where sorrow and brokenness in a relationship for example is replaced by love and reconciliation. The Lord works in those small events in our lives all the time.
  - ii. One step above that we see the Lord’s Redemption over the course of our lives in our life story. The weariness, destruction, and sin is replaced by joy and life-giving faith. Looking at our life story we see

when God called us to salvation, to repent and turn away from a life of sin. That's a night to morning change.

- iii. But higher than just our life story, we have God's redemptive work, his promise of bringing joy in the morning, on this cosmic, historical scale. God is shaping all of history in this story of the Gospel. We see his history of Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Consummation.
- b. It is at this highest level, that the morning has already come. In God's history shaping plan, we don't live in the centuries of midnight waiting for dawn of the Messiah. Sing praises this morning, O City Life Church, for Christ himself is the morning star. **You can rejoice this morning.**
  - i. Revelation 22:16 says, "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star."
  - ii. In John's vision here in the book of Revelation, Jesus is identifying his role in history that the prophets foretold of. He is saying 'I am the King in the line of David that will rule forever, and I am the morning star.'
  - iii. We realize the morning has already come in Christ's work, death, and resurrection. That's the life-changing, history changing event.
  - iv. JD: And it's this kind of vision of reality that checks despair over our the historical moment. This God-centered vision of history puts our sorrows, even this election in its place, where they belong. All these trials and concerns are ordered underneath the greatness of God's grand story of glory.
  - v. (Maybe an illustration of how stunning vistas or great stories have a way of inspiring us to keep going??) Moving, being motivated by new house?
- c. God was gracious to David on that episodic level in the trials and tribulations of his life, but God has worked in Christ in a much more significant way on that historical level, which allows him to call us to faith changing our whole life story. If we are followers of Christ, then God has already healed us, restored us to life, given us favor for a lifetime, and turned our mourning into dancing.
  - i. Maybe this doesn't sound like your life story. If you don't think you've experience the joy of salvation, of putting faith in Christ and rebelling against your sin, come talk to me, the elders, or prayer team after the service.
  - ii. For those who have faith in Christ, the joy of salvation has already come. This joy that comes in the morning is not exclusive, it is open to

- anyone who has faith in Jesus Christ. You all are invited to that this morning.
- d. Now, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, David knew about the highest level of God's redemption. Throughout the Psalms we see that David anticipated God's sending of an everlasting King to rule.
  - e. In the immediate context of Psalm 30, David was anticipating the Dedication of the Temple. You see that at the beginning of the chapter. This Psalm of thanksgiving was to be sung at the celebration of the Temple Solomon built.
    - i. This would be the first permanent place of worship for the people of God. It symbolized the very presence of God in the middle of his people. This is where they would meet the Lord.
    - ii. As Christopher Wright puts it, "This building would generate a theology and an outpouring of the worshiping poetry of affection and hope in the following centuries. It [the Temple] would be the heartbeat of Israel's unique faith in YHWH their God."<sup>4</sup>
  - f. Now, David never saw that come to pass, but he wrote this Psalm for the celebration that would occur when his son was King.
    - i. We live thousands of years after that Temple, but we share with David an anticipation for the eschatological or the ultimate temple. That physical building in Jerusalem was destroyed, another was build, then destroyed again, but at the end of this chapter, David writes a hint we see in his Psalms all the time that he anticipates a Temple that cannot be destroyed.
    - ii. Look at verse 11 & 12, "You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; you have loosed my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness, that my glory may sing your praise and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks to you forever!"
    - iii. David writes about being able to give God endless praise. He knew that was not humanly possible on earth, not in Solomon's temple, in the second Temple or even in the New Testament church. But, that is the type of worship we see in Revelation, in the New Jerusalem once the Kingdom of God is consummated at the end of history. That's the event we also look towards.
    - iv. SO do that today or when resting. Reflect on, or even write out all the times God has brought redemption in your life. Specific episodes in your life. The things you were stressed out about last year, reflect on how God provided or how he drew you to himself. Then look at your life story, where has the Lord brought you? His work in your life story

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<sup>4</sup> Christopher Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 132.

is worth rejoicing over. Then in times of rest and play, reflect on that highest level of redemptive history. Write out the gospel, how it applies to you, in your words.

- v. So, this vision is what changes everything.
- vi. The joy has come in Christ and now we live in a day of rejoicing that will transition into an endless celebration of what God has done.
- vii. We can now worship our way through dismay, sorrow, and brokenness, we are able to sing out of adversity, to thank God in all circumstances. This is how God's people endure; with their eyes set on a greater King and a greater kingdom than anything our country, our relationships, our jobs have to offer. That King has already come and is still working to bring his kingdom into full view.

IV. **Dancing:** So we have a great reason for joy, but what does this look like? How are we supposed to respond to that?

a. Let's look at David's response to the Lord's rescue:

- i. worshiping the Lord (v1),
- ii. encouraging others to praise the Lord (v4),
- iii. promising to glorify the Lord with all his being (v8-10, v12),
- iv. dancing (v11),
- v. singing (v12),
- vi. and dedicating to praise the Lord forever (v12).

b. These are all different angles and various reiterations of WORSHIP, of rejoicing!

- i. We should worship individually, worship together
- ii. Worship through singing and even worship through dancing.

c. Wait what? Whoa, whoa. Dancing? That may be the one on the list you skimmed over.

- i. But, yes, dancing. David was a dancer. One of the highlights of David's Kingship was to return the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem after it had been captured. The Ark was a holy gold-covered chest that contained important items from Israel's history to remind them of God's faithfulness. And on top was the mercy seat, which was considered God's throne from where God spoke to Moses. So this is a big deal for David to return the Ark back to the political and spiritual capital of Israel, where it belongs. During this event of restoring true worship in Israel, David danced in front of the ark.
- ii. The history of all this is recorded in 2 Samuel 6:14-15, "And David danced before the LORD with all his might. And David was wearing a linen ephod. So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting and with the sound of the horn."

- iii. So you've got this precession bringing the ark into the city and David is going before the ark dancing "with all his might." He was getting down. Just imagine one of our political leaders doing that. Whew.
  - 1. While dancing is talked about a lot in the Old Testament, this is a unique Hebrew word used in this story, its means a whirling type dance.<sup>5</sup> Spinning in circles.
- iv. He had the joy of the Lord and was unashamed to whirl with happiness.
- v. 2 Samuel 6:16 tells us, "As the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal the daughter of Saul looked out of the window and saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD, and she despised him in her heart."
  - 1. First of all, now we learn David was not just whirling, but leaping. Dang, that's not very manly David.
  - 2. Ok, but second, some looked at David and despised him for acting so foolishly.
- vi. I admit, I'm not a dancer. Surprising right? I think it's a waste of energy, its not sophisticated, its foolish even. (to be clear, Pokemon Go, not a waste of energy, very sophisticated, not foolish at all).
- d. Back in our Psalm 30, verse 11-12, David says, "You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; you have loosed my sackcloth and clothe me with gladness, that my glory may sing your praise and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks to you forever!"
  - i. This points us to something central about how we should respond to God's faithfulness to bring joy in the morning after nights of weeping.
  - ii. See, dancing is the epitome of "play" that we've been talking about.
  - iii. Dancing is, from one perspective, just a waste of energy, its exhausting (or so I've heard, from other people who dance). My brilliant wife uses house dance parties as a babysitting trick when she's watching a big group of kids. And it works. It wears the kids out.
  - iv. Dancing and other play is physically exhausting but its still leisure.
  - v. Josef Pieper says, "Leisure is the condition of considering things in a celebrating spirit. The inner joyfulness of the person who is celebrating belongs to the very core of what we mean by leisure." –Josef Pieper, *Leisure: The Basis of Culture*, 33.
    - 1. Josef Pieper, not John Piper. Josef's a German philosopher, different guy, and he's like 100% more catholic than John.

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<sup>5</sup> כָּרָר, karar

- vi. But Josef is saying the most important thing about leisure is the joyful celebration that affirms something, leisure is not just non-work.<sup>6</sup>
- vii. For David and for us, our leisure, our play, and dancing is an affirmation, a celebration, of the gospel. We find joy in reflecting upon and celebrating the freedom we have to enjoy creation, culture, and each other because of God's grace.
- e. Looking back he says in 11-12, the Lord changed David's mourning into dancing, so that, verse 12, "my glory may sing your praise and not be silent."
  - i. This phrase "my glory" is sometimes translated, "my whole being." Its the entirety of your life.<sup>7</sup>
  - ii. These are connected, see David is responding by worshiping with his "whole being."
  - iii. We need to learn this from children and from David. Learn to lose our dignity, not take ourselves so seriously and rejoice as we take God's greatness and grace more seriously.
- f. We too can respond to God's redemptive work in all of history, what he's done in our lives, and what he is doing in the specific episode were in right now. We can respond with a type of worship that transcends the songs we'll sing this morning, that's bigger than anything we do on Sunday or in City Group or Fight Club. We can worship with all our whole lives, even in our leisure.
  - i. Earlier in the Psalm, in verses 8-10, David was recalling when in a time of darkness and suffering, he pleaded with the LORD to spare his life.
  - ii. David's argument was not because he earned it or he was a really good guy, but he asks the Lord not to take his life because the dust won't praise God, but he will with his life?
    - 1. "To you, O LORD, I cry, and to the LORD I plead for mercy. 'What profit is there in my death, if I go down to the pit? Will the dust praise you? Will it tell of your faithfulness? Hear, O LORD, and be merciful to me! O LORD, be my helper!'"
- g. This morning let us pray with this attitude. The biggest accomplishment of our lives is to rejoice in the Lord and worship him.
- h. In Christ we've experienced the joy in the morning. Through the Gospel, the death, resurrection and reign of Christ, we have been rescued from our sin

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<sup>6</sup> In dancing, we see this, those kids were not just burn up energy they were having a blast. They were celebrating being together, laughing at each others dance moves and performances. Even my daughter who was a little grumpy that day had her attitude changed by dancing to Pharrell William's song *Happy*.

<sup>7</sup> Like in Psalm 16:9 David writes, "Therefore my heart is glad, and my "whole being" rejoices;"

and restored to true humanity. Let us worship with our whole lives, even if that means dancing under the morning star.

Extras:

Revelation 21:1-2, 22, tells us “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband...And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb.”

“Indeed, if we consider the unblushing promises of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that Our Lord finds our desires, not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.” –CS Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*

“The intermediate state is a state of rest and happiness. That, however, does not mean that life there, or life in heaven, will be characterized by idleness and inactivity. Far from it. In the first place, “rest,” in Scriptural language, carries with it the idea of *satisfaction in labor*, or *joy in accomplishment*. Even in this world we often find rest in a change in the kind of work we are doing. The activity of the saints is no longer “toil” or “labor,” in the sense that it is irksome or tiresome. In this world man in his fallen condition is under sentence to earn his bread by the sweat of his face (Gen. 3:19). Much of his work is misdirected, monotonous, repetitious, and vain. But there all of the unpleasant features are removed and it is given a new direction, with new motives, and is a joy to perform. It is no longer directed primarily towards ourselves, nor toward any creature, but toward God. The heavenly life is one of uninterrupted progress, always upward and onward. The saints are “before the throne of God; and they serve Him in work as well as in worship, His temple perhaps including the entire created universe.”

-Lorraine Boettner, *Immortality*

“But then David more clearly discloses the mystery of the resurrection when he raises up the Kingdom of the godly after the wicked have been lost and destroyed. What, I ask you, shall we call that “coming of the morning” [Ps. 30:4] but the revelation of the new life that follows the end of the present age?” –John Calvin, *Institutes*, II.X.17