

Life Group Topic #18

REST

(With Witness Focus on LOVE ABBOTSFORD)

WELCOME: (15 minutes)

After a long exhausting day which of the following options appeals most to you:

1. Collapse in an easy chair and watch TV.
2. Get together and talk with friends who accept me the way I am.
3. Putter around in the backyard or on some work project all by myself.
4. Have a good meal and go to bed early.

WORSHIP: (15 minutes)

Use whatever means possible to turn the group's attention to the wonder and majesty of our God- including music, prayer, meditation on the Psalms, and other art forms.

WORD APPLICATION: (45 minutes)

Briefly read or paraphrase the following sermon summary before moving to the heart of this section: the discussion around the application questions.

GOD'S REST...Hebrews 4:1-5

The writer speaks with a deep knowledge of the OT and sometimes that requires a decoding for the modern reader...*now we who have believed enter that rest, just as God has said, "So I declared on oath in my anger, 'They shall never enter my rest.'" And yet his work has been finished since the creation of the world. For somewhere he has spoken about the seventh day in these words, "And on the seventh day God rested from all his work." And again in the passage above he says, "They shall never enter my rest."*

He twice quotes Psalm 95:11 when he says...*they shall never enter my rest.* The emphasis is not on never entering but on the fact that this is God's rest...the rest He enjoys. So when we are given rest by Him, it is not simply a relaxation of our tensions, but the rest that He actually experiences. It is connected with the rest God enjoyed at creation, when He finished creating on the 7th day. It is noteworthy that on every other day of creating, it is mentioned that the day had morning and evening but Genesis 2:2 does not say that...the seventh day...the rest day is ongoing...it still continues.

But what is it like...

- It must contain deep joy...Job 38:4-7 says...*Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?...Who determined its dimensions and stretched out the surveying line? What supports its foundations, and who laid its cornerstone as the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy.*
- It must contain deep satisfaction...over and over again in the creation story, God saw that what He had created was good.
- It is a working rest...God finished His great work of creation and rested but it was not a cessation of work. In John 5:17 Jesus says...*My Father is always at his work to this very day and I too am working.* God is able to experience a deep, joyous, satisfying rest while yet working.

Verse 3 said...*now we who have believed enter that rest...* the verb “enter” is present tense meaning that we are constantly entering that rest...it is always available. Our experience of rest is in proportion to our trusting Him. The promise is that we can have rest now, regardless of what swirls around our lives.

Word Application Questions:

Please keep in mind that these questions are meant as catalysts designed to get the group talking about life application.

Take a close look at Matthew 11:28-30

- Who is the invitation to?
- What would rest look like for you?
- Whose yoke do you wear? Why?
- Describe the yoke the Jesus offers to you?
- How will the load become light?
- Of the people you know, what area of their souls most needs rest?

OPTIONAL: Look at the following Scriptures and note what the writer focuses on as he thinks of rest...Psalm 62:1-7 Psalm 91 I John 3:18-20

WITNESS: (15 minutes)

June Outreach: A Life Group Paradigm for “Love Abbotsford.”

- Love Abbotsford began as a one day blitz to show random acts of kindness in Abby.
- Last year we brought Love Abbotsford ‘in-house’ by helping people who someone in SAC already had established relationship. We ended up with about 10 projects- mostly among not-yet-believers, and mostly yard work, painting or minor renovations. We ended up with over 80 volunteers.
- **This year we want to build and expand on this momentum- but de-centralize our efforts by mobilizing our Life Groups.**
- The Challenge: **Does someone in your LG have connection with someone outside of the faith community with a tangible need that your group could meet?**
- Target dates: anytime between Saturday, June 13- Saturday June 20th.
- Seed money of \$100.00 for each Life Group
- Two guidelines on who to choose: Someone outside of the faith community, and (ideally) someone/family with whom you could continue to foster the relationship and integrate into your Life Group.
- IDEAS:
 - Outdoor yardwork, minor renovations, painting
 - Consider the unique skill set of your Life Group
 - BBQ: target one neighbourhood or numerous friends from workplace
 - Outing to a park/lake with shut-ins, or single parents with kids who don’t get that opportunity.