

Sermon Title: **“Rest and Healing”**

Bible: **Mark 6:30-34, 53-56**

When: on the 9th Sunday after Pentecost, July 21, 2024

Where: about 25 people (plus YouTube Live Streaming viewers) at Gilroy UMC

Opening Prayer

O Lord, let the words of our mouths, and the meditations of our hearts, be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our Rock, and our Redeemer. Amen.

1. Are You Workaholic?

Are you a workaholic? I know that many of you enjoy your retirement. But were you a workaholic? Do you like to work 24/7? If you own your business, do you want to work 24/7 and make money? Do you like to have time for fun, for yourself and your family? We want to do our best for our jobs, but we are human beings. We need breaks and vacations, and we need time for fun, for ourselves, and our families and friends. Especially during COVID-19, and even during this Post-Covid time, self care is most important. The balance of work and leisure is important. In other words, the harmony of work and leisure is important.

As you might notice, I am kind of a workaholic. The advice that I keep in my mind from my mentors is, “Work Smarter, Not Harder.” The Paris 2024 Olympics will start this week, and all the athletes work really hard for the Olympics. Because the Olympics don’t happen every year, but every four years, they really put everything into it. Does this mean that they practice 24/7? No. The rest, the sleep, and time to recover and recharge is the key to be top players. One of my favorite soccer players, Heungmin Son, is known to go to sleep at 9pm or 10pm and to get up at 8am, after more than 10 hours of sleep. The significance of rest is not only

for sports players, but also for musicians, nurses and doctors, police officers and firefighters, and many other people.

How about us, the church? As we read today's scripture reading from the Gospel of Mark, we see that the ministry of Jesus was very demanding. When Jesus saw a great crowd of people, they were described like sheep without a shepherd. And many sick people came to Jesus. According to the Bible, they rushed to Jesus! They were desperate and Jesus was compassionate. But what Jesus said to his disciples was to come away and take a rest for a while. Can we understand and accept what Jesus said? Have you heard of part-time pastors? How about part-time churches? There are many part-time pastors. But there is no part-time church. Which churches have more things to do, small churches or big churches? Even though we are a small church, we have many to-do lists. Perhaps, since we are a small church, we have more to-do lists, and many leaders have more hats and more responsibilities. And what Jesus said was to take a rest.

2. Rest

Since I am a workaholic, even though I serve two churches, the first advice that I keep in my mind is to work smarter, not harder. Another advice is to take a rest. So, I try to have a Sabbath every Monday, and I try to have a regular vacation, which is four weeks a year. Of course, this pastor is a human being, and I need time to rest, right? One of the reasons why I keep practicing Sabbath and vacation is very spiritual, which is to break down my idol. The idol that I have is the Savior Complex. I can feel like I need to be a savior or hero in a

situation. Because of the Savior Complex, I used to be unable to say no to others. To meet others' needs, I used to ignore my own need for self-care. So, I could not tell between good fatigue and total exhaustion. More importantly, I put myself in place of God. I thought that I was indispensable. I used to think that I was so important that everything depended on me. Is this healthy? When the pastor or some leaders have a vacation or take days off, if the church is not working well, is that church healthy? What does the healthy church look like? When we do our ministries of the church, do we rely on people or do we rely on God? Isn't it a temptation to put ourselves in the place of God? Can we rely on God? When we rest, when we have time to be, we can realize who we are. We are God's beloved ones, as who we are, not as what we do.

3. Healing

Please do not misunderstand my message. Does my message mean that our church does not need a pastor, and our church does not need any church leaders, members, and volunteers? Is that my message? No. We need you and each other. We need a pastor, church leaders, members, volunteers, and visitors. My main message is to work with our Lord, not without our Lord.

The healing in today's passage means physical healing to be sure. But the healing in the New Testament is more than this. The healing means salvation and wholeness, too. We pray not only for the healing of the body, but also the healing of the mind and the spirit. We also pray for the healing of our community and our country. All healing is of God. We are just

channels of God's healing, love, and grace.

In today's passage, people brought the sick to Jesus, and they even tried to touch Jesus, because all who touched Jesus' clothes were healed. I believe that Jesus was able to heal more people, but here the healing happened to those who came to Jesus within a distance that could be touched. I believe that there is a calling for us as a local church. Who knows our Gilroy community? Who can touch our local community for God's healing, salvation, and wholeness?

As many of you know, our church gave out Elvira Burnson Hispanic Scholarships to our local highschool seniors. Four seniors received a \$1,000 scholarship each. As you see, we are working on filling 51 backpacks with school supplies for our Gilroy children. We might want to do more. Because we are a small church, we cannot give scholarships to all high school seniors. We cannot give backpacks and school supplies to all students. I am just humble and thankful for what we can do. As Jesus healed not everyone, but those who came, as a local and small church, we cannot do everything, but we can do something. I pray that we do not miss the opportunity to touch others' lives with our own hands. I also pray that when and where we touch, there will be God's healing, God's salvation, and God's wholeness.

Closing Prayer

Loving and living God, all healing is of God. When we take a rest, please be with us. We are your children. When we work to heal our local community, please be with us. We are your servants and channels of God's healing. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.