

Devotion April 21, 2020

Scripture for today is Deuteronomy 4:9

Let us pray: God of the ages, You have always been faithful to Your people. Come to us now, we pray! Give comfort and courage to those who are suffering. Give strength and skill to those who are working to save and to heal. Give us Your peace that passes all understanding in these moments of shock and sorrow. Open our eyes, hearts, and hands to the movements of Your Spirit, that we might be comforted and comfort others in the name of Christ, our healer and our light. Amen

Good afternoon! Today I would like to look at the second element of a Rule of Life, Personal Life/Health. Our lives sometimes seem to be scattered, hurried, reactive and we are exhausted from these intrusions into our lives. Therefore, having a rule of life is helpful; it provides a rhythm to our life, a rhythm of being present with God through our thoughts, our study of God's Word, and our actions.

We have frantic schedules and we don't know what to change to become less frantic. This business of our lives doesn't reflect our purposes and priorities as one of God's children. We think we only react or respond to demands; we are exhausted each day. Let's listen to Deuteronomy 4:9:

**Only be careful and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them.**

In Deuteronomy, the Israelites are about to enter the Promised Land. The 4<sup>th</sup> chapter reveals Moses commanding the Israelites to be obedient to what God has commanded; not to forget what they have seen and heard, and to teach these things to their children. We are role models for our children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews, all children. Therefore, it is so important for us to have a lifestyle that keeps us from getting burned out. We need to lead by example.

Here are some things that we might look at for our second element in our Rule of Life.

Sleep

Rest and Sabbath

Physical health and fitness

Recreation and hobbies

Money and possessions

Sleep may be one of the most difficult things for many of us. It sometimes seems that we just can't turn our brain off and fall asleep no matter how exhausted we are. Establishing a rhythm or pattern to our life can help us remember what we have learned from the Bible, and what we have learned from our families and others in our lives so we can become less scattered, hurried and reactive.

In my adult life I have never been very good at sleeping. Both of our sons believe in taking power naps. My question is why they resisted taking naps when they were little? Goodness, I don't think either one of them slept much between the ages of birth to 25! So, I decided I would try taking a nap, on Sunday afternoons. Sunday is a busy day for pastors. It is physically and spiritually tiring and for that reason many pastors take naps on Sunday afternoons. Taking a nap worked! I slept about 40 minutes and woke up refreshed!

Recreation and hobbies - these might be things that we are currently finding critical for maintaining our sanity during the "stay at home" orders. A year and a half ago I started crocheting. I have had more fun relearning something my grandmother taught me! Among the benefits of this hobby are the help it offers for the arthritis in my hands, and the relaxation it provides to help me fall asleep after an hour of working on a project just before bed.

Perhaps you might spend some time tonight thinking about your own patterns in relation to the second element of a Rule of Life. Do you have trouble sleeping? Do you have time set aside for hobbies? Do you take care of your own physical health and fitness? What about your financial situation? These suggestions are not to create concern and worry in your life, these are ideas that you may need to look at and make some adjustments so that your life is less frantic. We all want our lives to reflect our purpose and priority as God's children.

My mom used to say she put all her worries on the bedside table at night and gave them to God. Mom had every reason to be scattered and worried in life. However, Mom taught me that the things that she couldn't control would be handled by God, and the things she could work through, God gave her the wisdom and strength to accomplish. Each of us has concerns. My prayer for you is that developing a Rule of Life may help you deal with these concerns and establish patterns that will help you be the person God created you to be!

Let us pray: Dear Lord, may we look to You in all that we do. May we remember Your commandments and live our lives according to them and teach the children we know to live by them also. May our lives reflect your love and grace. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

Blessings

*Pastor Linda*