Welcome to “Learning and Living the God-centered life”

Carmel Baptist Church

www.learningandlivingtheword.com

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Retreat Encouragement

Mark 6:31 - And He *said to them, “Come away by yourselves to a secluded place and rest a while.” (For there were many people coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.)

- What is the context here?

Jesus teaches the following:

- What to do
- How to do it
- Where to do it

Two verbs written in the imperative mood, means the mood of command

Remember NOT duty but delight
Mark 6:31

- **Come away** is an invitation from the Lord Jesus
- **By yourselves** is written in the plural not singular
- To a **secluded place**
- **Rest** for awhile

The word for rest in the Greek is anapauo, it means “*to cease from labor in order to collect one’s strength*”

- **physically**
- **emotionally**
- **spiritually**
Jesus teaches;

- **What to do** - come away and rest (verbs in the imperative)
- **How to do it** - By yourselves (the one another’s of Scripture)
- **Where to do it** - a secluded place
The Bible is NOT boring
Self-Sufficiency of God

We are studying this doctrine from a three-fold perspective

- Definition
- Scriptural Support
- Illustration

Definition - God possesses within Himself, *intrinsically* and *eternally*, every quality in *infinite* measure.

- This gives us a great picture of the God of the Bible
- Helps us better understand the God revealed in Scripture but also what our relationship to Him should look like
Review from last Sunday

Isaiah 40:12-17

- God’s power and immensity (verse 12)
- God’s knowledge and wisdom (verse 13)
- The implication for the nations (verse 14-17)

Concluded in Isaiah 40:17 - asking what does this mean?

Context reads that the nations are like:

- Drop in a bucket
- Speck of dust on a scale
- Nothing
- Less than nothing
Review from last Sunday

This is what is DOES NOT mean;

It doesn’t mean that God doesn’t care about the nations or the individuals in those nations and we know that because:

**John 3:16** “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

**Rev. 5:9** And they *sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.”
Review from last Sunday

Isaiah 40:17 - What does it mean?

- It means that if you take all of our human accomplishments, for example, all our military prowess worldwide, all our medical advancements worldwide and all of our technology, along with everything else, add it up and put in on a spreadsheet.

- The calculation when compared to God from the perspective of His power and knowledge would come to a drop, speck, nothing and finally as less than nothing.

- The bottom line is God is self-sufficient and we can't add anything to Him because there is nothing He doesn't have eternally, intrinsically and in infinite measure.
Turn to Psalm 50

Background – Israel is on trial and God is acting in the role of both judge and prosecuting attorney who is charging them. God is holding Israel accountable before His bar of justice.

God is talking about the people of Israel and those who have practiced the sacrificial system that God has put in place.

These are what I am calling the set up verses:
God is calling heaven and earth to bear witness
His people are on trial and God is judging them
So we need to know – “What is the charge that God is bringing against His people?”

READ Psalm 50:4-6
Read Psalm 50:7-12

Ask the question – “What in the world is going on here?”

God first tells the people of what they are NOT guilty of. They are not guilty of failing to bring sacrifices before Him because He says that they are doing that. God says – you are bringing your bulls and male goats from your field

So Israel might ask – “So what are we doing wrong?” You told us to bring sacrifices and that is exactly what we are doing, we are bringing our sacrifices.

However, Israel is evidently doing this with the same mindset toward sacrificing that we common to those pagan nations that were surrounding them.
The pagan nations around Israel believed that their gods were needy. They thought that the gods got hungry literally and therefore they would bring a sacrifice to their particular god to eat and then be satisfied. When the tummy of this god was full then he would bless those who fed him. This is probably the religion that occupies almost 2/3s of our current world.

Illustration – a person I know went on a missions trip to Madagascar and discovered that those there are big on ancestor worship. People spend time doing whatever the deceased grand father liked to do.

So what picture does this paint for us about God? As we sacrifice these things to Him we are helping Him out and contributing to His needs. It’s a good thing that we are here because if we weren’t He would lack.
Go back to verse 8 – The problem isn’t their sacrificing but their theology about sacrificing
Do you see the problem?

These Israelites are worshipping God as if He were needy, and they are going to give in order to help Him out.

Application for consideration:
How many people in the evangelical church think this exact same way?

In the giving of their tithes and offerings
Going to the mission field
Serving in a particular ministry

There is an underlining thinking that to this degree – poor desperate, poor hungry, poor helpless God and I am going to save the day with my gift, sacrifice, service and life.
And God says to that type of mindset – Don’t give it!

Read Psalm 50 verse 13 – Question – Is that what you think I am doing, eating flesh and drinking blood in order to satisfy My hunger?

Did you not understand what I said in verses 10-12?

Verse 14 – What does thanksgiving imply, in terms of relationship to God?

We are the receivers and He is the Giver!

God says you think you are offering in order to help me out? No, instead offer me a thanksgiving.
God is communicating to us in His word
I am the Giver
You are the receiver

I am the full One
You are the empty one

I am the wise One
You are the foolish one

I am powerful
You are weak

Read Psalm 50:14-15 and get the order right
1. You are to call upon me – God is the rescuer, helper, strong hold, rock, refuge, provider, protector, shield,
2. And then it says – He will rescue you because we are weak, needy and helpless
Acts 17:24-25

Acts 17:24 “The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands;
Acts 17:25 nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things;

➤ This is very explicit and jumps right off the page to tell us and teach us that God is self-sufficient

➤ There is no figurative language here just straightforward propositional truth
Check out the background and context for this passage.

Paul is in Athens which is the center of the religious world at that time. They prided themselves in having all the gods in their city.

They were as polytheistic as you can imagine. Here is the irony, in a city that had all these gods and even one that was to the unknown god and the very God they did not know was the true and living God.

**Go back to Acts 17:22-25**
Read carefully Acts 17:24-25 stop and think, this is theology 101
- The main point that the apostle Paul is making in these two verses stems from the fact that God is self-sufficient
- God is self-sufficient and everything is in Him, so how does Paul establish this point?
First of all Paul says that this is the God who made the world and all things in it

- Question - How does the statement that God made the world support the statement of His self-sufficiency?

How could we say that God needs anything in the creation when He in fact brings everything into creation?

Everything is from God, the doctrine of creation or ex nihilo is a critical doctrine

Because there is no pre-existing eternally other, God alone exists eternally
God creates the world out of the manifestation of His power, beauty, wisdom, knowledge, and creativity

The fingerprints of God are everywhere - Illustration coming…
In the second statement we need to ask "how does Lordship relate to self-sufficiency?"

Think about Lordship, He rules, reigns and governs over all that He owns

Remember Psalm 50 - I own the cattle on a thousand hills

We grow up with the notion in the church that the tithe is God's and everything else then is mine.

However what we need to understand is that it is all God's. So we pay God off with the 10% and then we live the way we want to with the 90%.

If you have not settled this issue then settle it today, we hold nothing tightly clenched in our fist because God owns it all.
Since He is Lord over it all then we can't give back to Him anything that He doesn't already have

Last statement in verse 25 that He gives to all life and breath to all people

We depend upon God for everything and God depends upon us for what? Absolutely nothing

First denial of God's self sufficiency - Illustration of the SS Bible teacher who mentioned that God was lonely as to why he created people - 5th grade boys SS class

This rolls over into every area of Christian service in which we are helping God out and it makes God feel good when we get involved.
The call in missions that God wants these people to hear the good news and if someone doesn't go then God will not be able to save them

The picture that we have is God in heaven in essence wringing His hands

May we never in our theology invert the God-Giver and us-receiver categories