

TIRED, WEARY, & WORN

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Cecil Clements

Date: 5th July, 2020

Scripture: John 4:1-6, Matthew 11:28-30, Isaiah 40:30-31, 1 Kings 19:7-9, Galatians 6:9

John 4:1-6

Therefore when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John (although Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples were), He left Judea and went away again into Galilee. And He had to pass through Samaria. So He came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph; and Jacob's well was there. So Jesus, being wearied from His journey, was sitting thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

Jesus is on His way to Galilee, and to reach there, He has to go through Samaria. This was a short cut that they were taking. Having travelled for about six hours (and travel at that time meant walking), and so having walked for about six hours, the bible says that Jesus was weary from His journey and was sitting there by the well.

I've read this passage many times, and I don't know whether it has to do with the times that we are in, but when I came to this line 'Jesus was weary' I paused a minute. We don't normally associate Jesus with being weary, and yet that's what the bible says: Jesus being weary, sat down by the well that Jacob gave Joseph. When I think of Jesus, I think of loving; I think kind; I think compassionate; I think King of kings, and Lord of lords, the supreme Judge, the Savior of the world – all those things is what I think about Jesus except, Jesus the weary one. I wondered whether it was possible that Jesus also could have been weary. And the answer of course is 'Yes', because Jesus is fully divine but also fully human. Therefore, He was able while He walked on this world, to feel everything that we too are going through. After a long journey, the bible says that Jesus was weary and He sat down by the side of the well to rest.

I had to pause there, because suddenly a light bulb began to flicker in my mind. If Jesus was weary, then He understands my weariness. He must, because He Himself was weary at some point. He knows exactly what it is to be tired; He knows what it is to be fatigued. He knows what it is to run out of breath and have to just sit down and take a few deep breaths and catch up. He knows what it means to be tired and worn and weak.

Is that possible? Of course, it is! The writer of Hebrews says this in Hebrews 4:15 – *We have a high priest (meaning Jesus) who is able to sympathize with our weaknesses.*

You and I have a high priest who is able to sympathize with our weaknesses, sympathize with us where we are in this whole arena of being tired and weary and fatigued. That was really good news for me, that Jesus understands. If He sympathizes, then He understands where I am. As you watch this service, if that's where you are, this message is for you. Maybe you've dragged yourself out to the living room, slumped down on the couch or a chair, or a recliner, and just watching the service saying, "I'm here, but I have no energy. I'm just going to sit." Or maybe you're still in bed. You've got your phone out, you probably have a mug of coffee that you're nursing, and saying, "I'm just too tired to get out of bed and go to my living room, switch on my computer, or the TV, and watch the service. I'm just too tired." I want to say to you, wherever you are, and whatever you are doing, and however you are watching – if you are tired and weary this morning, Jesus sympathizes with you. This morning I truly believe that He has a word for you and for me that is going to lift our spirits and be an encouragement.

Let's then delve into our message today. We are weak, we are weary, maybe frail. Then we are going to ask the question: What can Jesus do for me today? If He can sympathize with me, or if He sympathizes with me, as the bible says, then what is Jesus going to do? Well, I'll tell you. Jesus specializes in taking us from where we are to where we ought to be or where we can be. Let me give you an example of this.

Peter, after the resurrection, decided one day to go fishing. The other disciples joined him. Then Jesus meets them on the shores of Galilee, He fixes breakfast for them. Then He quizzes Peter. Three times He asked Peter this question, "Do you love Me?" and each time Peter responds, and this goes back and forth. But the Greek has an interesting nuance. In the Greek, the first time that Jesus asks Peter, He uses the word 'agape' which is the non-causal word. It's a word that says 'I just love. I don't need a reason to love.' "Do you agape me or agapau me, Peter?" is what He says to Peter. Peter responds and says, not using the word 'agape', but using the word 'phileo' which is a brotherly-sisterly kind of love.

Gone, it seems, is Peter's bravado in saying, "Wherever You go, I'll come. I'll give my life to You. I'll do this, I'll do that." Now there's a certain caution. When Jesus says, "Do you love Me with this kind of non-causal love?" Peter says, "I love You in the way that I can understand love, in the way a brother or a sister loves. I love You like that." Jesus repeats, again using the word *agape*. Again Peter responds using the word *phileo*. Listen to this! The third time Jesus comes to where Peter is and says, "Peter, do you *phileo* Me?" the same word that Peter was using, Jesus says to him, "Do you love me like that?" And Peter replies, "Lord, You know all things. You know that I love You."

And I've always been struck by that. When we just can't muster up within us to be where God wants us to be, when we are just there in that place, and all we are saying is, "Lord, You know my heart. I have nothing left." God reaches down to where we are, and He picks us up and then He takes us to the place where He wants us to be. Yes, He can do that for you and for me, even today. Wherever you are – weary, worn, sad, despondent, dejected, in despair, saying, "Lord, here I am. Just as I am, I have come." That's no problem for God – to come to where you are and say, "That's okay. I'll take you. Here's My hand, hold it and I'll take you to that secure place." Just as Jesus took Peter by the hand, lifted him out of the waters and brought him safely back into the boat, so God can today, reach down to where you are, however you are, whatever attitude, situation, circumstance that is surrounding you, He can draw you to a secure, safe place.

Are you with me so far? I'm going to look at four verses that I believe that we can use to get some idea of how we can get to a place of relinquishment so that God can then take us to the place that He wants us to be.

1. Matthew 11:28-30

Jesus says, "Come to Me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in spirit, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

So come to Him and find rest. What does that mean? It means immediately replacing the yoke that is on your shoulders which must be an extremely heavy yoke for you to be in the state of mind that you're in and accept the one that He offers, which He says is easy and light. Beloved, what yoke is on your shoulders right now? There can be a myriad yokes from all situations and circumstances, and I'm not going to be able to even think about what could be upon your shoulders.

Let's take one example. Maybe it's office work – you just finished Friday and it was just video call after video call, zoom calls, trying to get resolutions done, decisions made. And by the end of Friday

or Saturday, whenever it was, you ended it but had a “to be continued” stuck on to that last call. You are sitting over the weekend thinking that was what was waiting for you on Monday. That yoke is heavy on you. Maybe Jesus is saying to you, “Would you shrug that yoke off? Would you just take it off your shoulders? Would you right now take on My yoke which is easy and light, and just enjoy the rest? Don’t think about Monday, don’t think about yesterday or what is waiting for you, or unfinished business. Just think that today, right now, I’m offering you My rest. Take My yoke upon you.” Maybe that is what Jesus is saying to you, beloved. Ease it off, take off that heavy load. Just enjoy the rest that God can give you with His yoke which is easy and light.

What could that mean for you? It could mean just not thinking about work, of course, and just taking a book that you always wanted to read and haven’t done till now; watching a comedy show; listening to some music; spending some time with God, reading His word – something that will allow you to rest in Him and allow His Spirit to recharge you. “Come unto Me,” He says, “and I will give you rest.” And I believe, in that place of rest, God will meet you and then take you to where you need to be – on a place of solid ground and stability, in a better mindset that you had till now. I believe that He will also take away tiredness, weariness from you in that place of rest.

2. Isaiah 40:30-31

*Even youths grow tired and weary,
And young men stumble and fall,
But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength;
They will soar on wings like eagles,
They will run and not grow weary,
They will walk and not be faint.*

How do you appropriate this verse into your life? The bible is very clear. It says, “Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.” Are you hoping in the Lord today, or are you at a place where you have lost hope? Are you at a place where you left God back a long time ago, thinking I’ve just got to do it all? Everything rests on me. I’ve got to man up or woman up to face this situation, this circumstance that is so demanding, and it’s just brought you down.

You are right there in the doldrums, but still not willing to hope in God. It’s been a long time since you asked Him for His strength, a long time since you prayed, long time since you got into the Word. Satan’s got you believing that God has even forgotten about you, and that it’s all up to you. And you’re tired, and worn, stumbling and falling. What does that look like? Again, I don’t know. There are hundreds of possibilities of why you could be in that place, but let me paint you one scenario.

Maybe you are taking care of the home – three meals are coming on to the table, and yet it’s not enough. Everybody in the house wants more; more to snack on, not because they are hungry, but because they are all at home. You’re tired with the housework and it seems like it never stops. There is no time for yourself, no time for God. You’re just churning out work, and work, and more work, and you’re tired. I want to ask you: How would you like to soar, to run, to walk and not be weary or faint, or do your work with new strength? That’s what the scripture says is offered to you – you, who is without strength today, to renew your hope in God, and God will allow you to soar, to run, to walk, to not faint, to not be tired.

Sounds attractive? The only thing that you and I need to do in this situation is to renew our hope in God. Take maybe a quiet half an hour today, tell everybody at home “Time out” and spend it with the Lord. say, “Lord, I need Your strength. Lord help me to find moments in every day to connect with You, for I can’t do this alone. I’m about at breaking point Lord. Would You renew my strength? Lord, my hope is in You again.”

3. 1 Kings 19: 7-9

The angel of the Lord came back a second time and touched him (i.e. Elijah) and said, "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you." So he arose and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he traveled forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God. There he went into a cave and spent the night.

This is Elijah! He had just had this incredible victory on Mount Carmel where he took on the priests of Baal. God answered, consumed that offering with fire. The children of Israel said, "The Lord God, He is God." Then strangely, Elijah runs from Jezebel because she threatens him. But the Lord didn't forsake Elijah. Maybe today, you're just tired. It's been an uphill task. You've been doing a lot of ministry for the Lord, and there's been one very spectacular one that you've had. It seems like after that mountaintop experience, it's down in the valley now, and you're running as well. Suddenly the faith that you exercised to take you to the mountain top has disappeared, and you are floundering under Satan's darts.

Beloved, the good news here is that God takes care of Elijah. He sends food to Elijah. He gives Elijah time to have a nap, to sleep, to be replenished. Maybe, that's exactly what you need today. You need to just sit and allow God's word to soak into you. Even if you don't know any verses, go on the internet and search for encouraging verses. You will find hundreds. Read them and let them minister to you. Then give yourself permission to take a nap. Maybe, it's a long time since you've put your head down and said, "For two hours, I'm not going to worry about anything." Maybe you work 14 to 16 hours. Maybe you have to get up in the night to work a couple of hours and then go back to sleep. You're just tired. You feel like closing your eyes. I wonder whether today, God is saying, "Why don't you do that. I'll feed you." Words of comfort, cheer. Close your eyes and take a nap. Maybe, you need to give yourself permission to do that because sometimes we can be our own harshest critics. Tell yourself that it's okay for you to take a nap, it's okay to take some rest. Give yourself permission.

4. Galatians 6:9

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time, we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

Last week, the choir sang a song about not giving up. It is so wonderful to watch the places it has gone to, the testimonies that we have received. It's been so good to hear of how it has encouraged people in their spirits, not to give up. Maybe today, you just need to listen to that song over again, "Never, never give up!" Even though you are weary, never give up. What you are doing is something that has eternal significance, and at the proper time there will be a harvest, if you don't give up. You've got to stay the course.

Maybe you're the kind of person who has prayed for people, reaching out to them, doing things. You are in ministry, calling on people, encouraging them. And all of a sudden, now you are just tired. You don't know whether it's doing any good. Sometimes, that's the one reason that we say, "I don't hear back from anyone. I don't hear anybody saying anything. I don't know if this is appreciated." The bible says there is coming a time of harvest, if we don't give up. What you are doing now is sowing into eternal significance. So don't get weary of doing something good. Continue to do that.

Well, it's all very good to hear, and encouraging. You may be saying, "Well, Pastor, at some point of time I've tried that." And maybe you have. But what I want to say to you today is that, along with all of those things that you want to do which I have submitted to you through these verses, you need to be able to add the power that Jesus brings. It is God who is able to do all of those things. It is God

who is able to take you from where you are to where you need to be, under the power of the Holy Spirit. We need the Lord's presence to do that.

Many years ago, Steve Green wrote a song that went like this:

Everyday they pass me by
I can see it in their eyes
Empty people filled with care
Headed who knows where.

On they go through private pain
Living fear to fear
Laughter hides their silent cries
Only Jesus hears.

People need the Lord, people need the Lord
At the end of broken dreams, He's the open door.
People need the Lord, people need the Lord.
When will we realize people need the Lord?

We need Him, beloved, to take us from the place that we are in – weary, worn, fatigued, at the end of the road, no strength left, and say to Him, "Lord, I need You, O how I need You."

So church, wherever you are, in whichever place you are listening, and whatever frame of mind you are in, would you just muster up the strength to sing our closing song with conviction and faith. A song that says: Lord, I need You. I need You to take me from being fatigued, to being focused. I need You to take me from being weak to being strengthened. I need You to take me from disillusioned to being purposed. I need You, You who can sympathize with me in the weakness that I am in. I need You.

Should we sing this song together?

Lord, I come, I confess
Bowing here I find my rest.
Without You I fall apart
You're the One that guides my heart.

Lord I need You, oh I need You
Ev'ry hour I need You.
My one defense, my righteousness
Oh God, how I need You.

Where sin runs deep Your grace is more
Where grace is found is where You are
Where You are, Lord I am free
Holiness is Christ in me.

Lord I need You, oh I need You
Ev'ry hour I need You.
My one defense, my righteousness
Oh God, how I need You.

So teach my song to rise to You
When temptation comes my way
When I cannot stand I'll fall on You
Jesus, You're my hope and stay.

Lord I need You, oh I need You
Ev'ry hour I need You.
My one defense, my righteousness
Oh God, how I need You.
