



Sermon Discussion Questions

September 3, 2023,

WHAT DOES GOD SAY ABOUT...SELF-CARE?

Matthew 11:28-30

1. Opening Discussion Questions

- a. Every few months it seems that a new diet surfaces that is reported to guarantee we shed those extra undesired pounds. Have you or someone in your family ever followed such a diet? What was the experience like? How long were you able to follow the diet? What is the most important factor influencing the success of a diet?
- b. Have you ever run in a race (maybe the *Race for the Cure*)? What did you do to prepare? Following the race did you feel that your preparations were sufficient, or should you have trained more? What would you do differently if you were going to run again?

2. Discussion Points:

a. *The Sermon's Key Points*

- i. We should be good stewards of our minds and bodies.
 1. God gives us everything we have to manage on His behalf, including our bodies.
 2. The Bible demonstrates some of the well-supported elements of self-care.
- ii. Because the Bible calls us to deny ourselves, we must be careful that self-care does not become self-indulgence.
- iii. Truly walking with Jesus is the best self-care we can practice.

b. *Monday – God gave us everything to manage.*

- i. Read Genesis 1:26- 30.
 1. What task does God give man while still in the Garden before the fall?
 2. Verse 26 may be surprising when read carefully for the first time. Why does God say He created man?
 3. We are created “in the image of God”. What do you think being in the image of God has to do with the responsibility God gave man?
- ii. Now read Genesis 9:1-2, Psalm 8:6-8, and Psalm 115:16.
 1. How does the Genesis passage show that the responsibility God gave man in the Garden continued after the fall?

2. To you which verse most clearly shows that man's responsibility is not just over living creatures?

c. **Tuesday** – *Should be good stewards of our bodies.*

- i. Read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.
 1. Based on these verses what would you say should be the overriding motivation for all self-care?
 2. Identify the two reasons Paul presents for why we should honor God with our bodies.
 - a. Why would having the Holy Spirit living in us be a reason for using our bodies to honor God? What does the use of the word “temple” suggest in this regard?
 - b. What was the price God paid for you (see Ephesians 1:7 and 1 Peter 18-19)? Does that price make you want to honor God with your body?
 3. It is fairly easy to list ways we can use our body to dishonor God. Other than just the opposites of that list, think of ways you can use your body to honor Him.
- ii. “You are not your own” is a powerful statement which if truly embraced will certainly change one's lifestyle. Think of the analogy of living in a rental property as opposed to a home you own. How must our lives be different when we are not our own?

d. **Wednesday** – *Rest: the Sabbath.*

- i. Read Genesis 2:2-3, Exodus 20:11, & 31:17, and Hebrews 4:4
 1. What was the basis and model for the Sabbath?
 2. Since God is all powerful and cannot get tired what explanation might we give for Him resting on the Seventh Day? How would Exodus 34:21 and Mark 2:27-28 influence your response?
- ii. Now read Exodus 20:8-11 noting for context verses 1-7 and 12-17.
 1. What significance is it to you that the Sabbath appears as one of the 10 Commandments?
 2. The Commandments are divided into two major groupings. 1-3 address our relationship to God; 5-10 our relationship to one another. How would you describe where the Commandment about the Sabbath (#4) should be placed?
 3. In view of the topic for this sermon, do you think a case could be made for a third category: our relationship to ourselves?

e. **Thursday** – *The Sabbath today.*

- i. In Romans 6:14 (and many other passages) Paul makes it clear that we are not “under the law” – our salvation is not dependent on obeying the law but is by God’s grace. Keeping this in mind, read Romans 6:15.
 1. What does Paul’s command not to sin suggest about how we should view the 10 Commandments after we are saved?
 2. It is frequently stated the Sabbath doesn’t apply because we are not under the law. Read the commandment again (Exodus 20:8-11).
 - a. According to the verse 11 when did God actually institute the Sabbath?
 - b. If the Sabbath existed before the law was given how should that influence our views even though we are not “under the law”?
- ii. Read Mark 2:27-28 again. How would you paraphrase what Jesus is saying? What rules regarding the Sabbath did Jesus seem to consider important?

f. **Friday** – *Called to self-denial.*

- i. Read Luke 9:23, 14:27 and 17:33.
 1. What three things does Jesus tell those who want to be His disciples that they must do?
 2. What does “deny themselves” mean to you?
 - a. How would you relate the self-denial Jesus commands with self-rejection or self-loathing?
 - b. What additional insight is provided by 1 Timothy 6:17?
 - c. How does 1 John 2:16 assist in understanding self-denial?
- ii. Read 1 Corinthians 9:27 & 15:10, 2 Corinthians 12:15, Philippians 2:17, 2 Timothy 4:6-7. Based on these verses how would you describe what you think Paul was most concerned about?
- iii. Many sermons have been preached on “take up your cross” and you have probably heard more than one. What does “taking up your cross” mean to you personally?

g. **Saturday** – *Walking with Jesus is the best self-care.*

- i. Read the focal passage, Matthew 11:28-30 aloud several times (use different translations if available). Thinking about verse 28:
 1. In our society where do people go to find rest? Where does Jesus say we must go?

2. Read Matthew 23:4 and Luke 11:46. Considering these verses, what do you think Jesus had in mind when He said, “all who labor and are heavy laden” (ESV)?
3. What insight does Hebrews 4:9-11 provide?
 - ii. Now think about verses 29-30.
 1. What kind of rest does Jesus promise? Does He imply that life will not be hard?
 2. A yoke was used to link two animals (ox) together to pull a load.
 - a. When yoked together which animal does the most work?
 - b. How is our being yoked to Christ analogous to an ox being yoked to a chihuahua?
 - iii. Given Jesus’ promise that His burden is light, why do so many people, including many Christians, view Christianity as a challenge?

3. Application:

- a. The essence of Christian self-denial is captured by these words of Jim Elliot: “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep, to gain what he cannot lose.” Penned shortly before he was murdered by South American natives in 1949, Jim’s self-denial included giving his life. Most of us will not be called to that extreme but spend time this week considering honestly where you would draw the line.
- b. Matthew 11:29 tells us that we are to “learn” from Jesus. The Grow Deeper course starting next Sunday (September 10th) after the morning worship is an excellent opportunity to see where you learn. If you haven’t signed up, do so.

4. Prayer Points:

- a. **A**doration – Psalm 105:1
- b. **C**onfession – 1 John 1:9
- c. **T**hanksgiving – 1 Thessalonians 5:18
- d. **S**upplications – John 14:14
 - i. That God will provide opportunities for each of us to share the Gospel with someone this week.
 - ii. The growing Spanish-language ministry at LRBC.
 - iii. For persecuted Christians in Pakistan.
 - iv. For the MDO program as it begins another year: for students, parents, teachers, and administrators.
 - v. The Awana program for children which started last Wednesday.
 - vi. The “Grow Deeper” Discipleship program kicking off next Sunday.