

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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SPEAKER

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SERIES

Hurry Up & Slow Down

PART

2

TITLE

First Things First

SCRIPTURE

Psalm 63



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Well, it is great to see all of you. It's always a joy to sing with you. If you're new here with us, welcome. We're thrilled that you've joined us as our guest and pray this time we'll be really encouraging to you. If this is your first time here, or perhaps it's like the 50th time that you're here and you look around and you wonder how will you engage, we want to be able to help with that. We have this mission at Providence that God has given us and it's to honor Him. That's why we're here.

We want to glorify Jesus Christ and how we do that is we seek to help other people to know Christ and then to grow them up to love and to worship him. To help people find that pathway of how you can plug in how anyone can, there's a simple pathway. It has four steps and the second step is grow. If you want to know how to grow in the Lord or with us, that time is for you. It'll be right after this service.

Anyway, I hope that that is really helpful to you. We're in a series, it's called Hurry Up and Slow Down. It's inspired actually from a very brief passage of the Bible, and these are the words it says to this, to aspire to live quietly, four words in English, but actually there's two main words that almost look like they're opposites. The word aspire, it means to strive after. It means to hurry up and do something. It means to work really hard to do something.

Then the second half of that passage says to live quietly, to be content, to slow down. That's where we get the idea, hurry up and slow down. We need this because we're busy people. We tend to live so fast and do the different things in our life as fast as we can so that we can be with as many people as possible and to do as many things as possible and to fill up the tank of our heart. But here's what we learned last week and this is so important, is that the faster that we tend to live our life, the less pleasure we find in our living. The less pleasure we find in our living, the more concerned we get over how much living we've already done and how much living we have left to do on this earth.

We looked last week at Psalm 90 where he says, "God, would you teach us to number our days so that we would have a heart of wisdom." What we want to do is build on that foundation. We're going to look in a moment in Psalm 63. But before we do that, I want to pray for us. Okay? Father, I pray for everybody who's here. You know that we want good in life. You know that we want our soul, and our heart, our mind to be satisfied for the things within us that make us thirsty and hungry for purpose or for satisfaction or for contentment that go unmet.

I pray, God, that you would begin to help us to see this morning, what is the process and what goes first? I ask that you would speak to us. We come before you because we believe that you're the one and only. You are God and there is no other. You created all things and you sustain all things by the power of your word, that you sent your son to rescue us after making a promise to do so and in one day that you will be our judge.

We confess you as Lord. We confess that you are the Good Shepherd. You are the way, the truth, and the life. You are the one that sticks closer than a brother and you are the one that we need more than any other. I pray for those who are here, every single one of us that you would help us to see that in you there is a kind of friendship that is sweeter than anything that this world has to offer.

I pray that you would use Psalm 63 and you would use my weak voice to communicate that truth to each one of us. So would you impress it deep within our heart? Would you help us to believe that this is real? It's true that you are there, that you are personal, that a relationship is available and a kind of relationship and a depth of relationship that is so satisfying.

For those of you, Lord, those who are here who are already doubting, already doubting if you're really close, if you're really there, I just ask that you would show them that you are consequential and real and you are not silent. We look to you in faith. We need your help and I pray this in Jesus name. Amen.

In your Bible, if you would look with me at Psalm 63, if you don't have one with you, there's lots of Bibles in the chairs near you. If you don't have one at home, then take that home with you. But what I want to do is look at this idea of first things first and that is, what is it that goes into our life first? Now, most of you have seen something like this, but it's going to end a little differently, which may be a little discouraging to you, but life is full of so many different things that you can put into your life and that's what this one represents, right?

There's lots of things in our life that are insignificant. They're inconsequential things like these little [babies 00:05:02], okay? There are things that you can invest three hours in and you don't even know what you did with those three hours. There's no significance to them whatsoever. Okay? It's endless scrolling or endless gaming or all kinds of things where really that if this was the legacy of your life, you would feel a sense of regret. Maybe even a sense of embarrassment that you invested all of your life and your limited number of days and things that were so inconsequential.

Yet every one of us fills up a pretty significant portion of our life doing things that really just don't matter. This second size are things that you kind of have to do, they're various responsibilities. They're not necessarily what you want your legacy to be. They are more important or things like hobbies and responsibilities like you got to clean your car. You don't want that to be the legacy of your life, but you need to do it every now and then and that takes time. It takes time out of your life to do things that are important.

Then the last is, of course, areas of significance, the larger rocks in our life, things that if you economize on these by doing a lot of these, you end with a tremendous amount of regret. Typically, the big rocks are relationships. They're people that you're investing in. It's your relationship with the Lord or your relationship with people. It's the important things in life that really make up so much of what life is supposed to be about.

You've seen this whole thing work out, where if you start with the smallest and you pour all of those in and then you move to the medium, eventually there's nothing left. There's no space left in your life for the things that matter the most. The natural thing is we'll pour it all out, start fresh, and begin with the largest areas of importance and begin with areas of priority. Then what you'll find is everything will fit.

Now, this is where it's going to get discouraging if you've seen that workout is I've intentionally secured enough material to not fit because that is reality. Okay? You and I have limited capacity of what we can spend our time. Even if you said, "I want to be known and I want to invest all my time at the most significant consequential relationships," where there's too many people on the earth for you to relate to everybody, so you have to choose.

There are limited amount of moments in our life and there are differing levels of importance of the things that we're going to fill those moments of our life. The question that I have for you this morning is really this, what should go in first? If you can't fit in everything, what should you fit? What should go into the jar first, your life first? Maybe a better way to think about it is this, what could you put in your life first that would inform and give you wisdom and understanding to know what else should go in after that first thing?

What I want to show you this morning from Psalm 63 is that first thing is the Lord Himself. It's a relationship with God. Now the Bible is not going to use the word priority. It's going to use the word seek. When it uses the word, "I'm going to seek this," what it's saying is, "I'm prioritizing this." For example, in Psalm 119:10 it says, "With my whole heart, I seek you." What it's saying, "I'm prioritizing God."

Maybe the most famous of all seek passages in the Bible comes from Jesus' own lips. In Matthew 6, he looks at people who don't have any relationship with God, no reference point to God, and he says, "These people are seeking what they're going to wear and what they're going to eat, what they're going to drink." He goes, "But these aren't the things that you should seek. No, you seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness." Prioritize this over what you're going to eat and what you're going to drink and what you're going to wear. This is more important.

Well, in Psalm 63, we find a man, his name is David, he's the King of Israel and he's going to talk about who he's seeking and what he's seeking. But every song has a context and this context is fascinating and I want to tell you the context before I read it so you can appreciate it a little bit more as we read it.

In 2 Samuel 15, David is the King and his son Absalom tries to overthrow his throne and so David has to flee the city for his life and run into the wilderness with just a few people, his body guards. There's limited amount of water, limited amount of food, his own son is trying to kill him. He's had to leave the rest of his family. He's had to leave his cabinet. He's had to leave his responsibilities as King. He's had to leave everything that fills up his day, just like the things that you fill up your day and he had to be removed without any planning whatsoever.

Think about how unsettling that would be if whatever it is that you have planned this week, I picked you up, kidnapped you, and put you in some cave somewhere and you weren't able to do everything and be around everybody that's most important to you.

Well, this is what's happening with David. This is a stressful time and he's thirsty and he's hungry and he looks around and it's hot. He's in the middle of the desert. Notice what he says in that moment. He says, "Oh God, you are my God. Earnestly, I seek you. My soul thirsts for you. My flesh faints for you as in a dry and weary land, where there is no water. So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary beholding your power and glory because your steadfast love is better than life. My lips will praise you and I will praise you as long as I live. And then your name, I will lift up my hands. My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food.

My mouth will praise you with joyful lips when I remember you upon my bed and meditate on you and the watches of the night for you have been my help and in the shadow of your wings, I will sing for joy. My soul clings to you and your right hand upholds me, but those who seek to destroy my life shall go down into the depths of the earth. They shall be given over to the power of the sword and they shall be a portion for jackals, but the king shall rejoice in God and all who swear by Him shall exalt for the mouths of liars will be stopped."

For roughly two months now I have looked forward to reading Psalm 63 here and to talk about what to me is one of the most important things that I could perhaps impart to you that most of you have already learned, maybe even more so than me. What I get to do this morning is maybe the greatest privilege of all, and that is to point you to the reality that you can have a relationship with my very best friend. My very best human friend is Tabitha, and she's sitting down here. But even she would say that her time with Christ is more significant than her time with me.

You see, for those who find Jesus to be the greatest treasure of their life, to spend time with him, it's better than what this earth has to offer. I know that some of you don't know what I'm talking about. Some of you wonder if it's really true. Can someone actually have a personal relationship with somebody that they can't hug and see with their own eyes? Is it possible? Some of you have tried to do different things. Someone said, "This is what it means to have a relationship with Christ." It left you feeling dry. These kinds of sentences wouldn't be the sentences that you would use to describe what the world calls a quiet time, a time with the Lord. But I want you to know something. That is that, at least for me, I've found that the Bible is true on this, that there is not a more pleasant experience that this life has to offer than to spend time with Jesus Christ.

How I want to frame the passage is really to try to condense it down into its simplest form. This won't be a complicated thing to grasp. Some of you are going to say, "Boy, you missed out on so many things." I want to show you two truths and then I want to give you three applications at the end for those two truths. My hope is that when we leave that you're going to have the sense of hope that says, "You know what? I think I can have a relationship with Christ and know what that looks like and feels like and putting him in your life first." They would then inform the rest of your life.

So two things about seeking God first. The first is that seeking God first is the highest form of worship. I'm going to show you in a moment, it's actually the highest form of life. But seeking God first is the highest form of worship. You and I, we were created to know God, to enjoy God, to glorify God. You see, you were created and so was I with this unique ability. Humanity was at the beginning is that when we woke up instinctually naturally our soul, our heart, our mind, everything in us leaned towards God like flowers lean towards the sun. That was our nature. It was instinctual.

Had no sin been in the world, you would wake up and you would first think of God and not you. You would first think of God's pleasure and not sin's pleasure. You would first lean and say, "I got to be near the Lord." But then once we sinned against God, our very nature reconstituted and we began waking up and leaning not towards the sun, we began leaning towards the shadows, towards banal things, trite things, temporary things, unsatisfying things, sinful things, small things, and we lost our capacity to live up to our potential.

If you find somebody in the world or you find somebody within scripture who looks like they're not leaning towards shadows but they're leaning towards the Lord, you're looking at a miracle. Psalm 63 is a miracle. His heart wouldn't do this if God was not at work in his life. Let me tell you something, you would not be in this room this morning if God was not at work in your life. You're leaning towards the Lord. You came here for some reason. Now maybe somebody dragged you here, but you're here, right? You're here.

Just listen. Listen to the words that he says. He says, "God, you are my God. Earnestly, I seek you. I prioritize you." He could be seeking vindication. He could be seeking his family. He could be seeking reunion. He could be seeking the different responsibilities he had as King, but he says, "God, those things are all important to be, but let me tell you the very first thing that's the most important. I earnestly seek you." Then He says, "Why?" He says, "My soul, God, it thirsts for you and my flesh, it faints. It longs for you as in a dry and weary land where there is no water."

You just imagine how his must have pleased the heart of God. The heart of God that said, for example, in Matthew 15. In Matthew 15:8-9, it says, "This people honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men." Let me tell you something that is so easily confused in this world of religion, God is not a cold idea. He's a warm person. God is not a cold idea that's supposed to be learned and taught by men. He is a warm person who is supposed to be experienced and enjoyed by mankind. He is not lessened if we don't enjoy Him. He's not made insecure if we don't enjoy Him, but He is honored when we come near to enjoy Him. I know this sounds really weird because it sounds very wanting, but God wants to be wanted.

You see, you're created in the image of God, right? And you want to be wanted. What that means is that you resemble some of the longings of God's own heart. Throughout the scriptures, we find places where He says, "I want you to want me for me, not just my gifts." That's why He says, "Look, you honor me with your lips, but your heart is so far from me." He wants to be wanted.

So just imagine His joy when David continued in verse two and he says, "God, I have seen, I have beheld with my eyes, your glory and power. This is better than life." It goes on and he says, "My lips are going to praise you and I'm going to bless you. Like a little kid that looks up to mom and dad and raises his or her little hands," says, "I'm going to lift my hands up to you." Some of you, you've never lifted your hands up to the Lord and it's really a shame because it's really freeing to you.

If there's a better reason why you should lift your hands up to the Lord, and that is because He likes it. He's not a cold idea. He is a person with personhood and emotions. For those of you who are parents or guardians of a child, or even a little kid and they raise their hands up to you. It feels so good because it's like, "They're looking to me for protection. They're looking to me for comfort." This is God. He loves when we lift our hands up to Him. He loves when we sing to Him. That's why we do these things.

He says, "God, my soul clings to you." Literally the word is cleave. As in marriage, a man shall leave and cleave. Same word, clings to you. So why should we seek God first? Because the highest form of living is worship, and the highest form of worship is love, and the highest form of love is seeking first. Think about it this way. Think about somebody you love saying these things to you in a love letter. We'd go, "I want to be wanted like that." Well, so does God.

The first reason we do this is because it's the very highest form of worship, which is really the highest form of life. The second thing I want you to see is that seeking God first is the deepest pursuit of pleasure. What that means is he's not only doing it because God is worthy of it. He's doing this because he is hungry for it. Sometimes I hear people say things like, "Our devotion must be free from self interest if it's to be sincere." That kind of theology would make David toss his cookies. Are you kidding? Look what he says, he says, "God, my soul will be satisfied if I have gone to this banquet hall and there is this huge feast full of the heaviest, richest fantast of foods."

Some of us, we can't even imagine that because like kale is our thing, but most of us... If you're offered a last meal, you don't go, "A little side of kale." No, you want something filling. Usually it has protein. It's usually meat or a lot of butter or carbs. It's comfort food. This is what he said, he says, "God, you're my comfort food."

Do you know why God made you to need food and then why He made food to be so tasty? It's to give us categories on this earth of the feast that's available in Him. Like coffee, it's bitter, but it cuts through sugar, right? Oh, God is both the sugar. He's the sweetness of life, but at the very same time He is... It's counterpoint. He's nutrition as well as comfort as well as everything else that food has the capacity to be able to offer us.

I mean, think about it. He could've made you to not need energy. He thought it's up. He can make us however He wants. We could just have a battery. You don't need food at all. He could have made one food. There could have been just fields of kale everywhere and everybody, that's all you get is just kale. But no. What does He do? He had such beauty and complexity and fatness and fullness in order to give us a picture to say, "You know what? This is what I found. I found that my time with you it's like finishing, Thanksgiving Feast."

Some of you I know it's hard to even imagine that this is your experience because all you ever know is religion. I promise you it's there. It's available to all of us, and what he does is he then tells us some of the amazing benefits that he experiences at this table. He talks about joy three times. He goes, "I'm going to praise you with joyful lips. I'm going to sing with joy and the King is going to rejoice." In verse eight he talks about stability. He says, "I'm going to cling to you and your right hand is going to uphold me."

What that means is I'm going to hold on to you, but when I get tired and distracted and for whatever reason I let go, you're never going to let go of me. All this feast, and pleasure, and joy, and stability, it adds perspective, which is why his last three verses, he looks at his situation. He says, "You know what? It's true. People are pursuing my life. But God, you are the just one and when I'm in the word, you give me wisdom to understand that in the end you are the righteous judge of all things that you're going to redeem, and reconcile, and judge everything that needs to be judged the way that it needs to be judged. And so I'm simply going to trust you right here."

But why do we seek God first? The second reason is because pleasure. One of our greatest hurdles in life is our hearts' willingness to settle for such pitiful pleasures that we would not think about seeking God. You see, God created our soul just like this picture over here with grapes and raisins to adjust to the size of our treasure. You fall in love and you love someone of such significance like God, and suddenly your soul becomes like a grape. It just continues to expand further and further and further. It increases your capacity for joy and yet the soul, just like a great tour raisin, you fall in love and make something that's banal, and trite, and sinful. Your greatest treasure and your soul will not go away, but it will shrivel. It will dehydrate.

A dehydrated soul only needs a little bit of trashy TV. Just a little bit of piddling, a little bit of scrolling, a little bit of uncovered skin to feel momentarily happy. This is why Peter says, "Abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul." Fall in love with something that's not going to fight your soul. You seek God first, and your soul begins to expand and as your soul expands, the lure of temptation with its hidden hooks will lose some of its appeal.

See, some of us... Oh, what would it be like if we stopped sipping at the broken cisterns, the dirty streams of the world, and instead walked over the hill and found the fountain of life?

You see, the wisdom of His word is available to you and the piece of His presence is available to you. The courage of His promise is available to us. It's real and it's just over the hills, so go. The person sitting next to you may think this is ridiculous, but you go. Your best friend may love to drink on dirty wells, but go. Go to the fountain and find a better day than you have ever known. Three things for us to apply. Let me encourage you to trust Christ, to be reconciled to God.

Until we trust Jesus as savior, we have no access to the pleasure that is found in Him because sin separates us from Him, which is why Jesus says, "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness." He knew that we couldn't earn a way and so Jesus came to be our way and he lived without sin, but he went to a cross and he died for our sin. Three days later, he rose from the dead, defeating death, making salvation available to all who would admit their need and believe and trust in him.

I urge you today to trust Jesus Christ. All the pleasures that are available in God, which are the deepest and fullest treasures on this earth will not be available to you until you trust Jesus Christ. Trust Him today. Most of you in the room I know have. So let me encourage you to prioritize time with Christ and let me tell you something, you have time for it.

You find a college student, they got six courses, they're overloaded. They're, "I have no time to do anything." All of a sudden they fall in love with somebody. Suddenly they find all kinds of time. You know why? Because we make time for what we love. Put God in your life first. Just imagine everything that was pulling on David's attention in this world and yet here David was looking not only to who God was, but also he was seeking God because of what he needed.

So let me encourage you, if it is not your daily pattern, I urge you to consider devoting the first moments of every day or in particular the first preparation moments of your life for each day to God as an expression that you want to be with Him and that you want to know His will. When I say the first moments of when you prepare for your day, many of us in the room, that's the morning. That's when we prepare for the day, but some of us, we're night owls. We stay up super, super late. That's just how God made us.

Some of us were single parents and your kids get up at 5:00 and you think, "When am I ever going to have time to be able to do these things?" Some of you, you're married parents and your kids get up at 4:00 and it doesn't matter. Every single one of us, we have obstacles for this. You've got to find your time. Some of you, you need to do it at night because that's when you prepare for the next day. Whenever it is though, to be able to come to the Lord and say, "God, I want to be with you."

Now listen, the very worst thing that I could do is to give you a bunch of rules of how to do that will ruin any good thing, any good thing. Man, God made the Sabbath a day to rest and we mess it up with all kinds of rules, so we'll mess up time with the Lord by adding rules. Don't hear anything I'm about to say is a rule, these are simply things that over 30 years of trying to have a relationship with Christ, these are just a few things that I found that have been helpful to me. Okay?

When I try to prioritize time with Christ, the first thing that I try to remember in the morning is this, is to remember that God is someone not something.

This is not an academic experience. I'm not writing a theology book, right? Here is a person there and that leads me to treat the whole thing differently. This is not a task to be accomplished. There is somebody in the room with me, which means that I need to acknowledge and so I say in the morning, "Lord, good morning. Thank you for the privilege to live in your world today." It reframes everything. Now there's somebody in the room with me. I'm acknowledging, it changes how I look at everything once I affirm this is a person.

Second thing is to prepare a place and time. To prepare a place in time. Some of you have a chair, some of you have an office, some of you have a closet. Some of you it's your car. You have a long commute and so you pray and you spend some time with the Lord in the car. It doesn't matter, but to prepare to have a place and a time. Now when I say prepare, this is what I did and now some of you would say, "Well, I'm just not going to do that." That's cool. Don't.

At night, I get so excited about what's going to happen in the morning, but I prepare for it. I go to my office at the house and I clean off all my desk of things that could distract me first thing in the morning and then I open up the Bible to where I'm going to be reading and I open it up just ready and I put my pen right there. I just can't wait to get there. You come with expectancy, you come ready, you plan for. You know what happens though growing up as the kids were growing up? Sometimes they get sick, it would be interrupted and that's okay. It's life. It's like a date, isn't it?

If you have been married for a long time or if you've been dating a long time, not every day is like a 10 but you continue to do it day after day or week after week. You continue to prioritize that relationship because the consistency is actually doing something deep within. Third thing I always try to do is open with prayer. My mind is racing when I wake up in the morning. The first thing I have to do is to say, "God, I got to come underneath you." This is what I do. Jesus taught us to pray. He says, "Hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." I pause and I say, "God, before I do anything, I simply want to affirm that you're the great one and you have all authority over my life." You get to call all the shots.

Usually, I start talking about things that I admire about Him. “You’re righteous and you’re Holy and you’re good, you’re kind and you’re generous and you’ve been good to me.” I just want to acknowledge all of them. And then I open the Bible. You see, usually they’re already open. Here’s a place, pick a book. They’re all good, so just pick one, right? Don’t jump around. I want to just see where the Lord leads me this morning and let me read that. No, no. They’re written with intent, and so read a book or pick one. Some of them are real short. Some of them are real long. If it’s real long, just a section of that book and maybe a paragraph, a sentence, maybe a chapter, and you read.

We’ve provided this journal. They’re out in the lobby if you don’t have one. If you have a way to do this, then just smile at me and say, “Oh, that’s cute that he put a little thing together, but it doesn’t matter because I got my way,” right? But if you don’t have a way, this is a way. It’s not the way, it’s a way. It’s been put together to simply help you. You turn and there’s a day and you go, “Hey, there’s today and there’s a passage to read,” and you read that passage. This journal this year, we’ve added something a little bit different in the hope. Not that you’ll become a journaler. Some of you goes, “I’m just not a journaler.” I’m not a journaler. I have a hard time journaling, right? You don’t want to journal, don’t, right? It’s for your benefit.

But what it does is it leads you through four different sections. So hopefully, it’ll help you interact with the text in a way that you can pull out an application and take you with you for the rest of your day. So this is how it goes. Let’s just say it’s today. Well, today in the actual Bible reading journal, it says the text of the sermon, so you could write up there, Psalm 63, right? Then what it does is it says, “Highlight.”

Now that’s just a highlight to you and there’s no right one. They’re all really good, right? So just pick a verse or two and you write it down. When I did it last night, I said, “You know what? Psalm 63:8 is really encouraging to me.” It says, “My soul clings to you and your right hand upholds me.” Then there’s a little section for E, which is explain. That means explain it in your words. Why is it important to you? What does it mean to you? So I just wrote, “You know what? Christ not only lets me cling to him, he holds me. Nothing is as strong as his right hand. Nobody can make him let go of me. I may get tired and distracted, but Christ won’t let me go.”

You go to A, application. What am I going to do with this truth in my life? I’m going to trust that Christ is holding me today. Even when I stumble, I’m going to trust that he will pick me up and forgive me and I’m going to try to share this truth with somebody today. Then you move to respond. To me, respond is simply a prayer. So look to God and say, “Okay God, this is what I’ve just read in Psalm 63,” and you start praying some of what you just read. Maybe even that verse, “God, I want to cling to you today. Would you help me to cling to you today? Would you help me to find more joy in you than in my sin and would you forgive me because, man, yesterday I just ignored you the whole day?”

All of a sudden now what you're doing is seeking to interact. Usually after that, I spend a little bit more time praying for other people and asking God to forgive me for things that I've found within the word that are clearly not found in my own life. Let me give you one last suggestion is this, let me encourage you to be more attentive to God than to your emotions or to your consistency.

In other words, if you were to go to an art gallery, I would encourage you to look at the art, not look at how you think about the art or feel about the art. Some of us, you hear this and you think, "I have tried that before. I've missed four days this week. I'm not very consistent with it anyway. I'm really not getting much out of it anyway." Listen, there are things that are happening in your soul when you pray and when you sit before Christ, then your soul may not be able to feel and translate to your mind and what's happening. Deeper things are happening though when you sit in the word of God.

Don't go to the Grand Canyon with a mirror. Okay? Look at the Canyon. Look at God, interact with Him. Don't say this, "I just don't know what I feel about this." I know it's hard to believe. It's just not about you. It's not. It's about Him and it's how we're living in His world. Prioritize time. Last thing is let's look to Christ throughout our distracting days. Even if you have like a rock star or quiet time one morning, it may take 15 minutes after you shut the Bible and leave and all of a sudden someone pulls out in front of you and Jesus is not anywhere in your view of understanding is just me and my anger now, right?

You need regular moments and regular reminders throughout your life where you can steal away time. Those of you who cook meals, things, all kinds of chaos, put a scripture verse on your refrigerator so that you can steal a moment with the Lord even when you're doing something else. Write a verse, stick it on your mirror. If you're in a meeting all day, pause just at regular intervals and say, "God I just want you to know I still recognize even though I'm here and this isn't how I necessarily want to spend all of my day, it's all you. So would you just refocus my attention on you?" See, here's the deal. When David hit his last period on Psalm 63, he was still in the desert being hunted by his son.

Throughout the rest of that day, he needed to keep looking back to the Lord. Let me encourage you to do what you need to do. You see, because the invitation is for us all, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." So let me pray for you. Father in heaven, I ask that you would help us to see that this is available, that the highest form of life being worship and love and the highest experience of pleasure in our life. They both collide in being near you. For those that doubt and who are skeptical, I ask God that you would open up their eyes and help them to see wonderful things in your word and help them to believe them.

For those who are skeptical because they've tried and the meal felt like crackers and not a feast, I pray Father that as they labor to seek you, that you would open up their heart and open up your word to their heart tomorrow morning in such a way that confirms everything that David said is true, that to be near you and with you is the greatest pleasure on earth.

So help us to seek the first things first. We love you and we need you. Would you help us now to sing to you, to lift our hands to you, to sing to you with joy, and to give to you and what you're doing around the world. We pray all of this in Christ's name. Amen.



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