

SOUL CARE: AN INTRO

Mark 8:34-38



SYNOPSIS

This Sunday, we started a new series called Soul Care - exploring the ways that God has created us as beings with a soul and how to properly care for this important part of our being. We have come to understand that we are not just physical bodies, not just how we conduct ourselves on the outside in our outer world, but also who we are in our inner being - the invisible parts of us that we may or may not be aware of. In a sense, the soul acts as the glue that integrates our will, our body, and our mind into a single whole life.

Yet sometimes, the challenge we face is a disintegrated life - where we find our lives so compartmentalized and in disagreement with one another - where what we think and say can differ greatly from how we act. A healthy soul is one where there is integrity - and it results in one where no external circumstance can destroy our lives. But if our soul is unhealthy, the opposite is true, where no external circumstance can redeem our lives.

As we learn how to take care of our soul, we also recognize the limitations of self care. Whereas self care can be helpful and refreshing at times - it is ultimately a way to care for ourselves that is centered around ourselves. Soul care is a way to care for ourselves where it's centered around Christ.

As we start this series, let's be intentional to address the brokenness and wounds of our souls and hold onto the promise of God - that he will give rest to the weary and burdened souls.



OUTLINE

1 WHAT IS A SOUL?

Genesis 2:7 informs us that we are not just physical beings, but ones in whom God breathed life into us and animated us. Thus, we are not just physical bodies, but there are invisible aspects of our life that we may or may not be aware of. In our case, we are beings with souls, where the soul has the capacity to integrate all the parts (body, will, mind) into a single, whole life.

2 IS YOUR SOUL HEALTHY OR UNHEALTHY?

We have seen many people who may have gained the whole world but lost their soul in the process. If your soul is healthy, no external circumstance can destroy your life. If your soul is unhealthy, no external circumstance can redeem your life. In 1 Peter 1:8-9, the word "salvation" can also be translated as healing - and the end result of our faith is the healing of our souls, a life filled with inexpressible and glorious joy.

3 SOUL CARE OR SELF(ISH) CARE?

In a me-centered world, it is easy to go beyond self care into selfish care. While we can certainly appreciate the need and time for self care, our culture can convince us that we are able to bring rest to our self by our own means. That couldn't be further from the truth. Soul care is a way to care for yourself where it's centered around Christ. True rest is found in the presence of God, where It invites His presence to refresh, encourage, and restore us. It is also communal in that it invites community to be part of that process.



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

Icebreaker: How has the holidays been for you? What were some things you rejoiced over? What were some things you grieved over?

2

What is your understanding of the soul? How would you describe the soul? What are questions you have about the soul?

3

What are some ways you take care of your body? your mind? your soul? Are there habits you have developed that help in a healthy life? Do you spend more time focusing on one over the others?

4

Do you feel you have a healthy soul? What circumstances in life would be really difficult for you to weather? Will you be able to say "it is well with my soul" if those circumstances were to happen?

5

How can we practice more soul care on a daily basis as opposed to self(ish) care?



BIG IDEA

As 'soulish' creatures who have been animated by the Breath of God, we realize that as we take care of our bodies and our minds, we also need to take care of our souls. We can have healthy souls and unhealthy souls as well, and so we learn how important soul care is - to care for ourselves in a Christ-centered way. Father, help us to find true rest in you.