

Charles Wesley UMC
At-home Devotion
June 4, 2020

“God saw everything that he had made and indeed, it was very good.”
Genesis 1: 31a

Scripture:

Genesis 1: 1-2:4a

Psalm 8

2 Corinthians 13: 11-13

Matthew 28: 16-20

Have you noticed that the world is looking different these days? I have been sitting on my front porch more in the past few weeks, months, however long it has been. (I can't remember which day it is anymore without looking at a calendar. Time has a whole new meaning these days. Anyway...) Sitting on my porch I have noticed that the air seems fresher...the sky bluer... the clouds whiter... the earth seems renewed in some ways due to the reduction of people driving cars everywhere. I have also noticed that even though I am experiencing anxiety due to the unknown of the COVID pandemic, amidst the concern over protest... racism... violence... I am still finding rest. My days have shifted. I'm not in my car as much. I'm on the computer Zooming for meetings, yet I am still finding rest... a slower pace.

I love the creation stories (yes there are two different stories- that's for another time) for a number of reasons. In the Genesis 1 creation story I love that God looks at everything created and sees that “it was very good.” At each day of the creation we have a refrain...

“And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and morning, the ... day.”

God creates, reviews his creation, calls it good, calls it a day. Do we do that? Maybe for some things but more times than I want to admit, I do my work, analyze it, think it might be good, try to call it a day but then rehash it in my mind, work on it some more, call it good enough. God did not create us to live like this. God called the creation to be co-creators in partnership with God. God tells the birds, the fish, the animals on the land, the humans to be fruitful and multiply. God says of the plants that they each have seeds so they can create more. If our work is in partnership with God then we too can create, review, call it good and call it a day.

The second thing I really love about the creation story in Genesis 1 is actually found in Genesis 2: 2... “And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested from all the work that he had done.” God rested! Isn't that great? God set the example for us. We need rest. We are not meant to work 24/7. God looked at all his work, called it very good and rested.

I need this reminder to rest. My work may be, okay, not so great, very good, good, or even good enough but I still need to rest. I need to rest to renew myself so that I can complete the work God is calling me to. If I don't rest, I will become irritated, resentful and unproductive. I can't do good work if I'm not my best self.

Rest, defined by the Oxford American Dictionary, is "to be still, to cease from movement or action or working, especially in order to regain one's energy." What does rest look like for you? Are you getting enough rest? Too much? We need our rest so that we can do the work we are called to do for God. What is this work? Jesus told us...

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." (Matthew 28: 19-20a).

That's a big job in a big world. A world that needs the healing touch of God. A world that needs to hear a message of love, grace and acceptance. A world that needs us to help heal not only God's people but also God's creation which has been polluted and abused for its resources. Right now, even in the midst of a pandemic, unrest and violence in our society, we need to rest, renew and recreate. With God as our helper, we can go, we can make disciples, we can baptize, we can teach and God will see our work and say... that is very good.

Prayer:

God of creation,

Thank you for this wonderful world you created and people that you created in your own image. Help me to see the beauty even in the midst of illness, violence, fear, unrest among people. Help me to be a co-creator with you creating a community of love and unity. Help me to live into the call you have placed on my life to make disciples. Remind me to rest as you rested. Amen.

Questions to ponder:

- Am I truly finding or seeking rest?
- How in the midst of this pandemic can I continue to be a disciple maker for God?