

Sermon Notes: Re Center 2

Key Verse: Matthew 6:33 (ESV)

"But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."

I. Introduction: The Tyranny of the Urgent

* The Titanic's Warning: On April 14, 1912, the Titanic received seven warnings about ice fields.

* The "Cape Race" Trap: Wireless operator Jack Phillips was so overwhelmed by the "urgent" demands of passengers (sending personal greetings) that he told the life-saving warning to "Shut up!"

* The Priority Drift: We don't wake up and decide to hit an iceberg; we simply get so busy "working Cape Race" that we silence the quiet, eternal whispers of God.

* The Jar Analogy: If we fill our lives with the sand of the mundane first, the Big Rocks of God's purposes will never fit. "Busyness is not a sign of spiritual health. Often, it is a sign of a soul that has lost its center." — Chuck Swindoll

II. Point 1: Identifying Where Things Replace God

* Functional Idols: Misalignment happens when we choose "good" things (work, relationships, reputation) at the wrong time or with the wrong weight.

* The Tangible Mediator: Rabbi Rashi suggests the Israelites created the Golden Calf because they were anxious and wanted something they could see. We do the same with finances and status when God feels "slow."

* The Vessel (Thomas Watson): The heart can only hold so much. If it is filled with the "effervescent waters of the world," there is no room for the "wine of the Spirit."

"An idol is anything more important to you than God... anything you seek to give you what only God can give." — Tim Keller

III. Point 2: Reprioritizing the Schedule

* The First Fruits Principle: God demands the best of the harvest, not the leftovers of our time.

* The Sabbath Testimony (Ramban & Sforno): The Sabbath isn't just about resting; it is an act of "remembering" our Source. It testifies that the world has a Master, and we are but stewards.

* The Rebellion of Rest: Seeking the Kingdom is an act of rebellion against the frantic pace of a fallen world (N.T. Wright).

"Don't tell me what your priorities are. Show me your checkbook and your calendar, and I'll tell you what they are." — Adrian Rogers

IV. Point 3: Taking the Right Yoke

* What is a Yoke? In Jesus' day, a "yoke" was a Rabbi's specific teaching and interpretation of Scripture.

* The Easy Load: Jesus isn't just pulling your load; He is showing you an easier load to pull. If you are overwhelmed, you may be pulling a yoke the world put on you.

* The Anointing that Breaks the Yoke (Isaiah 10:27): In the Hebrew context, the yoke is broken by the "fattening" (growth) of the ox.

* The Growth Principle: You don't always need a "lightning strike" to be free; you need to "get fat" in the Lord. As you grow and learn from Him, the old yokes of the world literally snap because you have outgrown them.

V. Reflection for the Week

* Wait on the Lord: Isaiah 40:31 — "But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles..."