

1. We are going to continue this morning with a study from the book of Matthew chapter 11.
2. We said last week that there is a familiar couple of verses that most often we associate with rest. Come to me all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.
3. But if we pan out, we find that the verses about finding rest are actually a part of a larger passage that has a central or overall theme, and that theme is knowing God.
4. So, last week we asked the question, how do we get to know God?
5. We get to know God more deeply when we understand what kind of people, He allows to know Him.
6. I clarified last week that from the bible we learn that God wants every single person on planet earth to know him intimately.
7. God can be known by everyone, but not everyone will come to God and put themselves in a position to know Him.
8. Look with me at **Matthew 11:25** At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children."
9. Last week we discovered there is a spiritual position that will hinder our knowing God and that is when we approach him as being wise and learned in our own eyes.
10. For sure, God wants us to be wise. He offers us wisdom, but there is a difference between being wise, and wise in our own eyes.
11. In fact, the book of Proverbs identifies being wise in our own eyes as being a fool.
12. **Proverbs 10:8** The wise in heart accept commands, but a chattering fool comes to ruin.
13. The wise person listens a lot and talks less.
14. But a fool talks a lot and listens less. And Solomon said that the one who won't listen comes to ruin.
15. So, when we approach God with a heart that is not willing to listen to him, then it will be nearly impossible to know God intimately, because knowing him requires listening to him.

16. Sometimes the reason why people approach God as being wise in their own eyes is because of pride.
17. And sometimes the reason why people approach God as being wise in their own eyes is because of fear.
18. Because of fear of what the Lord will think of us, or out of fear of being rejected, we might go to God in a way that puts us in a good light.
19. We might relate to him in such a way that we think we are somehow keeping certain aspects of our life a secret from him, which almost instantly cuts off the opportunity to learn from Him or know him more deeply.
20. So, last week we ended with a powerful question.
21. When you go to God in prayer, which you do you present to Him?
22. The fake you that appears to have all the answers and only minor flaws and blemishes.
23. Or the real you, the you that misunderstands often. Who has more questions than answers. The you that is flawed and broken and dirty and selfish at times?
24. So, Jesus prays to the father and he says, you have hidden these things from the wise and learned in their own eyes.
25. And instead, you have revealed yourself to a different type of person.

**TEXT:** **Matthew 11:25** At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children."

**INTRO:**

1. Father, you don't reveal yourself to the wise and learned in their own eyes, but instead you reveal yourself to those who approach you as little children would approach you.
2. Later on in Matthew 18 verse 3, Jesus will expound further on what this means. "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."

3. For the last several weeks as I have been praying over this message there is one particular characteristic of the way children approach adults that I just can't get away from.
4. To be clear, I believe these passages could be describing a whole list of healthy characteristics that children possess, but there is one characteristic that seems to fit in as being the opposite of those who approach God as wise and learned in their own eyes.
5. That characteristic is the willingness to ask questions.
6. Remember we said, a person who is truly wise talks little and listens a lot.
7. But the fool talks a lot and listens little.
8. One of the things that smaller children do extremely well is ask questions.
9. My kids are all grown and out of the house, so I had somewhat forgotten how many questions children ask.
10. But my grandchildren have brought that truth front and center to my attention.
11. We have 5 grandchildren, the four youngest are between the ages of 4 and 8.
12. That means there are four little minds who are in the stage where children ask numerous questions.
13. I'm thinking about writing a book about all the questions my grandchildren have asked me over the last few years.
14. I think it would be a quite funny read.
15. Questions like...
  - Papi. How come you have old (grey) hair?
  - Papi. How come you have that spot (blemish) on your face?
  - Papi. How come you have a poky face? Didn't shave that day.
  - Papi. Who come you wear glasses?
  - Papi. How come your eyes don't work very well?
  - Papi. How come you have hair up your nose?
  - Papi. How come you make noises when you get up off the couch?

- My grandchildren are bi-racial, and so my favorite question is... Papi. What color are you?
16. A couple of weeks ago we had three of our grandchildren at our house and the questions were just flying left and right, and I heard my wife say to one of them in the kitchen, boy. You sure do ask a lot of questions.
  17. Without missing a beat, I heard, well my mommy says that asking questions is good because that is how you learn.
  18. We have such a wonderful daughter in law.
  19. Now. I don't know about your upbringing, but if it was similar to mine, when you asked questions, you might have heard the following answer.
  20. **Because I said so.** Why do I have to do that? Because I said so.
  21. Why do I have to stop hitting my little bother over the head?  
Because I said so.
  22. I am not blaming anyone. It's just the way many generations were raised, and it is how I raised my children.
  23. Until one day I was reading a great book and the author made the statement. Never answer your child's question with, because I said so.
  24. I wasn't convinced that was good advice until I heard the authors reasoning.
  25. If you answer your child, because I said so, essentially you are saying to them, I don't have time for you.
  26. Your questions don't matter.
  27. I don't need you to think, I just need you to do what I say.
  28. Who in the world wants their child to grow into an adult and just do whatever everyone tells them to do?
  29. Ouch.
  30. And the reason that really made me think was this. Is that how God treats us?
  31. If I study the word, I have to conclude that is not how God treats us. God is not opposed to our asking him questions.
  32. God is not too busy for us to ask him why that matters or why do you want me to live that way.

33. God is not offended, and he doesn't feel threatened when we ask him to explain himself.
34. After studying the word a little bit, I am convinced that God is NOT a... Because I Said So, God!
35. King David in the Old Testament is the writer of 75 of the 150 Psalms.
36. In those 75 psalms, David asks God 51 questions. Here are some examples.
- How long oh Lord. Will you forget me forever?
  - How long will you hide your face from me?
  - How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and everyday have sorrow in my heart?
  - How long will my enemy triumph over me?
  - My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
37. And what exactly did God think about this man who asked all these questions? In 1 Samuel 13 David is called a man after God's own heart. The only man in all the bible to be described that way.
38. Evidently God is not bothered by our asking him questions. As long as we ask those questions like a child would ask them.
39. It seems to me, from my experience with others, and from my own failures and flaws, that a person who is wise in their own eyes has a different relationship with asking questions than a harmless child.
40. A person wise in their own eyes...

### **Sometimes doesn't ask any questions.**

1. People who are wise in their own eyes tend to make more statements than ask questions.
2. They are not interested in finding out what you know, they are interested in telling you what they think they know.
3. An innocent child asks simply because they want to know.
4. A person wise in their own eyes...

### **Sometimes asks suspicious questions.**

1. When I ask a suspicious question, generally it is because I have already decided I know the answer, I just want to see if you will confirm my answer.
2. If you get the chance, listen to younger children ask questions. You probably won't hear any suspicion in their voice.
3. That's because we are not born being suspicious.
4. Suspicion is something we learn as we grow up. As we experience hurts and disappointments and as people let us down.
5. In the Garden of Eden, Eve didn't have any suspicion toward God, it was the serpent who questioned God's motives and planted that suspicion in her mind.
6. Again, I say, and I'm not proud of it, but when I ask a suspicious question, it is usually because I have already come to a conclusion, and I just want the other person to confirm my conclusion.
7. A person wise in their own eyes will...

**Sometimes ask questions that are only intended to put the other person down.**

1. Have you ever had someone ask you a question, and the tone of their voice indicated that what they really wanted to know is why you are so foolish to think or act that way?
2. They really didn't want to know your opinion, what they wanted with their question was to give their opinion of you.
3. Imagine the response of God if we tend to relate to Him that way. Which by the way is very easy to do.
4. Now imagine the response of God when we approach him with the innocence of a child.
5. An innocent, childlike question...

**Humbles the asker, and elevates the person being asked.**

1. When a child asks a genuine question, it is the same as saying, I think you know something I don't, and I just want to know what that is.
2. That type of approach elevates or lifts up the standing of the one being asked.

3. You may have never thought of this, but when you ask God a genuine, heartfelt question, even if the question is out of pain, or fear, or misunderstanding or confusion, you are in essence saying to the Lord, your understanding is higher than my understanding and I just want to rise to meet you where you are.
4. That sounds to me like something God would be extremely pleased with.
5. He was pleased when David did it.
6. An innocent, childlike question...

### **Is an opportunity to express faith in the one being asked.**

1. Here's the reality. Sometimes we ask God questions, and he doesn't answer the way we want him to.
2. Sometimes we ask God questions, and he doesn't answer at all.
3. In those moments we have an opportunity to express faith that God knows what is for our best. And if our knowing the answer was for our best, then God would share the answer.
4. You see, sometimes we ask God questions, and we aren't spiritually mature enough to receive the answer. The answer is too much for us to handle.
5. I once heard a story about a young girl riding on a plane with her father.
6. During the flight, the girl began asking her dad where babies come from.
7. The dad shared some surface level truths, but perceived the girl was much too young to hear the complete answer.
8. But the girl kept pressing and pressing and would stop asking.
9. And finally, the father said. Honey. You know that carry-on bag I put up in the overhead bin when we got on the plane. Yes daddy.
10. When we arrive, I want you to get that bag down and give it to me.
11. Well, I can't dad. That bag is too heavy for me. I'll get hurt.
12. The father responded. That's right sweetheart. It is too heavy for you right now.

13. And I'm asking you to trust me that the answers to your questions are too heavy for your right now, but when you are able to handle it, I will tell you everything.
14. I am convinced that sometimes we ask God questions when we aren't truly able to handle the answers.
15. Sometimes I ask God questions and I ask him for things, thinking I know what is best, and later on I am extremely grateful that God didn't answer my prayer the way I wanted because if he had the result would be disaster.

#### Conclusion:

1. You see, when we approach God with a childlike faith, a faith that says I trust that you know more than I do and you know best, that kind of faith is pleasing to God.
2. And we can approach God with every single emotion you can imagine.
3. Sorrow, hurt, pain, joy, happiness, fear, surprise, wonder, and even disgust.
4. Psalm 13:1-6 How long, LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? 2 How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me? 3 Look on me and answer, LORD my God. Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death, 4 and my enemy will say, "I have overcome him," and my foes will rejoice when I fall. 5 But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. 6 I will sing the LORD's praise, for he has been good to me.
5. Do you need to pour your heart out to God and be real with him? Then do it. He will not be angry with you.
6. He will be pleased that you trust him enough to bring it to him.
7. Pray.
8. Do you need to bring your sin to Him?
9. Salvation call.
10. I realize this may not the best place to lay every emotion out before the Lord.
11. Can we form circles and pray for one another that we will have a clear picture of God's loving nature towards us, so that if needed this



week will trust God enough to pour out our heart and our questions before the Lord.