

Returning Your Soul to Rest

read

Psalm 116

think

This past summer, I enjoyed a beautiful hike with our students. We hiked the trail to Emerald Lake in Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado. The trail has everything to be desired – the blue-green hues of mountain ponds, half-melted snow lining the path, crisp alpine air, and snow-capped peaks. After winding through the woods and pressing up steep inclines, we climbed a small hill and glimpsed the surrounding territory from a high vantage point. With that broad, beautiful perspective, we rested and drank in the glory of God.

The Christian life is regularly compared to a difficult journey. It's like an arduous and treacherous hike. And yet, God gives us the broader perspective of grace along the way – enabling us to rest. The writer of Psalm 116 reminds us of these gospel respites. After praising God for a recent deliverance, the psalmist turns to addressing his own soul. He practices “self-talk.” In this instance, he says to himself, “Return, O my soul, to your rest; for the LORD has dealt bountifully with you” (v. 7).

He urges his soul toward rest. Why? The reason is God's abundant grace. This is our great reason for rest too. The gospel invites us to rest in the midst of our fear-fraught pilgrimage. The gospel broadens our perspective to consider God's grace to us in Jesus and to hope in God on the basis of His covenant love. Jesus purchased our rest. Because of God's grace to you in Jesus, your soul can return to rest.

apply

- How have you experienced God's grace in your life? Share specific instances with your family.
- Read Matthew 11:28-30 and Hebrews 4:9-10; 10:19-25. How does Jesus' work on our behalf free us up to rest?
- How might you practice returning your soul to rest throughout the Coronavirus pandemic?

pray

Father, You are gracious, righteous, and merciful. You have delivered us out of Your great affection. Lord Jesus, thank you for securing our rest through Your life, death, and resurrection. Be near us and help us to cling to You. Holy Spirit, return us to rest – granting us the love that bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. In Jesus' name, Amen.

by Greg Meyer

Greg Meyer serves as the Assistant Pastor to Youth at Covenant Presbyterian Church in St. Louis, MO. Prior to coming to Covenant in 2015, he served churches in Mississippi and Georgia. He holds a BSE from Mercer University and an MDiv from Reformed Theological Seminary. He has served as a conference speaker with [Reformed Youth Ministries](#), is a contributing author at [Rooted](#), and has also written for [Orthodoxy Orthopraxy](#), Covenant Theological Seminary's theology blog. Greg and his wife, Mary Jane, have three sons.