

“Building a Life of Rest”

March 15, 2026 | Pastor Jason Hillier

Well, hello, hello. Valley Creek. It is good to be together today. Let's take a moment and welcome in all of our campuses from wherever you are watching together. It is good to be the church, and it is really good to be a Movement of Hope for the City and Beyond. And it is really good to experience the movement of Jesus that's happening all across our church. Hope is on the move. The Spirit is on the move. There is life. There's a divine stirring happening among us. It has not been like this in my almost 20 years of being here. I'm thankful for it. I love what Jesus is doing among us. I love being a Movement of Hope for the City and Beyond. And last weekend, we got to celebrate one year of Missional Move Create the Future, which was incredible. We got all the updates. It is wild how much you can do in one year. More specifically, it's crazy what Jesus can do in one year. And He is. He's moving. So, for all of you who are giving and serving and praying for and leading, I just want to say to you, thank you. See, a generous person will prosper. And those who refresh others will be refreshed. May you be refreshed in Jesus' name as we build the future that others can experience, that others can live in. All of us here, man, we're living in the present that was once the future that someone else built for us. I'm so thankful for that. So, Mission Move Create the Future, it is well on its way. And all year long, we've been fueling the fire, baby. We have got to keep the fire burning. Keep the fire burning. Keep the fire burning. A log of humility here. A log of faith here. A log of confession and repentance here and there. The fire is burning bright inside of us as a church. People are starting to take notice. Heard a story recently when our Valley Creek College students came back from Greece on a mission trip. Somebody on the flight said, "Your students have sparkling faces. Okay, what was he saying? What was he saying? They got radiant faces. They got radiant faces. They got burning hearts, holy lives. So, in Jesus' name, may we have radiant faces, burning hearts, holy lives. May we keep the fire burning. Don't let the fire go out.

So that leads us to right now. We are in spring break right now. Maybe some of you are watching on vacation or are off on online. So, thanks for joining us today. And spring break, what a time to enjoy. What a time to be alive. But it led me to an interesting question. Why do we “spring break”? Why do we vacation? Why do we have times of rest? And I think for the average one of us, the answer is because life is so crazy, so hectic, so busy, I just need some downtime, man. I have got to get away. Or the next person that annoys me, there's going to be teeth marks. Get me out of here. And so, I think sometimes our lives are kind of chaotic, and they leave us in this place where it's like, man, if I don't rest, I'm just going to, like, my lid's going to flip. But should it be like that? See, in January, we had these snow days that happened because of an ice storm. We had like 100 snow days in a row. And it was like layers upon layers of ice. And during that time, Pastor John posted something online that was from his journal. And I thought it was fascinating. Build the kind of life you don't want a snow day from. Ooh. Build the kind of life you don't want a snow day from, you don't need a vacation from, you don't have to get away from. What if we could build that kind of life? The kind of life that Jesus offers us all the time. Building a life of rest that's available all the time in Jesus' name. That's the kind of life that I want. Why does that seem so elusive? Why does that seem so difficult? Why does that seem like that's just not available for us? You might think, man, that

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sounds impossible. Oh no, my friend. Everything is possible. A wise church once said, everything is possible. And so, it is possible. You could build an entire life of rest in Jesus' name. So that's what I want to have a conversation on today. And I want to start with this thought. Have you ever thought about the word vacation? The word vacation is actually connected to the word vacate. Like to get out of, to leave. In fact, the root word for those words means to be emptied. Now think with me. I don't want to be emptied in my life. I want to be filled with the Spirit. I don't want to escape from, I want to lean into. I don't rest from my life, I rest for it. And so yes, that's the word we use. But compare that to the word holiday. The word holiday literally means holy day. A day set apart as unto the Lord holy. I'm set apart in him, and I live it wholly. W-H-O-L-L-Y. A holiday. Now hear me, I love vacations. In fact, I'll be going on one this weekend. So, this is not the Pastor Jason hates vacations message. This is the how do we build the kind of life that we don't have to extract from. And when I'm on break and when I go on vacation, I'm just leaning into the life that I live with Jesus. And it is not impossible, and it is the life that Jesus offers us. The Lord is my shepherd. I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside quiet waters. He refreshes my soul. That is the kind of life that Jesus offers. Notice it doesn't say he makes me lie down when I'm on the beach in Florida. He leads me beside quiet waters when I'm fly fishing in Colorado. He refreshes my soul only on spring break. No, like, like all the time. Like all the time. That's the life that he offers us. And I think the question we have to ask is, how much do I really want that life? Because am I actually humble enough to be made? Am I surrendered enough to be led? Am I willing enough to be refreshed? Parents of toddlers, you know this.

Sometimes you're trying to make your child lay down, and they just don't want to. I don't want to. I always think about, like, when you swaddle a baby, and the arms are like wah, wah. Or if you're like with a toddler, and it's really hard to get them down. I think that sometimes that's us also. How much do we actually want to be made to rest, to lie down? Am I willing to build a different kind of life? The kind of life I don't want to get away from, I want to lean into. Are you ready for this? Can you even imagine Jesus having anything other than that kind of life? Goes to the disciples. “You guys, they're just so bad. And the Pharisees, they're just asking me these crazy questions. And if one more deaf, blind, or mute guy comes and just needs, I'm going to flip, man. Listen, if you make me late to my flight to Galilee, I'm just going to lose it.” And the reason that that is so preposterous, the reason that that's not possible, is because it's so not who Jesus was. And if I'm really honest with you, it's really humbling to think about how much he lived his whole life at rest. His whole life. Side note, I think that most of the craziness we see when we're traveling or on vacation is because we've built lives that are so chaotic that people have to have the perfect trip, or they're going to take it out on everybody and everyone. So, for anybody who's traveling, hear me, hear me, hear me. Hear ye, hear ye. Valley Creek Church, be nice to the gate agent. Be kind at the rental counter. Say thank you at Starbucks. Be a life-giving person wherever you are and whatever is going on, because that is the life of Jesus. That's who he was. That's how he responded. That's how he engaged. That's how he reacted. One of my questions I've been trying to answer as I've been thinking about talking to you guys is like, who told us we have to live like that? Who told you? Who told you your schedule had to

be crazy? Who told you it had to be chaotic all the time? Who told you that the school year had to be just run, run, run, run, run? Who told you that? And I think you're thinking, well, society and work and my boss tells me that, and the IST sets our schedule, I know. But Jesus says, "I lay down my life willingly. No man takes it from me." And so, there's this, like, there's this willingness, this free will that he lets us live our life with and our perceived limits, and ultimately the decisions that we make are from within my own will. So, who told me? I did. Maybe I did. So, can I be real for a second? I think there's two primary reasons that we don't live our entire life at rest, that we don't build the kind of life that we don't want a vacation from. a.) I think we just don't want to. And b.), I think we've segmented our life so much that we're like different people in different spaces. So, a.), I don't think we really want to. There's something inside of us that kind of thrives in the chaos, even while saying that we don't. There's something inside of us that's so chaotic in here that if out here doesn't match, then it's like out of equilibrium. Like, it has to be kind of chaotic. I'm sure you've experienced that, and maybe you've even known people in which that's true. Why is that? Why is it that it has to be so chaotic all around us that our life has to be busy, busy, busy, busy? I think we're a little bit addicted to the chaos, and like all addictions, it might feel good at first, but it's slowly killing us. The inside of us is so chaotic that we desire the outside, life's schedule, life's busyness, to match all of that. At least if I'm hurried out here, then it can match what's in here. But the problem with that is when my soul is not at rest, my life will not be lived at rest. A soul at rest is not controlled by the chaos of the world. It's controlled by Jesus. If my soul is not at rest, then no amount of vacation or spring break or downtime will ever be able to make up for what actually is going on inside of here. So maybe we just kind of don't want to.

Why else don't we want to? Well, because wanting to requires trust and obedience. It requires surrendering fully to Jesus. This is what the sovereign Lord, the Holy One of Israel, says, "in repentance and rest is your salvation. In quietness and trust is your strength." Pause. Doesn't that just sound good? Repentance, rest, quietness, trust, my salvation and my strength, all of my life in Jesus. But you would have none of it. You said, no, we will flee on horses. Therefore, you will flee. You said, we will ride off on swift horses. Therefore, your pursuers will be swift. Do you ever feel like life is pursuing you swiftly? Like you just keep running, running, and running, running, and you are getting chased down. Could it be that we're being chased because we don't ever want to stop running? Could it be that life is chasing us down because we don't ever want to slow down enough in Jesus to live a life at rest? This is why we've talked so much about arranging and rearranging our lives recently, the importance of actually setting my life, like, into the kingdom. And in Jesus, it's Jesus'. If I'm in Jesus, then my entire life is his. My resources, including my calendar, are always up for heavenly debate. Can I ask you, is your life up for heavenly debate? Can people weigh in on it? Do you have Godly relationships that can kind of speak into it, spiritual leaders that can be like, hey, can I, can I ask you about those decisions, that schedule, that calendar? If I'm in Jesus, it's always up for heavenly debate. He gets to decide. He gets to point my direction. He gets to dictate how I spend my time and who and where I spend my time with. He sets the schedule. Literally, Jesus takes the wheel because

He is my salvation and He is my strength, if I want to, if I actually want that life. So that's the first thing.

I think the second thing is we've segmented our lives. We've so segmented our lives that we often live as two different people in two different spaces, and I can prove it to you. Ready? Jesus didn't have a spiritual life. Jesus didn't have a spiritual life, nor did He have a on-the-boat-with-the-disciples life, nor did He have a going-and-visiting-Mother-Mary life, nor did He have a going-to-preach life, nor did He have a doing-miracles life. Jesus didn't have a spiritual life because He only had one life, and the death He died, He died the sin once for all, but the life He lives, He lives to God. Jesus did not segment His life. He lived it all to the Father, the life He lives, the life He lives, like one life that He lives, not multiple versions of Himself in different spaces and places, and He invites us to the very same thing. The life I now live, I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved and gave Himself up for me. I do not set aside the grace of God. The life, the one life I now live, can I ask you, have you set aside the grace of God by segmenting your life into different spaces and places, by literally living as a different person, which is called duplicity. We've been talking a lot about this. It means I have a duplicate version of me. Here's how it would sound if you set aside the grace of God. Oh, that's just what I'm like at school. That's just how I talk with the guys at the golf course. That's just what I'm like when I'm pressurized at work. That's just, you know, you know how I am. Those would be examples of living a duplicate life, and here's the problem. Duplicity is exhausting, and it's part of the reason I don't build the kind of life that I don't actually want a vacation from. I don't have to take one because I'm exhausted all the time trying to keep up multiple versions of me in different spaces. There's a second me in a second space. Well, that's just how I act around them. That's how they know me. But when I try to keep that perception, when I try to keep up those errors, the Soul can't keep up, and I become exhausted, and I become frustrated in the life that I'm called to live in Jesus. Hear me, it's okay to say I wear different hats. It's not okay to be a completely different person in different spaces. It's okay to say there's different things that I'm called to do. I just don't have different faces and way that I talk and act around different sets of people. Jesus didn't have a blank life. He had a life, and the life He lives, He lives to the Father. Jesus came to give you that life and give it to you to the full. Oh, I want a full life in Jesus. Don't you want a full life in Jesus? I love that. We all know that. He came to give us life to the full. Do you know this translation? Ready? "Yes, I am the gate. Those who come through Me will be saved. They will come and go freely, and they will find good pastures." That sounds familiar. The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and a satisfying life. In Jesus, may you have a rich and a satisfying life. May every day be a holiday, a holy day, and may you live it wholly, W-H-O-L-L-Y. May you have a rich and satisfying life in Jesus' name. I got one more quick thought on that. I've been saying our life, your life, but in reality, it's not actually my life. The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the creatures and all who dwell upon it. If I'm in Jesus, I've been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I that live. It is Christ that lives within me. It turns out it's not actually my life to do with what I want. It's Jesus'. Because when Christ, who is your life, appears, then you will also appear with Him in glory. It's not even mine, it's His. My life is His. I'm hidden in

Christ. So, when I make decisions, when I set my schedule, when I make my plans, those are Jesus'. My whole life is His. And so, I'm invited to live that fully. And so true rest is when I'm living my one life in Jesus. True rest is when I'm living that one life in Jesus. It's His. It's His. He is my life. And so, let's talk about how to experience that. How do I experience that one life built upon Jesus? Not one that I want to vacate, one I want to get into. Not resting from, resting for. Here's what it is.

I think there's three primary things we need in order to build that kind of life, and they are humility, gratitude, and margin. Humility. Humility is simply agreeing with what God has already said and aligning my whole life with His words for me. Humble is when I just agree with what He's already spoken. So, it would be really humble today to let the Lord's words speak into my heart. No matter what kind of tension I'm facing right now, I'd be humble to be like, I just want Your word, Lord, to go way down deep, to pierce those hard places, and soften my thoughts about rest and resting with You and vacations and all the things. That would be humility. You see, some of the humblest people you know are likely the people with the most restful spirit, the most joyful countenance, and the kindest attitude. And many of the most prideful people that you know are the most stressed out, the most vacated, like, hello, hello, hello. And they have the sharpest words. Why? Because pride comes before the fall, and then when I have pride in my life, my whole life starts to fall. It starts to fall down, fall apart, my relationships do.

And so, it takes humility to build a life at rest. It also takes gratitude. Gratitude is simply being thankful for what I do have instead of accusing God for what I don't. I think many times when we talk to God, we talk to Him in accusatory tones. Why didn't you? Why hasn't it? Why can't it? And that's how we start and live much of our life, grumble, grumble, grumble, grumble. And I even recently had to go to Kerry, my wife, and just say, I'm sorry, I have been grumbling. And I specifically was grumbling about road construction outside of our church, and it was just so, so frustrating. And here's the thing. I was even so tempted to try to make a joke right here about grumbling about the road construction to try to normalize it in my life so that it would be kind of like, oh yeah, but it's just kind of the way it is, right? And then I felt really, really strongly from the Spirit that I'm not supposed to do that because grumbling and a lack of gratitude is never the heart that God has for us. And so, I want to be a heart of gratitude. I want to have a heart of gratitude. I want to live my whole life at rest. My heart is not at rest when I'm grumbling. It is at rest when I live with gratitude. I have everything I need in Jesus, including patience. And because you have everything you need, when you realize you lack nothing, then you won't scurry around trying to gain that which you already have. Catch it. Most of the decisions that we make that steal our rest come from a place of discontentment, which ultimately comes from a lack of gratitude. Most of the decisions we make that steal our rest that come from a place of discontentment, which ultimately comes from a lack of gratitude. So, we hurry to make more money to buy the stuff that I don't really need. We work out hard to impress the people I didn't really want to impress in the first place. I try to gain the approval of that friend group that I don't want to be friends with in the first place. All of that, all of that,

because of a lack of gratitude in my life, which is just insanity. All of that can be avoided by being so thankful. Thank You, Jesus. Thank You, Jesus, for what I do have. Thank You, Jesus, for the life You've given me. Thank You that I have everything I need in You. Your divine power has given me everything I need from my life and my godliness to everything You've called me to. Thank You, Jesus.

So, rest then takes a humility. Rest takes a gratitude. And finally, rest takes, and hang with me, margin. Margin. I think margin is one of the most difficult areas of our life right now, and I think it's something that Jesus so wants us to live with. He wants to give us more and more and more. But once, once every seven years in the Old Testament, the land was supposed to lie fallow, meaning it was unplowed, unfarmed. There was time for rest in the land. And once every seven days of my life, my life is supposed to lie fallow. It's called the Sabbath. It means I rest from the work I usually do, and I enjoy God and the life that He's called me to. Now think with me for a second. God is so good to us that He wants to give us one out of every seven, at least that much margin in our life, which means He wants to give us more rest and more margin with our time than He even asks back of giving from our tithes. One out of seven, one out of ten. So, as a percentage of our life, He actually wants us to have more time margin than even what we think of as like, oh, I give the money back to God, I return to Him the tithe. That's how much He cares about margin inside of us. And look at this. Suppose you're gathering your crops, then do not harvest all the way to the edges of your field. Do not pick up the grain you missed. Leave some for the poor people and the outsiders who live among you. Do not reap to the edges. Can I tell you, I think we not only reap to the edges, I think we go way beyond the margin of our life, spending the money I don't have, saying yes to more things that I have time for, or certainly more things that I have the heart to be able to do wholeheartedly. Traveling all the time because that's just the way that I've been told that it should be. But my friends, we cannot reap to the edges. We have to leave some for the poor and the outsiders. I catch it. When you read that, you're thinking about like those guys way out there. But what would be a modern interpretation for the outsiders who live among you? Outside, outsiders. Anybody who is outside of me. Anybody who's outside of this, myself, my sphere. So, there are many that are outside of me who live among me. And this is calling out a chance to say, great, make some margin. So, do you have time to have that conversation with your friend? Do you have time to read that book with your kids? Do you have time to have a conversation with your spouse that's more than five minutes? Oh, it's good. You're not five minutes. No, how about longer than that? Do you have the margin to be able to say yes to the person in your circle that they need a meal brought to them or somebody who needs help with yard work? That's what we're talking about. And I want you to hear that, and I don't want you to feel the shame of that. Man, that's an invitation. To arrange and rearrange my life, to know that in the kingdom, it's not just set it and forget it. So, you think you need that vacation. But the people that you love and the people that you're called to love need your margin. You think you need that time and that space. They need you and the margin of your life. And a few years ago, I just, I stopped saying I'm so busy. And the reason I stopped saying it is because I realized I'm actually speaking like an ungodly belief over my life. I am not so busy. I have time. I have time to live the life and to

love the people that God has called me to. And the reason I have time is because I'm so thankful to God and I'm so thankful for my life that I just know my life is expansive. I have everything I need in Jesus. So, I have time to live my life. I have time for people when they need a little bit of time. Hear me, I don't have time to do all the things that God hasn't called me to. But I have lots of time to do the things He has called me to. I won't always have the time to do the things He hasn't called me to. I have lots of time to do the things that He has called me to. God has not called you to all things. And the thing that probably takes up our margin more than anything are the good things. You don't have time for the good things that aren't the God things. You do have time to absolutely do everything He's called you to do. So, I'm going to teach you a word today that's just, it's profound. Ready? No. Here, say it with me. Exactly. That feels good, doesn't it? Because I don't have time for the things that God hasn't called me to. Do you know the things that God has called you to? Have you asked somebody? Have you processed it with God? Have you asked a spiritual leader? What is this season called to? What am I called to do? What should I spend my time on? Because the very best word to say to God is, yes. The answer is yes, God. What is the question? My answer is yes for whatever you have for me. What is the question now? I've made the margin. I have the space to say yes. Best word to say to God, yes. Say no to the world, no to the flesh, no to sin, yes to God. No to the world, no to the flesh, no to sin. Yes, to God, yes, God. I say yes to You.

So, my friends, it is spring break. A time to have rest. A time to get away. And yes, I'll be going on vacation this week. I'm going to enjoy all of it. I'm going to lean into all of it. I want to lean into the fullness of the life that God has called me to. I don't rest from my life, I rest for it. I don't want to vacate it, I want to get into it. I don't want to be emptied, I want to be filled up with everything that God has for me, and I want that for you also. I want you to have that rich and satisfying life in Jesus' name. So, over all of us, I declare, truly my soul finds rest in God. Truly, my soul finds rest in God. Not some of the time, all the time. Every day is a holiday. Every day is a holy day as my Soul finds rest in God. By the way, that'd be a great one to memorize and just speak over your life over and over and over. Truly, my Soul finds rest in God. So, Valley Creek, may you build the kind of life you don't want a snow day from. May you build the kind of life you don't need a vacation or to escape from. The kind of life you don't want to get away from, you want to get into. May you rest in Jesus' name. Not some of the time, all the time. Because that is the rest that He offers. Thank you, Jesus, that You offer us a chance to build our whole life on You. May we rest in Jesus' name. Come on, would you pray with me? So, Lord, thanks for Your goodness to us. Thank you for times of rest and relaxation and breaks, and vacation. We know that that is just part of the amazing life that we enjoy with You. So, over every single person that has some of those spaces coming up in those places, I just pray that they just enjoy it. I pray that they are so filled to overflowing with the goodness of God. And then God, I pray for a major change of mind for us. That we will think differently with You. We will think about our whole life as holy, set apart, and wholly all of me is in it. There's no segmentation, there's no duplicity, there's no different versions of me. There is just me living life with Jesus. All of it, and enjoying each and every day with Him. Thank You, God, that You are with us. Thank You, God, that You are leading us. Thank You, God, that You are good to us.

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Thank You, God, for the expansive life that we get to live with You in Your kingdom. Thank You, God, that our entire life can be a holiday, a holy day, set apart as unto the Lord. In Jesus' name, we want to lean into it. Humility, gratitude, margin. We say, yes, Lord. Yes, Lord. The answer is yes. Now, what is the question about our life? Thank you, Jesus, for your goodness. In your name, Amen.