



Proof At Last!

November 28, 2018

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I have proof at last! Some thought it wasn't possible – that maybe we were genetically deficient and that's why. Others acknowledged our heritage as the "frozen chosen" for our staid and proper approach to worship. Like searching for the Yeti, I wandered the country, seeking proof that Presbyterians weren't uniquely subject to stricter laws of gravity. At last night's Presbytery Gathering, I finally had my proof, and it's captured on videotape: Presbyterians are, in fact, able to lift their hands in worship. For at least 15 seconds, we overcame gravity's pull, responding to the rhythmic, hip-hop beat of our worship and education leaders, Hansi and Jeremy Bryan. (Check our Facebook page @presbytery.milwaukee to see the video proof!)

In the year's final Presbytery Gathering, we welcomed the Bryans to reflect on our theme of stewardship, particularly the stewardship of time. The Bryans had felt the hectic pull of ministry tugging at their family and their sanity, so they decided to pull back and ground themselves again in Scripture and prayer. By seeking 16 months of unstructured Sabbath in which they could rest, delight in the Lord, and meditate upon Scripture, they found a peace that allows their ministry to place Jesus at the center again. In turn, Jeremy urged us to seek the roots before we seek the fruits. Too often, we reverse that by chasing our mission and ministry activities to exhaustion.



He offered three, practical Sabbath practices:

- 1. *Be still and no.*** Say "no" to at least one thing in order to make more room for Sabbath and the rooting of oneself in prayer and Scripture. (This is a hard one for me! I kept thinking of the things that other people should set aside. "My husband should say "no" to...").
- 2. *Be still and now:*** Identify one practice in prayer, meditation, or delight into which the Lord is inviting you. Perhaps *lectio divina* will guide your study of Scripture. Someone suggested beginning prayer with silence, to seek God's voice, instead of launching in with our own petitions.
- 3. *Be still and know:*** Name one person for whom you should make more room in service, friendship, or encouragement. Jeremy explained that Millennials particularly are craving relationship, and through authentic friendship with people who love Jesus, they, too, will seek that personal relationship. We need to make time for authentic relationship – a core value you approved last night for the Presbytery.

For some, this message will be hard to absorb, particularly during Advent, when we get busier, rather than slow down. That's exactly why we need to hear this message now. I pray you will let go of perfection this season and simply delight in the Lord. I'll raise my hands to praise that!