

REST

I pause regularly to declare that God, not productivity, rules my life



WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

Any discussions on rest in regards to the Bible, need to start and have at their focus - Jesus. In Matthew 11:28, Jesus says this, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

Rest, true rest, the kind the Bible speaks of, can only come from Jesus. Rest, in a life apart from Jesus, is simply an imitation.

Rest is a common theme throughout the Bible and is first introduced at the very beginning. In Genesis 2, we read of God creating all of creation on 6 days. After this, he rested on the seventh day.

God didn't rest because it took every ounce of energy out of him to create, and he needed to recharge. God is all-powerful. God rested to set apart that time as holy, and in doing so, God set a standard and expectation for humanity.

Rest is not something nice we do for ourselves. It is a command that God gives us. Exodus 20 includes that command in the list of God's Ten Commandments. We are to remember the Sabbath and keep it holy. Rest is not simply taking a nap, or lying in a hammock while reading a good book (although both of those certainly can be part of rest).

Rest is intentionally pausing from all the tasks and busyness of our lives to stop and focus on God.

WHAT'S OUR PART?

In order to have a healthy life of rest, we need to have a healthy life of work. At times, work is treated like the opposite of rest. That isn't true when it comes to the Bible. Work is more like a partner to rest. For example, in Exodus 20, the command to remember the Sabbath includes a command to work, "Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God," Exodus 20:9-10a.

A healthy rhythm of rest includes a healthy rhythm of work. If work isn't the opposite of rest, what is? A heart that has a lack of trust for God. In order to pause and stop our work, we must put God first, and also trust that God will take care of everything while we are taking a pause.

When we refuse to rest, we are actually taking the reins from God and insisting that we be the driver.



PROCESS

Think through what you have learned and summarize it on your own words or write out how you would explain it to another person.

PRAY

- Ask God to show you if you are resting in a way that honors Him. Ask Jesus to allow you to focus on Him when you are looking for rest.

LOOK

- Look at how you are using your time. Do you have regular times of rest in your life, in your week, even in your day? Look for the patterns that exist in regards to your busyness and rest.

RESPOND

- Make a commitment to rest biblically this week. How will you pause? How will you focus on God? Rest is something that should drive us to delight in Jesus. How are you setting aside time to enjoy Jesus this week? Some examples of ways you might be able to do this can be: taking a walk outside and praising God for all He has done. Taking some time to sit in silence and solitude, as you think about Jesus, taking some time to sit and listen to some music, recognizing that our creativity is the result of us being made in the image of our creator. It doesn't have to be any of these ideas. Choose something that fits you best. How can you pause, rest and focus on Jesus?