

Is There Real Rest for Your Tired Soul?  
Life in Chaos (Matt 12:1-8)

I would like to begin today with a short survey that has three simple questions. Here is the first:

Are you **constantly tired**?

Comedian George Karlin, "One of the great things about getting old - is you can get out of all sorts of social obligations by just saying ... I'm tired."

"My day starts backward. I wake up exhausted, spend most of my day tired, and go to bed wide awake."  
Steven Wright (picture)

Humor aside - A 2015 US Gov survey states that **50% of Americans are tired more than 3 days of the week.** (Tired for this survey meant it affected their work, their desire to be with others, or do what they normally would do.)

Would **others** say you are a person who is **truly happy** with your life?

"When I was in grade school, they told me to write down what I wanted to be when I grew up. I wrote down happy. They told me I didn't understand the assignment, I told them they didn't understand life." - Adam Sandler

"I've reached that age where happy hour is a nap." anonymous thought (picture)

Harris poll in 2011 - **55% of Americans said that in general – there lives were unhappy.**

Harris poll in 2015 saw the **unhappy group increase to 58%.** (Unhappy was based on 7 questions about enjoying career, family, friends, purpose, etc. – with the thought being - is life disappointing in these areas.)

Do you have a **deep regret** you can't seem to shake?

"Speak when you are angry - and you'll make the best speech - you'll ever regret." Laurence J Peter

"This is what regret looks like." (picture - young comedian Russell Howard) (Peter – Management Prof from Can.)

Survey for US Today showed that **more than 60% of Americans over 50 have regrets about their past** because of how their actions have shaped their current life. **#1 regret and its affect – broken relationships that have suffered to this day.**

**We live in a country where many of us are tired, unhappy, and or have deep regrets.**

*What about you – are you tired, unhappy, or shackled by a regret?*

*These are all different – but they have one common affect – they **exhaust your soul.***

*Something deeper than just our body or our feelings - something deep within – wants relief.*

Listen to Jesus, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest."  
Matthew 11:28 (ESV)

*In our soul - each of us longs for His words to be true? Why ... because ...*

**Even a long sleep doesn't help if your soul is tired, laughing doesn't make your soul happy, and great success doesn't unshackle regret from your soul.** "...and I will give you rest." Jesus says...

Our tired soul groans for rest – and this rest is only found in Jesus' work – not ours. (warning / promise)

01. Seeking rest in our work – moves our soul to grow more and more exhausted.

02. Seeking rest in Jesus' work – moves our soul to trust and taste true rest.

01. Seeking rest in our work – moves our soul to grow more and more exhausted.

Matthew 12:1-2 (ESV) 1 At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. 2 But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, "Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath."

• **The religious leaders accuse Jesus and His disciples of breaking the Sabbath laws.**

Doing any work on the Sabbath was against God's given, written law (OT). *It punishable by death. (Ex 20:9-11)*  
Why was this so important to God?

**Sabbath** (*lit. cease, rest*) – Rest our soul in the person and work of God.

1. Show God as creator, provider, and sustainer, *not us*.
2. Show our work as good - *but not a provision for our soul*.

*The purpose of the Sabbath was to point us to the person and work of God as our only place our soul can rest.*

• **But, the religious leaders, teachers of the day - had made a false god out of the Sabbath laws.**

Jesus shows how they had done this – *and how we do this!*

Exhibit A: Matthew 12:3-4 (ESV) 3 He said to them, "Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, and those who were with him: 4 how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests?"

Showbread" or "bread of the presence" bc it was always to be in the Lord's presence. The table and bread declared two things: 1) God's **provision** (*This bread fed the priests at all times.*) 2) God's **PRESENCE** that calls us to relationship with Him. (*The bread was picture of God's presence through the intimate act of a meal.*)

Jesus points out that according to God's written Law – *this bread was for the priests alone.*

But God was not breaking his own law in letting David and his men eat this bread. There were exceptions for every law – to protect people and animals and to show God made the Sabbath law to point us to God – not to become our god that we worshipped. One of those exceptions in God's law for the Bread of Presence was when someone was in danger. David's story definitely fit this exception.

1 Samuel 21:1-4 (ESV) 1 Then David came to Nob to Ahimelech the priest. And Ahimelech came to meet David trembling and said to him, "Why are you alone, and no one with you?" 2 And David said to Ahimelech the priest, "The king has charged me with a matter and said to me, 'Let no one know anything of the matter about which I send you, and with which I have charged you.' I have made an appointment with the young men for such and such a place. 3 Now then, what do you have on hand? Give me five loaves of bread, or whatever is here." 4 And the priest answered David, "I have no common bread on hand, but there is holy bread—if the young men have kept themselves from women." *The passage goes on to say - David answered yes – even more they have kept themselves pure on a mission. So the priest gave David the bread of presence.*

David lies because he is trying to save himself. *Not good.*

David runs to the tabernacle – *where God is* – to find help. *GOOD.*

And, God allows David to have this bread. Why? Because David is good – *no because God is good.*

**The point – David was not going to find rest in His work. But in God's work on His behalf. Bread made for God and as a reminder to the people of who God is and how he acts – this bread, would save his life.**

Exhibit B: Matthew 12:5 (ESV) 5 Or have you not read in the Law how on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are guiltless?

Each Sabbath day, the priests on duty in the temple had to do what was defined as unlawful work for any other person to do. On the Sabbath, this work was punishable by death.

Numbers 28:9-10 (ESV) 9 "On the Sabbath day, two male lambs a year old without blemish, and two tenths of an ephah of fine flour for a grain offering, mixed with oil, and its drink offering: 10 this is the burnt offering of every Sabbath, besides the regular burnt offering and its drink offering.

*Yet God allowed the priests to do this work – bc there was an exception for every Law for the greater purpose of fulfilling God's greater redemption plan. Everything that was being done by the priest in Num. 28 was pointing people to see their great need for a sacrifice that **COULD** take away their sins and bring them to God's rest.*

Why were the religious leaders so bent out of shape about what Jesus and his disciples were doing?  
***They hated Jesus. Yes but why? ...***

**Over time, they had added so many extra laws to God's law that they**

**1) could not see the original provision of God's law,**

In order to keep the Sabbath law, the Jews had made lengthy commentaries on what it meant "to work". Over time these commentaries stop being a needed guide and became **equal to the law of God. The Mishna was the oral**

**Law.** (*Jesus never recognized this.*) There were 39 areas that encompassed 100's of things that were against the law to do on the Sabbath. By eating the grain, the disciples were breaking laws in the area of **reaping and winnowing**.

## 2) had helped make a false God out of the Sabbath.

*Instead of the Sabbath being a holy holiday or feast **made** to allow people to rest in God's work. They had turned the Sabbath into a god – in which they sought to find rest for their soul.*

***They hated Jesus because He was always exposing their false gods. He does the same to us ...***

**God is exposing two things in us:**

1) **#14** We believe-when we do the work of God, we will be rewarded with rest for our tired soul.

*\* If we serve the body of Christ (a command of God) – we will find rest for our soul's tiring search for this elusive thing – happiness.*

*\* If we give to God's work on this earth (a command of God) – we will find release for our deep regret and rest for our tired soul that has been on a desperate search for freedom.*

*\* If we love our neighbor (a command of God) – God will grant us restoring sleep that will free us from constant exhaustion and give rest to our tired soul.*

**When we make keeping God's law the way we find rest for our tired our souls – we have made a false god out of holy God's laws.** Like all false gods – it cannot deliver on its promise and just makes our soul more worn and exhausted.

2) We believe – somewhere in our work, is rest for our tired soul.

*Personally – I get tired from work. We all do – the question is – do we believe our work will satisfy our soul, make us happy, remove our regrets? I have lived there – to prove the doubters, to make up for past sins, - it doesn't work. It just left me physically tired and worn on the inside so I wanted to quit and go live in the mountains. Happened 8 years ago. During that time I got lost – and my soul was exhausted – constantly.*

*\* I began a pattern of blaming God for my failures – why didn't you do this. I did my part!*

*\* I started doubting God's presence and really - I simply wondered where he was.*

Same thing with the religious leaders who had made a god out of their work to find rest for their soul.

**Matthew 12:6-8 (ESV 6 I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. 7 And if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless.**

**- They accused Jesus – God - of sin. condemned the guiltless.**

*Because they didn't understand the spirit of the law – mercy – point us to our need for a Savior, for God and his work – they accused Jesus, God of sin for showing mercy in this law in letting his disciples eat.*

**- They were blind to who He was because they had another god – the law.**  
**something greater than the temple is here**

**Seeking to find rest for your soul in a false god – will blind your eyes to Jesus.**

*You will wonder where He is and why He is not more active in your life.*

**Seeking to find rest for your soul in a false god – will cause you to not trust that Jesus can give your soul rest now.**

**Seeking rest in our work – moves our soul to grow more and more exhausted.**

*You may believe He will give you eternity with Him – but you will doubt real rest for your weary soul can happen now. It will even make you believe heaven won't be that great. Imagine rest – real rest in your soul forever. Not because you are not working – you will work in heaven. But because Jesus gives rest forever. You can know a great and real taste of that now.*

*What happened to me ... well, listen to Jesus and I will finish my story.*

**Matthew 12:8 (ESV For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath."**

**02. Seeking rest in Jesus' work – moves our soul to trust and taste true rest.**

Jesus is saying,

1) I have come as man and I see and get your broken world. It is exhausting. Son of Man

2) I am GOD. I alone can give your soul rest. lord

Constantly exhausted – *come to me*. Truly unhappy *regardless of all you do – come to me*.

Is there Deep Regret – *come to me*.

3) I am Sabbath. Sabbath

I alone made your soul (creator), I alone can redeem your soul separated from me by sin (provider), and I alone can restore your soul broken by sin (sustainer).

*Remember, this was the point of the Sabbath. God is creator, provider, sustainer – and we can only find the true rest for our soul when we rest our soul in Him as His work as all these things.*

How do we find rest for our tired soul?

We place our soul in the person and work of Jesus.

Matt 11:28 (NLT) "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest."

*Sabbath meant no work. Trust me God said – I will provide and you will not only survive you will find true rest. When we place our soul in the person and work of Jesus we are saying:*

1) *I believe my work cannot give me rest.* I am sorry. My work only makes me soul exhausted.

2) *Jesus, I trust that you and your work can give my soul rest.*

*Jesus – came as God and man – and lived a sinless life.*

*Jesus – took on my sin, my attempts to find rest for my soul in all I do. Jesus became guilty of being a worshiper of other gods. He took on my sin of trying to remove my deep guilt (regret) and find happiness (meaning and purpose) in my work – even my religious work or just family doing, or job doings. Jesus became everything I have ever done to find rest for my soul.*

*Jesus – rose from the grave – conquering – a body that wears down, a soul that longs for happiness, and soul that can't remove its deep shame and guilt.*

**Placing your soul in the person and work of Jesus is saying Jesus – “you will restore my body (death – the ultimate exhaustion), you will give me purpose in a life with you (eternal happiness), and you will free from soul from guilt and shame (regret).”**

**Trust him now with your soul.**

Believer:

If we have trusted our soul to Christ – we do not stop longing for rest. Broken world piles up on us.

This requires us to turn from our work and trust in our deep identity in Christ.

In Christ, we are favored, accepted, forgiven, pleasing, - and this identity cannot be affected by what we do or don't do.

***I had to believe I had made my work a god. Specifically, that helping others did not give my soul the rest I longed for that was full of regret from the people I hurt, that all the people who I saw come to rest in Christ – did not give my soul the rest it longed for – it didn't make my soul happy. Had an awkward moment of tears in the mountains that freaked it the wildlife as heard the words I had read that day ...***

Matthew 11:28 (NLT) "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest."

1) Repent of seeking to find your rest in what you do.

2) Ask for the power by the Spirit of God who lives in you to believe that what Jesus has done is give you an identity that is favored, accepted, forgiven, pleasing – and it cannot be changed by what we do or don't do. *Come back to His presence and find your regrets removed, your body filled, and your purpose in Him given (happiness).*

**Seeking rest in Jesus' work – moves our soul to trust and taste true rest.**