

Sabbath Part 1 – Time to Rest (6-2-2019)

Introduction: Abby tubing – resting on the river (falling asleep, stuck on rocks, never tipped over!)

1) The Need for Rest

From the book: "Margin" by Dr. Richard Swenson

"We live with unprecedented wealth and all it brings. We have leisure, entertainment, convenience, and comfort. We have insulated ourselves from the unpredictable ravages of nature. Yet stress, frustration, and oftentimes even despair unexpectedly accompany our unrivaled prosperity . . . Something's wrong. People are tired and frazzled. People are anxious and depressed. People don't have the time to heal anymore."

Our Culture has no Margin, and so we fail to Rest properly. Factors that exhaust us and steal our margin:

- **Progress** – we tend to focus on the obvious things that we can measure (and say its worth it!), and not the hidden areas: spiritual, mental, emotional, relational (that often suffer).
- **Stress** – 2 areas: **distress** & **eustress** (everyone's tolerance is different, but we all have limits)
- **Change** – can be good & product, but it requires a lot (you lose or say good bye to something, the process it self is demanding, adjustment to what's new is hard)
- **Speed** – Our pace of life matters, are we constantly running from one thing to the next? Does a long line drive you insane? Why?
- **Complexity** – Our mental capacity has limits just as our bodies do, the more complex our lives, the greater the variety of details we have to keep up with, the higher our stress goes.
- **Intensity** – High demand, High pressure environments drain us (from the boardroom to the living room – CEO's and mothers pay the price)
- **Overload** – We all have limits, when those are reached (and often exceeded), we either adjust and learn to live within limits, or we pay the toll.

Statistics from the Barna Group (as shown in Andy Crouch's book – the Tech-wise Family)

Poll - Setting time aside for rest . . .

- 12% - set aside time each day for an activity that re-charges me
- 16% - set aside time each day to spend alone
- Only 14% of those polled said they took 1 day of rest per week

What do you do on your day of Rest? (This is from the people who do take a day of Rest)

- 37% Non-enjoyable work that needs to be done
- 44% Enjoyable work
- 19% No work at all (So only 2.7% of those polled take a real day of rest where they do no work at all)

2) The Source of Rest

- God worked & rested

Genesis 2:1-3 (ESV)

(1) Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. (2) And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. (3) So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

Notes: God works & rests, and then set aside (**holy**) the 7th day as a **blessed** day of rest!

- We need to work & rest too

The people are in the wilderness, having escaped Egypt & God begins to provide manna which only lasts a day and needs to be gathered everyday. There is one exception: on the 6th day they were told to gather double & God promised that it would keep (and not spoil) for an extra day . . .

Exodus 16:23-36 (ESV)

(23) (Moses) said to them, "This is what the LORD has commanded: 'Tomorrow is a day of solemn rest, a holy Sabbath to the LORD; bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over lay aside to be kept till the morning.'" . . . (27) On the seventh day some of the people went out to gather, but they found none. (28) And the LORD said to Moses, "How long will you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws? (29) See! The LORD has given you the Sabbath; therefore on the sixth day he gives you bread for two days. Remain each of you in his place; let no one go out of his place on the seventh day." (30) So the people rested on the seventh day.

Notes: We are just as guilty as they are – we don't take the rest that has been made for us!

- The Law of Rest

Exodus 20:8-11 (ESV)

(8) "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. (9) Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, (10) but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. (11) For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

- 3 Commands relate to our relationship with God: No other gods, no idols, don't take His name in vain
- 6 Commands relate to our relationship with others: honor parents, don't steal, murder, etc.
- The 4th Commandment is placed in between these sets – and it is the command to rest!

I wonder how much of our real issues are related not to a lack of desire for good relationships with God and others, but a lack of margin and rest so we can live out those God given desires.

3) The Purpose of Rest – a counter-cultural movement

Matthew 12:1-8 (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." (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? (5) Or have you not read in the Law how on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are guiltless? (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. (8) **For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath.**"

Notes: Jesus feeds the hungry on the Sabbath

- (Verses 3-4) 1 Samuel 21:1-6 (David and his hungry men get the holy bread from the Priest)
- (Verse 5) Numbers 28:9 (Priests perform "common duty" like sacrifices on the Sabbath)

Same story – but Mark's Gospel adds an important detail to the words of Jesus . . .

Mark 2:27-28 (ESV)

(27) And he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. (28) So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath."

Note: Sabbath wasn't a law for man to be burdened by, but a gift for man to enjoy!

Matthew 12:9-14 (ESV)

(9) He went on from there and entered their synagogue. (10) **And a man was there with a withered hand.** And they asked him, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"—so that they might accuse him. (11) He said to them, "Which one of you who has a sheep, if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not take hold of it and lift it out? (12) Of how much more value is a man than a sheep! So it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." (13) Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And the man stretched it out, and it was restored, healthy like the other. (14) But the Pharisees went out and conspired against him, how to destroy him.

Note: Jesus heals on the Sabbath – but note the specifics: you work with your hands, and he heals and strengthens a withered hand – the very purpose of the Sabbath!

Matthew 11:25-30 (ESV)

(28) Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. (30) For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Note: Jesus offers Rest – a yoke worth bearing for those who labor, are heavy laden, and souls needing rest.

Conclusion: Do you need to learn to Rest? Here are some questions to consider . . .

- How often do you rest? Is it consistent? Are you refreshed afterwards?
- When will you rest? Review your schedule and plan it.
- What brings true rest? Consider what fills your tank.
- How will you make that happen? You may have to say “No” & you may have to work to make space.