



BREAKTHROUGH & BREATHING ROOM
GEN. 1:26-2:3, 3:8-9, JOHN 15:1-8

CONNECT

What do you do to really relax? How often do you get a chance to do this?

WORD

Genesis 1:27 (ESV) - ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Genesis 2:2-3 (ESV) - 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.

John 15:1-8 (ESV) - ¹⁵ "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ² Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

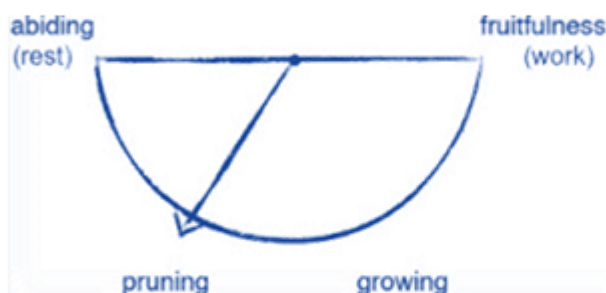
WHAT**What does the Bible say?**

These days we are obsessed with what we do. When people think about their identity it usually begins with some activity. They think of themselves as a teacher or a sales person, a doctor, or a lawyer. Within minutes of meeting someone new, we are asking them what they “do” as if that is the most important thing about them. And it doesn’t end with our occupations, we fill our lives with activity. We are constantly on the move and yet we are complaining that we just don’t have time for everything we need to do. We have lost the ability to rest. We have become human doings instead of human beings.

God thought that resting was so important that he included it in the Ten Commandments. He felt that a failure to observe the proper rest was as serious as murder, theft and adultery. So why did God see taking a rest as being so important? Perhaps the answer can be found in two of the most interesting and complex passages of scripture, those that we are examining today.

In the first passage, we see God at his most divine. He has spun the universe into existence with his will. He has shown his sovereignty over all things. Yet, at the climax we see him doing something that seems to be very...human. He rests. This seems to be at odds with the awesome power that has just been demonstrated. Perhaps rest is not such a human thing after all. Perhaps it is part of the image of God that has been impressed upon us by our creator.

We learn more in Jesus' example of the vine and the branches. Here Jesus tells us that we need to be fruitful in order to prove that we are his disciples. This seems to be something that requires activity from us, but how are we told to do this? We must abide. We must rest in Jesus' in order to become fruitful. This seems like a contradiction. We have to rest in order to get things done. God is emphasizing how important and necessary it is for us to consider the rhythms of life.



The passage in John 15 reveals a pattern like a pendulum swinging back and forth between rest and work. We cannot have one without the other. We are most effective when we work from rest instead of only resting from work.

SO WHAT

What is the relevance to my life?

- Was there anything in today's message that stood out to you? Was there anything that you would like to discuss with the group?
- Read Mark 2:13, 3:7, 3:13, 4:35, 5:1, 5:21 and 6:45-46. What importance does Jesus place on resting in these passages?

- Murderer. Adulterer. Thief. Workaholic? The Ten Commandments seem to place overwork right up there with some pretty serious sins. Why do you think that taking time to rest was so important to our relationship with God that he felt the need to include it in the “Top 10”?
- What happens to our relationship with our loved ones if we are constantly on the go and don’t spend quality time with them? How does this apply to our walk with God?

NOW WHAT

How do I apply the word to my life?



How does this lesson change the way you think about work and rest? Why did God choose this moment to bring this lesson to you?



What has God laid on your heart with this lesson? How does understanding the importance of rest change your relationship with him?



What does God want you to do differently this week as a result of this lesson? How will you change the way you work and rest?

How can we help you and hold you accountable? How can we pray for you? What can we do to show our love for you this week? Who do you know that needs to hear this lesson? Who can you share it with?

