

Slow Down

No Rhythm

Welcome to summer! Over the next few weeks, we will be talking about the art of Slowing Down. This is important because if we don't slow down, we won't reach our destination.

Spell "Rhythm" because you don't have any.

RHYTHM

- We live in such a fast-paced, always plugged-in, 24-7 culture. Every area of life can begin to feel like a race. But every race has a pit stop. We must learn to slow down and refuel, or we'll end up broken down somewhere.
- A lot of good things (going to work, driving the kids around, handling responsibilities can drain us emotionally and spiritually)
- Some people can even become unraveled, navigating the pressure of keeping all the plates spinning. Life can feel more like a balancing act than a journey
- Salvation: wide enough place to dance, not a tightrope walk.

Jesus promises a full life, not a full schedule.

John 10:10 (AMP)

I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance [to the full, till it overflows].

John 7:37-39 (TPT)

Then on the most important day of the feast, the last day, Jesus stood and shouted out to the crowds—"All you thirsty ones, come to me! Come to me and drink! Believe in me so that rivers of living water will burst out from within you, flowing from your innermost being, just like the Scripture says!" Jesus was prophesying about the Holy Spirit that believers were being prepared to receive. But the Holy Spirit had not yet been poured out upon them, because Jesus had not yet been unveiled in his full splendor.

Example: *"More" is better persuasion. When building a fire, I tend to add too many logs and many times this causes it to go out. It's actually not the log that makes the fire burn, it's the space between the logs where there's oxygen. Too much of even good things will cause the fire to go out. The space is as important as the actual logs (Burn out or too many logs on the fire)*

The most important question isn't how many logs we are burning but how much space do we have.

- I've experienced this numerous times. Sometimes it's the pressure and demands of life that put those there and sometimes I add them to the fire myself.
- There have been times when I've worn "business" as a badge. "Busy people are important people."
- My "get it done" personality has worked against me

Rhythm Everywhere:

- **Universe:** the planets, the waves, the ticking of a clock, the songs we just sang.
- **Bodies:** the beating of our hearts gives life to our bodies, our lungs filling with air, brain waves, the movement of our cells.
- **Spirits:** spiritual and emotional well-being
 - Farmers even use rhythm. God gave them a rhythm for planting a reaping their crops.
 - Leviticus: the land was to be given a break every 7 years. A sabbath or rest for an entire year. Even the dirt needs a break! The soil needs a rhythm of resting so it can produce again.
 - Everything that God created needs rest and restoration and we are not exempt.
 - When we ignore this principle, we pay a high price. We wreak havoc on our bodies and souls. We wake up tired and go to bed stressed.

You can live at warp speed without it warping your soul. Lance Whit

Rhythm of Jesus:

- Jesus was busy. He had so much to do in 3 years: recruit and train disciples, heal the sick and raise the dead, get the attention of the religious leaders, and establish this new Kingdom all before going to the cross to be crucified and rise from the dead then sending His followers to change the world.
- He had a lot to accomplish in a short amount of time, yet we never read in the gospels that He was hurried or too busy. He always had time for people and their needs.
- Jesus is in Capernaum ministering and this was a busy day. He had healed people and cast out demons. At the end of the day, they brought everyone in the town who was sick or possessed to Jesus' front door and He healed them. The next verse:

Mark 1:35 (NIV)

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.

- Jesus deliberately chose a rhythm that allowed for space, quiet, and time just to be with His Father.
- Jesus practiced the spiritual discipline of withdrawing from the noise and demands of life to just be with God

The Bible teaches us spiritual disciplines, not to earn our way to God but to learn how to live in rhythm with God.

- The goal isn't information but transformation.
- Jesus has always been more about who you are becoming than how much you are doing. (Human beings not Human doers) Most people spend their lives doing, not being.

Philippians 3:10 (AMP)

¹⁰ [For my determined purpose is] that I may know Him [that I may progressively become more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him, perceiving and recognizing and understanding the wonders of His Person more strongly and more clearly], and that I may in that same way come to know the power outflowing from His resurrection [^[a]which it exerts over believers], and that I may so share His sufferings as to be continually transformed [in spirit into His likeness even] to His death.

- Paul already knew Jesus, but he wanted to know Him even more.
- "To know" active on going tense. It's continual!
- The power overflowing from the resurrection is the Holy Spirit.," I want to know Him!"
- The Holy Spirit restores and strengthens us and without a relationship with Him we will feel wiped out and powerless.

Spiritually Winded?

Just like if your physical heart gets out of rhythm can cause shortness of breath, when we get out of rhythm spiritually it can cause us to experience spiritual/emotional fatigue.

Proverbs 4:23 (CSB)

Guard your heart above all else, for it is the source of life.

- We guard our wallets, our cars/houses, phones, and bank accounts but so many times we leave our hearts unguarded.
- One of the strategies that God gives us to guard our hearts and develop a healthy spiritual rhythm is the Sabbath.
- Not talked about very much even in church. Like one of those commands that we don't have to do anymore. (Rest when we are dead)
- Many of us are taught how to "GO" but no one ever taught you how to "STOP"

Just like your car needs a gas pedal and a brake...so does your life.

God "Sabbathed"

- God created the world and said, "it is good." He created humans and said, "it is very good." He created the Sabbath on the seventh day and said, "it is Holy."
- The first place in the Bible where something is called "Holy" isn't a person or place, but a sacred space of time set apart for rest.

Genesis 2:3 (NIV)

³ Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

- God didn't rest because He was tired from creating the universe. He doesn't grow tired. He was teaching us rhythm....to Slow Down.
- In Exodus, Sabbath makes it to God's top 10 list. It's the 4th command and it has the most explanation added to it. And it's the only spiritual habit mentioned in the 10 Commandments.

Exodus 20:8-10 (NIV)

⁸ "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping 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.

- God values work and rest. You can't really appreciate the value of the sabbath unless you've worked hard the rest of the week. It's a time to recharge and refuel.

Exodus 20:11 (NIV)

¹¹ For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

- "Therefore" is a connector word so God is connecting His rest at creation to us practicing rest in our lives.
- There's a rhythm hardwired into creation that goes all the way back to creation: work and rest, produce and replenish, work hard and unplug hard.

"Remember the Sabbath, don't overthink it."

- The religious leaders accused Jesus of violating the Sabbath: they made it about how far one walked, if prayed for healing, ministered, making food, even lighting a candle or fire.
- Jesus refused to be bound by the man-made laws that stole the power of the Sabbath
- In every confrontation about the Sabbath, Jesus never dismissed its validity. He did tell them they were missing the point.

Mark 2:27 (NIV)

"The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath."

- Paraphrase: "Guys, I gave you the Sabbath and you've made it complicated." You've made it a religious burden. Sabbath is a "get to," not a "got to." It's meant to lighten your load, not add to it."
- The Sabbath is about rest and relationship, not rules.

Havdalah: *Jewish tradition that symbolizes the practical impact of the Sabbath. At the beginning of Sabbath, they light a candle that says that this day is different than the other six days. This day isn't about work and productivity but it's about rest and relationship with God and with each other. When it ended, they would extinguish the candlelight with wine. Then they would pour some of the wine into a saucer, representing that when you practice Sabbath it spills over into the other days of your week. You will experience the fullness of life on the other days because you fully honored the Lord on the Sabbath day. ("We receive an extra soul.")*

- God is telling us that He has a rhythm for us where we can look more like Him.
- I've experienced personally how practicing the Sabbath makes me a better man, husband, father, and pastor. When I don't, my relationships pay the price.
- I came to church! Is that it? Corporate worship and word are a huge part

The Sabbath means to STOP

- God invites us to stop. Stop producing, striving, and achieving.
- Accept His invitation and give yourself permission.
- Most of think we can't. We've been trained to think we can't take our foot off the gas.
- You are always "on" and never "off"

The Sabbath means to REST

- The bible actually uses Sabbath and rest together. The original language means rest for the body and soul.
- Many of us are sleep deprived. You may sleep at night, but your soul isn't resting.
- Before the creation of the light bulb, people slept an average of 11 hours a night.
- God is giving you permission to take a long nap today. What if that one of the most spiritual things you do today?
- Active resting: walking, reading, exercising, playing.
- Component of enjoyment that fills your tank back up.
- If you always give out and never fill up, you'll not have anything to give. What fills your tank? What is life-giving to you?

The Sabbath means to WORSHIP

- This place is part of worship, but it's not contained here. We worship as we go. But what we do in here should change how we live out there. Let the songs we sing and the scripture we study transform how we live out there.
- We are separating FROM work and TO God.
- It's more difficult to be overwhelmed with life when you take time to be overwhelmed by God

Slow Down: We Need a Spiritual Pacemaker *Welcome to Summer but the Holy Spirit is inviting us to slow down.*

Matthew 11:28-30 (Message)

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”

What do you need to do this week to create a healthy spiritual rhythm?

What do I need to stop doing this week to create space for a healthy spiritual rhythm?