

Slow Down

Learning 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.

Learning God's rhythm of stopping and going is the key to a full life.

- This is a way of life not another thing to do. It takes patience and perseverance. Don't get frustrated and think it isn't working when you don't play on beat at first

John 10:10 (AMP)

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

Story: (I'm a "get there" person.) On a family trip to Disney, the fireworks were over, it had been a great day, but now it was time to beat the 30K people to the buses and boats. I picked up Timbo and we headed out, leaving the other half of my family. We got separated from Emma...a great day ended very badly. How fast we got to the boat didn't matter anymore. I had lost what was important because of "tunnel vision". The tunnel was uncomfortable initially for some, but you've adapted to a fast-paced life. But who wants to get to the boat and miss what's important? There are people and experiences that God wants our lives to intersect that we will miss if we don't slow down.

Who in your life needs you to slow down and walk with them?

Illust: The fastest distance between two points is a straight line but it creates collateral damage. If we slow our roll and our line looks more like a spiral, then we can get to our destination with more people. Draw picture.

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."

Our pace will determine the flow of Jesus' goodness and kindness through us.

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"

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."
- One of God's reasons for freeing Israel was to give them a Sabbath. Slaves don't have a Sabbath, free people do.

What won't let you Sabbath, owns you.

- 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.*

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?