

Rooted in the Spirit

Living from Rest • Message #6

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Prayer Points for Prayer Time:

- **Ask God to help you slow down and be still.**
- **Pray and invite God's presence into your day.**
- **Pray for the Father to show you how to make space for a Sabbath each week.**

Scripture Reading:

Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. By the seventh day God had finished the work He had been doing; so on the seventh day He rested from all his work. 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.

Genesis 2:1-3 (NIV)

This is the Word of the Lord.

Bryan Jones

A. Introduction

My wife and I lived in Chicago for 12 years, and the one thing we never got used to was snow. In fact, when we bought our first house in Chicago, we had very, very little money left after purchasing the home, so we bought flowers on May 9 to decorate our new home... fast forward to the next week ... May 16... it snowed and killed all our flowers... and I told Steph if Jesus doesn't return today, I'm going to be angry... And he didn't, so I felt justified in my anger all day long.

But I remember being in a few snowstorms that were so bad you couldn't see a few feet in front of you... Do you know that in the Midwest, especially in earlier times, farmers would leave their homes to go to their barns in blizzards to get some extra food, and in some cases, because they couldn't see anything in front of them, they would literally get lost and die 10 feet from their home? In fact, it became common practice to actually tie a rope around you so you didn't get lost when going from your home to the barn. Today, in certain parts of Canada, they still do this.

Today, there are so many things competing for our attention and our hearts ... There is a blizzard of activities and many of us constantly feel lost in how to navigate life and live in tune with the presence of God ... and if you don't learn how to stay attached to God, how to be TIED to HIS PRESENCE and HIS PURPOSES, you can die, spiritually speaking, 10 feet from the church.

We have to have practices and rhythms in this crazy world to allow us to return home to Jesus, spiritually speaking...

In fact, I've been working at a church for 20 years and for a lot of that time, I felt constantly exhausted, stressed, unhealthy, doing a bunch of things that looked good on the outside, but my soul was dead... Now, today, I feel more in tune with Jesus than I ever have. I can hear His voice. I've learned how to stay tied to Jesus more than ever before ... In fact, there are two things I do that have helped me stay connected to Jesus. (These are the ones that have helped me more than anything to hear and connect with the presence of God; maybe there are a few others for you.)

1. Daily time with God (eremos)
2. Sabbath (this one has helped me hear from God as much as anything)

Today I want to speak about this idea of sabbath... A lot of us really don't know much about it or how to do it... We think it's from the Old Testament ... that it doesn't apply today ... But sabbath has transformed my life, and I'm hoping today God awakens a commitment to this practice and rhythm in you.

B. Sabbath

1. **Is about learning to REST.**
(Exodus 16:21-23. C/R: Genesis 2:2-3)

Each morning everyone gathered as much as they needed, and when the sun grew hot, it melted away. On the sixth day, they gathered twice as much—two omers for each person—and the leaders of the community came and reported this to Moses. He said to them, "This is what the Lord commanded: 'Tomorrow is to be a day of sabbath rest, a holy sabbath to the Lord. So bake what you want to bake and boil what you want to boil. Save whatever is left and keep it until morning.'"

Exodus 16:21-23 (NIV)

This is a reference to the Israelites in the wilderness. Since they didn't have food, God provided for them by literally raining down manna from heaven. They were to gather the food each day, except it says that before the day of the sabbath, they are to grab twice as much... because notice, the sabbath is a day of rest.

This is one of the first times it's mentioned in the bible...

Corrie ten Boom once said that ... *if the devil can't make you sin, he'll make you busy*. There's truth in that. Both sin and busyness have the exact same effect—they cut off your connection to God, to other people, and even to your own soul.

No joke, I used to pray, *God, make it where I don't need sleep*. I just wanted to constantly be moving and going, but my soul was often dead 10 feet outside the church.. In fact, I used to drink 1-2 of these a day for several years... (show pic of 5-hour energy drink) ... so it's safe to say I'm probably going to die a little early.

By the seventh day God had finished the work He had been doing; so on the seventh day He rested from all his work. 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.

Genesis 2:2-3 (NIV)

That word rested is the Hebrew word **SABBAT**, which means to stop, or to cease.

Now, the moment you speak about resting, stopping, slowing down... so many people go, *"There is no way I could do that; I'm too social. I need to be around people, doing something...* Notice what it says: GOD RESTED...

You don't understand, I'm type A. I have to be doing something... GOD RESTED...

I can't turn off my mind; there is too much to get done; this rest thing is easy for you to say... I've got a full-time job, chores, kids, and life is crazy. Maybe later... GOD RESTED...

Now, God didn't rest because He was tired, exhausted, and needy... No, it was a time to celebrate and delight.

2. **Is learning to SPEND a day with God.**
(Exodus 16:23. C/R: Exodus 16:27-29)

He said to them, "This is what the Lord commanded: 'Tomorrow is to be a day of sabbath rest, a holy sabbath to the Lord. So bake what you want to bake and boil what you want to boil. Save whatever is left and keep it until morning.'"

Exodus 16:23 (NIV)

For many of us, the challenge isn't starting or ending a day with God. The challenge is spending a day with Him, learning to be tuned into His voice each day...

For so many people, we spend time with God, and then we go about our day. But what if we learned to train our minds and heart to stay tuned into God... my daughters got some walkie talkie for Christmas, and they constantly would see how far they could go... while keeping in tune ... one time, Selah was in my car and Grey was in the other... and when we got too far away, Selah said, *Dad, speed up... I want to talk to Grey...* so I broke the traffic laws for my daughter. The point is, some of us get so busy and unintentionally distant from God that we don't hear his voice... sabbath is about staying close to God to hear His voice.

See, if I gave you 30 days just to sleep in and rest, some of you would come back still drained and stressed because you haven't learned to be spiritually replenished. At the same time, you can be in tune with Jesus and have no creativity, no energy, no optimism because your body is just so worn out...

Sabbath is a day of physical rest and spiritual replenishment. You need both...

I want you to see that God is trying to create rhythms and practices that will help the Israelites stay connected with Him... so He gives them the sabbath.

Sabbath is a time to slow down and taste your food, sabbath is a time to feel the sunlight on your face, sabbath is a time to learn to be present with the people around you, sabbath is about learning to delight in the gifts you've been given.

Sabbath is about positioning yourself to hear from God; to the Jews, it was equal to all the other commandments, such as don't kill.

But I want to show you something really amazing. There are three things God blesses in the 6-day creation account in Genesis 1 and 2....

1. Animals – Be fruitful and multiply
2. People- Be fruitful and multiply
3. Sabbath- Made it holy

Now, why bless animals and people and then a day? What's going on? See, animals and humans are a way of bringing new life, physical life, into the world. Sabbath is a way to bring soul life, a way for us to be FILLED UP on the inside... The first two are about physical life, the sabbath is about spiritual life, it's about our souls awakening to the FULLNESS of JESUS.

But I don't want to make it seem super easy; sabbath is hard... Go back to Exodus 16.

God gives them the gift of sabbath in Exodus 16. He shows them this rhythm of physical rest and spiritual replenishment, and notice what it says ...

Nevertheless, some of the people went out on the seventh day to gather it, but they found none. Then the Lord said to Moses, "How long will you refuse to keep my commands and my instructions? Bear in mind that the Lord has given you the Sabbath; that is why on the sixth day He gives you bread for two days. Everyone is to stay where they are on the seventh day; no one is to go out."

Exodus 16:27-29 (NIV)

The Israelites couldn't get it; they were on 24/7. They had tasks to be done, activities and deadlines to meet. And if we are honest, most of us are enslaved to our phones and accomplishments. And honestly, it's just hard and difficult to slow down... and for many people, when they do, it's like you can be so distracted and overwhelmed, it's hard to focus.

But if you stay with it, I believe it will be one of God's greatest gifts to you...

3. **Is about learning to live in JOY. (Exodus 31:16-17)**

"The Israelites are to observe the Sabbath, celebrating it for the generations to come as a lasting covenant. It will be a sign between me and the Israelites forever, for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed."

Exodus 31:16-17 (NIV)

I have always been a workaholic, I confess that to you... In fact, one time I was meeting with a person, and I was telling her that I'm a workaholic, and she said *Yeah, me too*. I said, *Yeah, I showed up to work the day my son was born for a meeting*, and she said, *Oh, you are way worse than I am*. But I have never really known how to slow down, never really known how to rest. I couldn't turn my mind off, it was always racing, always stressed and worn out...

But I had this moment last year where I was in the front yard with the kids... and it was sabbath, so we were playing in the yard, walking around, and I got the leaf blower. I walked straight up to the girls and pulled the trigger on the wind, hitting their face, and their hair went straight back, and their eyes got big... and then one of them just started belly laughing, and then Steph and I started laughing... and then Steph

started laughing, and I started laughing. And I'm telling you, no joke, for 10 minutes they would try and sneak up and I just kept using the blower... laughing, smiling, and just enjoying the moment... fully present...

You know, if you have a toothache or some ailment, it's amazing that after a while, you can just learn to live with some of those annoyances and pains... It's amazing how for years I learned to live constantly worn out, exhausted, discouraged and weary... without joy.

But being in the front yard last year, tears of joy filled my eyes, and I thought to myself, *I'm me*. This is who I'm supposed to be.

Our family loves sabbath... Our sabbath is Friday... we don't have a huge agenda. We each spend time in the morning with Jesus, we always get good food, we talk, we go on walks, we leave our phones on the charger, we breathe, and we celebrate. Our son loves sabbath... He calls it slumber party... because he gets to stay up late and hang out with mom and dad, and then sleeps in our room... and He's the reason I went to Costco and bought a king-size bed!

How is delight a part of God? ... because it's learning to not work for Him but live with Him... God is just as much a part of the good food, the ice cream, the laughter, the slumber party.

Let me encourage you. A sabbath rhythm takes a bit to learn: how to slow down, rest, breathe and delight. It's not a day off or a day to do all the dreaded chores. Rest, do joyful things, spend time with Jesus and allow your soul to find new life...

Tristan drew a picture of slumber party.

It's time for us to admit 24/7 isn't working anymore and step into the gift of 24/6...

God's gift to flourish in your soul is to move from 24/7 to 24/6 living.

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Sabbath is about positioning yourself to hear from God.

Think about it. Sabbath is a big enough deal to God that it made his top 10—it's in the Ten Commandments.

When we don't observe the Sabbath, there are consequences. We become emotionally unhealthy, fatigued, worried, and stressed. Our creativity or intellect goes down. We become burned out, negative, weary, and discouraged.

Sabbath is about positioning yourself to hear from God; it's about delight and rest.

Pick a Time

Prepare a rhythm

- **Morning**

1. COFFEE
2. Sit for 15 minutes, breathe
3. Spend time with God
4. Run

- **Afternoon**

1. Lunch with Steph
2. Time with kids

- **Night**

1. Dinner
2. Prayer Walk
3. Movie/Game Night

Protect and value that rhythm. You have to protect and value it... Listen, I was building furniture, and I thought I need to violate sabbath, and just the other day I'm already putting up Christmas lights (you can judge away but Christmas is a way better time than for Halloween and Thanksgiving, it's a savior's birth) ... saying I'll do it on Friday because you can't get everything done... sometimes you have to sacrifice. That means you can't do that home project, or if you have different schedules, say, *Great for you, but there's no way to do it.* If you see the value, you will protect it. For instance, if I said once a week you're coming downtown and I am going to give you 25,000 dollars, you wouldn't be like ... No way ... you would see value... my soul has found the value of sabbath every week I start to look forward to it.

We will stay up late, Tuesday-Thursday, if we need to protect sabbath.

Let me read you a verse...

"The Israelites are to observe the Sabbath, celebrating it for the generations to come as a lasting covenant. It will be a sign between me and the Israelites forever, for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed."

Exodus 31:16-17 (NIV)

Exodus 31:17 literally means to breathe in, take a breath... (now God isn't tired, He's delighting)

How does God work and create? He uses His words; He spoke life into Adam... so for 6 days He exhales but on the 7th day He takes in... He inhales.

In some ways, sabbath is inhaling God, inhaling His joy and His life and freedom.

Do you need more of God's presence, His power, His peace, His joy, His rest? Have you found a way to stay tied to Jesus in the flurry of activities and demands that happen each day? ... because it's so easy to die, spiritually speaking, 10 feet outside the church... Sabbath is God's gift to stay in tune and learn to hear His voice in new ways!