

WAYPOINTS

Rest Before Leisure

Introduction

Mark 6:31

And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.

Gen 2:2-3

And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

- Today we see very little biblical appreciation for the meaning and pursuit of genuine rest.
- We are a tired generation evidenced by health problems related to overwork and exhaustion.
- The paradox is that we are such a leisure-orientated society with an industry providing goods for the pursuit of fun.
- Genuine rest is different than the pursuit of leisure.
- **Exodus 31:17** - "...on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed."
- **Genesis 2:2-3**
 1. God did not need to rest, but He choose to rest.
 2. He set the precedential rhythm that rest was not a luxury, but rather a necessity.
 3. Rest has become a perverted amusement that provides a temporary lift but does not restore the soul.
 4. God means for us to have diversion, laughter, and recreation, but did not intend for it to replace rest.
- God through example gives us three principles of genuine rest.

Time of Reflection

- God gave His work meaning and acknowledged its completion.
- He taught that there is a necessary appreciation and dedication for our routines.
- Rest should include us gazing on our work and asking:
 1. For whom did I do this work?
 2. How well was the work done?
 3. What were my motives to work?
- In our busyness we delay reflection, learn to get along without it, and lose sight of "What's this all for?"
- To allow the meaning of work to be computed merely by the amount of the paycheck leaves lives barren.
- Without reflection, rest-less work styles produce restless people.

*Prone to wander,
Lord, I feel it;
Prone to leave
the God I love..
-Robert Robinson*

Heb 4:11
*Let us labour
therefore to
enter into that
rest, lest any
man fall after
the same
example of
unbelief.*

Time of Recalibration

- Secondly, biblical rest restores us when we pause amidst daily routines to sort out truths and commitments by which we are living.
- We are bombarded daily with signals competing for our loyalties and labors.
- We often have to make quick decisions and value judgments: by what standard of truth do we make these decisions?
- Our inexorable inward drift must be checked and measured against the truths of God.
- Rest is not only looking back at the meaning of my work, but also a refreshing of my belief and commitment to Christ.

*"Blessed be to
God for the day
of rest and
religious occupa-
tion wherein
earthly things
assume their
true size. Ambi-
tion is stunted."
-William
Wilberforce*

Luke 4:16
And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

Luke 5:16-17
And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed. And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them.

We do not rest because our work is done; we rest because God commanded it and created us to have a need for it.

Time of Realigning

- Rest that is biblical reaffirms our intentions to pursue a Christ-centered tomorrow.
- General George Patton demanded “*What is your mission?*” from his men, and wanted them to articulate exactly what the mission was.
- Jesus often withdrew to seek solitude because He was drawn to the rest of gaining strength and direction for His next mission.
 1. It is no surprise He met every new encounter with a fresh burst of wisdom.
 2. No wonder he had courage not to fight back and His spirit was always rested.
 3. Without this kind of rest, our private life will always be strained and disordered.
- We do our families and friends a favor by withdrawing from them to God for rest. For when we return, we have something to offer that God could not have given us in any other atmosphere.

As Christ pressed stillness into a storm, order into a being of a demon-possessed maniac, health into a desperately sick woman, and life into a dead friend, so He seeks to press peace into the harried world of the man and woman who has been in the marketplace all week. But there is a condition. We must take the time to withdraw and receive it.