

Rest: cease work or movement in order to relax, refresh oneself, or recover strength.

Rest means to stop or to pause. But if we are being honest with ourselves, many of us have a hard time of relaxing and refreshing because there is always so much to do! We may take a vacation now and then, but a full on stop? Who has time for that? We have become conditioned to always be looking for the next thing. To grow and expand on what we have, or to become better at what we do. Becoming the top salesman, the lead mechanic, teacher of the year. We are conditioned to do, do, do.

Paul writes this in Philippians, he says...

I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength. Philippians 4:12-13 NIV

Be grateful for what you have. You have everything you need in this life when you accept who Jesus is and what he has done.

So here is the part so many of us figure out. If we do not learn to rest, to intentionally rest and take a break, we will break. Resting isn't optional, sabbath isn't optional, you can choose to do it, or life will make you do it.

What we are tempted to believe that things will go better for the family if we work nonstop. If we just keep working, and pushing, we'll get more done, and eventually feel more peaceful. Research is showing that this isn't true. In fact, several studies demonstrate that "people get more done when they work fewer hours, and less done when they work more hours."

Quickly let's break down what the sabbath is.

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. Exodus 20:11 NIV

Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the Lord your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the Lord your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day. Deuteronomy 5:15 NIV

Taking time to rest must be intentional.

You can't leave your check engine light on forever and expect for your car not to break down.

You must ...

Make A Plan

Plan ahead to what taking a Sabbath day looks like for you. Evaluate your status. Are you single? Married? Married with Kids? Single with Kids? Young Kids? Old Kids? Retired? This status is important to discovering what you're sabbath will look like.

Will you Sabbath alone or with others? Consider your personality. Are you introverted or extroverted? Do you work alone all week and crave time with people? Are you home with kids all week and needing some time alone with God? Or are you around people in an office all week and designing some alone time on the Sabbath?

A wise man thinks ahead; a fool doesn't and even brags about it! Proverbs 13:16 TLB

Sabbath gives us a chance to step off the hamster wheel and listen to the voice that tells us we are beloved by God. This Sabbath heals us from our compulsion to measure ourselves, but what we accomplish, who we know, and the influence we have. Sabbath enables us to define ourselves less by our achievements and more as, beloved daughters, and sons of God. As we become more aware of how much we are cherished as children of God, we grow in our trust of God.

In order to connect, listen and grow with God, we first need to be able to **Be Still**

God has everything we need to sustain us, and Sabbath is about returning to trust in God as the creator and sustainer. It's a way of reminding ourselves that he has delivered us from bondage.

In Hebrews, the author writes...

So there is a special rest still waiting for the people of God. For all who have entered into God's rest have rested from their labors, just as God did after creating the world. So let us do our best to enter that rest. Hebrews 4:9-11 NLT

Doing our best means abiding in Christ, not performing for Christ, that is the goal.