

## 5 Reflections for the Rest-Resistant

### Do you resist making rest a priority in your life?

Do you find yourself resisting

- taking breaks in your daily work?
- going to bed at a scheduled time for 7-8 hours of sleep?
- taking a full day away from occupational work and home-related work on the weekend?
- taking vacation time?

Here are 5 reflections that focus on the reexamination of the thoughts/beliefs that may be driving your resistance to rest:

#### Is more always better?

Consider that the Old Testament Sabbath commandments included a rest period for the land. For six years the Israelites were to sow, prune and gather, but 7th year was designated as a year of rest for the land. (*Lev. 25:3-4*)

In agriculture, a time of rest for the land (known as letting the land lie fallow) is established in the interest of the quality of future crops. This rest period allows for the restoration of minerals to the soil and is especially important in fields that are prone to depletion or where demanding crops have been grown.\* Good soil produces good crops! Demanding efforts can quickly deplete us. Perhaps this is why a clarification of one of the ten commandments was given in *Exodus 34:21* - *Six days you shall labor, but on the seventh day you shall rest; even during the plowing season and harvest you must rest.* It appears that rest is important even in seasons of important and time-sensitive work.

It is not always better to do more because sometimes doing more is actually counterproductive.

#### How might taking the time to rest increase the quality of your efforts?

#### Is it all up to me?

Our days are filled with producing, providing, protecting, and making progress. When we rest, we take a risk as we cease all of our activities associated with surviving and thriving for ourselves and our loved ones. Taking that risk becomes difficult if we believe that we are responsible for it all! *Psalm 127* reminds us that the activities of building, watching over and toiling, in the absence of our acknowledgement of God as protector and provider, is useless. Why? Because God is the ultimate source of everything we have and need, and He wants us to live in dependence on him.

Taking the time to rest while the world keeps on working is one way that we demonstrate our reliance on God.

#### In what area of your life do you need to trust God more so you can get more rest?

### Is it all about me?

We are valuable, but not so valuable that we cannot rest. *Psalm 103* reminds us that the things of the world are temporary and the things of God are eternal - *The life of mortals is like grass, they flourish like a flower of the field; the wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more. But from everlasting to everlasting the Lord's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children—with those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts.*(vs.15-18) When our life is over, the world will go on. Likewise, when we rest, God continues to supervise the earth's spinning on its axis without any assistance from us.

When we rest, we acknowledge that the world does not revolve around our contributions.

**Where does a sense of pride in your responsibilities or accomplishments cause you to miss out on getting enough rest?**

### Is it all about accomplishment?

The fruits of the Spirit are not accomplishments. Rather, the fruits of the Spirit reflect who we are as we go about accomplishing things (*Gal. 5:22-23*). The world drives us to become known by how much we do. Jesus encourages us to make Him known by how well we love each other (*John 13:35*). Have you ever been so wrapped up in your work that you diminished your capacity to give and receive love?

When we rest, we open up opportunities to experience blessings and live out values that are not very much valued by a dog eat dog world.

**In what ways has your resistance to rest impacted your ability to love?**

### Is it a weakness to be human?

God put His Spirit in our very needy physical bodies. These human bodies need to be attended to on a consistent basis. God does not seem to be bothered or upset by our humanness. God did not tell Elijah to "pick yourself up by his bootstraps" when he was hungry, fatigued and at the end of his emotional rope. Instead, God's first response was to meet the needs of Elijah's human body by encouraging food and rest (*1 Kings 19:3-9*). Have you ever felt ashamed by your humanness?

When we rest, we accept, rather than resist or depreciate God's creation.

**In what ways does your desire to be superhuman interfere with your ability to rest?**

Sources & resources:

\*<http://www.setapartpeople.com/the-sabbatical-year-why-the-land-must-lie-fallow>

Sabbath; Muller, Wayne, 1999 Bantam Books

**When the going gets tough,  
the tough get a good night's sleep!**

**Resource for calming a  
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*Be Held: Lullabies for the  
Beloved* (Christy Nockels)**



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