

RELAXING IN GOD'S GOODNESS

Living in the Goodness of God – Part 3: Psalm 23:1-2

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MEMORY VERSE

*“A psalm of David. The Lord is my shepherd,
I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in
green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters.”*

Psalm 23:1-2

THESE IMAGES REPRESENT: REST & REFRESHMENT

WHY DO PEOPLE OVERWORK & NOT GET ENOUGH REST?

1. MISPLACED IDENTITY: BASING MY WORTH ON MY WORK

“Only someone too foolish to find his way home would wear himself out with work!” Ecclesiastes 10:15 (TEV)

2. MATERIALISM: ALWAYS WANTING MORE THINGS

“Do not wear yourself out trying to get rich; Have the wisdom to show some restraint! Your money can be gone in a flash as if it had grown wings and flown away like an eagle!”

Proverbs 23:4-5 (NIV/TEV)

3. ENVY: WANTING TO BE LIKE OTHERS

“I’ve learned why people work so hard to succeed; it is because they envy the things their neighbors have.” Ecc. 4:4a (TEV)

4. VALUING ACHIEVEMENT OVER RELATIONSHIPS

“I observed yet another example of something meaningless under the sun. This is the case of a man who is all alone, without a child or a brother, yet who works hard to gain as much wealth as he can. But then he asks himself, ‘Who am I working for? Why am I giving up so much pleasure now?’ It is all so meaningless and depressing. Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed.”

Ecclesiastes 4:7-9 (NLT)

5. INSECURITY: WHEN I'M AFRAID I WON'T HAVE ENOUGH

“All man's efforts are for his mouth, yet his appetite is never satisfied.” Ecclesiastes 6:7 (NIV)

“It is useless for you to work so hard from early morning until late at night, anxiously working for food to eat; for God gives rest to His loved ones.” Psalm 127:2 (NLT)

HOW DO I RELAX IN GOD'S GOODNESS?

1. REMEMBER MY VALUE TO GOD

“God decided to give us life through the word of truth so that we might be the most important of everything God has created...” James 1:18

God: *“See, I have engraved you on the palms of My hands.”* Isaiah 49:16 (NIV)

2. ENJOY WHAT I ALREADY HAVE

“A little food eaten in peace is better than having twice as much earned from overwork and chasing the wind.” Ecc. 4:6 (CEV)

“And people should eat and drink and enjoy the fruits of their labor, for these are gifts from God.” Ecclesiastes 3:13 (TEV)

3. LIMIT MY WORK TO SIX DAYS A WEEK

“You have six days in which to do your work, but the 7th day is to be a day of complete rest dedicated to me.” Exodus 20:9-10a(TEV)

• **“SABBATH” MEANS: A DAY OF REST**

“The Sabbath was made to benefit man...” Mark 2:27 (LB)

4. ADJUST MY VALUES

“What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?” Mark 8:36 (NIV)

5. **EXCHANGE MY RESTLESSNESS FOR GOD'S PEACE**

Jesus said, "Look at the birds in the air. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, but your heavenly Father feeds them. And you know that you are worth so much more than the birds. You cannot add any time to your life by worrying about it. And why do you worry about anything else? Look at the beauty of the wildflowers in the field... They don't worry or overwork... but God takes care of them, so you can be sure that He will clothe you too!" Matthew 6:26-30

Jesus: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." Matthew 11:28-30 (NIV)

Jesus: "Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out? 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." Matthew 11:28-30 (MSG)

PRAYER OF COMMITMENT

Commit your ways today by admitting to God the issues you face:

"Lord, I've been envious of others, I've wanted what other people have and I have wanted to be like other people, and I haven't wanted to be me."

Or maybe you need to say:

"Lord, I confess that I've let achievement be more important than relationships, another thing on earth that makes no sense. I haven't asked the tough questions: Why am I always working so hard? Why don't I let myself enjoy life? Who cares? Who's going to get what I leave behind?"

Maybe you need to confess insecurity and say:

"Lord, I live with the fear that I won't have enough to make it through retirement (or _____), but today I want to change."

Once you admit to God your current circumstance, continue on:

Lord, today I want to learn to relax in the Your goodness. You are my Good Shepherd. I want to lay down in green pastures. I want You to lead me beside me quiet waters. Help me to remember that my value to You is greater than anything else, that You love me unconditionally, and I don't have to prove anything to others. God, help me to enjoy what I already have instead of always reaching for more. Help me to limit my work to six days a week and to obey Your Ten Commandments which instruct me to take a Sabbath day rest. Where necessary, help me to adjust my values, to put first things first, and to focus on the major and not the minor things of life. Help me to make any changes needed in my schedule so I can take a Sabbath day of rest every week and honor Your rhythm of life set up for my benefit. Today, I want to exchange my restlessness for Your peace, my pressure for Your peace, my problems for Your peace. I want to live in the love and goodness of my Good Shepherd. Jesus Christ, I give every area of my life to You. I want to love You and follow You. In Your name, I pray, Amen.