

'Rest' habits - June 15



This month with the focus on **Rest** we are looking to take time to reflect on how we personally get Rest & Re-creation; emphasising:-

- a) how we can take more rest in this season
- b) think about rhythms that will sustain us more effectively



- c) identify where God is challenging us to make changes towards a more sustainable, sabbath-honouring lifestyle.

A number of these ideas are swappable & could be used in the other sections, as well as the one in which they appear.

and remember...

'to DO is to BE' R. Descartes; to BE is to DO 'E. Kant 'DO BE DO BE DO' - F. Sinatra

All of these are good to do & share in accountable relationships too!

P1) Thinking Rhythmically in the light of Matthew 11: 28-30 (in The Message) where do you identify your 'unforced rhythms of grace'? Do you have a rhythm to your day? your week, month or season of the year (that includes space for R&R - rest & recreation)? List what you see as your main rhythms at the moment.

P2) Re-Creation Reflection! Make a list with 4 columns. In the first list how you most get energised or 're-created' - what are those things? Next to that list, make a second column of when you do this at the moment inc regularity. In the 3rd column write how often you'd like to do this realistically (inc regularity). In the 4th column write what action items you need to do (inc people to contact, research, prayer & action for resources).

Make yourself accountable to one other person for that list of action items - ask them if they think they are realistic!

P3) Working from Rest Reflect on the difference between 'resting from work', compared to 'working from rest'? Where are the challenges in Genesis 1:26 - 2:2 that mean we need to learn to manage work & rest (BOTH are pre-fall heavenly concepts!) in a way where **Rest** can be our 'leading beat' rather than the place of recovery?

P4) Striver or Skiver? Identify & think on further where you naturally fit on this spectrum? What do you observe you do the most? Get one other person who observes you the most to say what they notice of you? List where you think God is getting your attention about embracing the side of the spectrum that is harder for you. Share that list with a trusted person.

P5) Study - John 15 1-8:

The focus of this passage is as we grow in Jesus (the vine); the natural rhythmic cycle is we also have times when we are supposed to fruit, be pruned & rest before growing again. Identify where you most think your life is in this cycle at the moment

REST (ABIDE) -> GROW -> FRUIT -> PRUNE -> REST

How do you think you are supposed to respond to the season you are in. Make a list of those action items & share them with 1 other person.

P6) Remembering the Hard times Some suggest Burn Out or 'Career Breaks' are God getting all his unobserved Sabbaths back in 1 go! Can you identify times this has happened to you? Write down what happened, what it felt like, and the process that took you into & brought you out of that season?



HOUSEHOLD IDEAS

H1) Considering 'Rest' together: Clothes!

As a household, come together for an agreed Rest time - food, games, movie etc. Wear the clothes you most associate with resting - inc PJs!; & get a chance to each share with each other why those clothes represent **Rest** to you.

H2) Agreeing Sabbaths Discuss as a household if you have a shared understanding of Sabbath - is it the same day for all in your house? Is it something you want to do together more? Is Sunday the day in your house or Saturday (or another day) your main 're-creation' day? Is Sunday for you the "Lord's Day" of church & seeing people? What do you

need to do to honour one another more in this? What culture do you want to create as household about sabbath & rest? What household plans could you make to help one another in this? Do you all agree to it?

H3) Weekly Sabbath Events? Jewish culture acknowledges the **Rest** rhythm of the week is Friday dusk to Saturday dusk. This starts with a family meal on Friday evening. Are there regular things you want to put in place to affirm the rhythm of sabbath in your household's weekly rhythm? eg Many families protect a weekly 'family night' (maybe as the start to the sabbath?) that is an inclusive social time; with the agreement is no-one brings work or responsibilities along! What would you like to invest in more?
(if your household doesn't have enough people, who would you like to come together with for such events / rhythms?)

H4) Holidays & Holy-Days! what are the bigger picture rhythms of rest you want to instigate in your household? e.g.:

- An annual break together where its only you 'hunting as a household pack' (no others invited)? (especially for those who go away with lots of others normally)
- termly rhythms - what do you think you need to do at least once a term that brings you life? (eg couples getting a weekend break?)
- monthly rhythms? are there things that seem right to do monthly? Have a quiet / prayer day? Meet to celebrate or go out together? Or have a practical 'review & plan' Family Meeting?



SG1 Rest as worship As a group you could focus on **Rest** together - doing worship as 'Time Out' encouraging Quiet & Reflection.

Give everyone opportunity find a space & situation that feels restful inc encouraging lying down (you could provide blankets / duvets). You could use the song played at the end of the Rest Talk - available for download on the website- ('I Rest' by Gareth Robinson) or you may have another of choice of song to play. Alternatively you may prefer the experience of quiet - although be aware of managing distractions.

You could also use visuals as a focus of reflection - an example meditation on Jesus's words in Matthew 11 ('Come way with me & learn the unforced rhythms of grace') with images is available on the website.

Afterwards you could take time sharing with each other where God got your attention / what you found yourself thinking about or receiving. Dozing off is an affirmed option!

SG2 Discussion: When's your Sabbath? Share what you do to Rest & Re-create, & if you currently have a flexible or boundaried **Rest** day. How does it work for you? What can you learn from each other?

SG3 Discussion: Holy Spirit & the Role of Rhythmic Rest ` Look together at the verses in the talk from John 16:13 & John 15 1-8 & . Discuss what it means for the Holy Spirit to be your pace-maker (John 16:13) & how he does that with you. If the group is appropriate for deep, honest sharing do the process in Personal Exercise P5 looking at John 15, and sharing where you are at the moment in the rhythmic cycle of REST -> GROW -> FRUIT -> PRUNE -> REST & how you think you are supposed to respond in that season.

SG4 Discussion: Responsibilities of Rest Look together at Exodus 20: 8-11. Discuss what it means to have a day that is 'holy' or 'set apart' (v11) & where do you have a responsibility to others to make sure that they get time? v 10 emphasises being aware of having responsibilities to encourage Rest in our household, those who work with & for us, & even foreigners around us? Share who those people are for you, where God is getting your attention about this to act, & pray for each other.

SG5 As a group you could agree a **Memory Verse** (that you challenge each other to all learn) that speaks into the areas you are most identifying God is getting your attention or challenging you about Rest .

A starter suggested verse is Isaiah 30:15 - the formula of what Rest & Repentance lead to.. (as well as Quietness & Trust...) ; but it may be one of the other verses listed above or mentioned in the talk: Psalm 23; Matthew 11: 28-30; Exodus 20:8-11 ; Genesis 2: 2, John 16: 13 ; John 15: 1-8.

You could make memorising the verses you choose a competition, & test yourselves the following week :) Prizes for the best / who manages it!



Over this month there are opportunities we can take to **Rest** together, including:

- whole church camping weekend (with no sunday services June 28th!) - come along & hang out on the beach, with a programme free weekend!
- Family Fun Day at Ashton Court on July 12th

But if we are to embrace this whole culture in the whole church; then where do you need to encourage others to respond to this issue further? Who is God reminding you of concerning this? Pray for them, & if you get the chance encourage & cheer them on in this area 'to live a life worthy of the calling they have received' (Ephesians 4:1)

Also ask the Lord about those you have strong relationships with in the church, who you could ask to challenge you in this area? Who do you trust to do this - go for it! (1 Thessalonians 2:12)