

Coach House Church BEACONS

TAKE A BREAK?

30TH JUNE 2020

Genesis 2:2-3 says "By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day He rested from all His work. Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it He rested from all the work of creating that He had done."

When we were created, God created us to have a natural rhythm. So much of life has a rhythm; the seasons, day and night, even the heart beating inside of us. There is a pattern that life is supposed to follow. In Ecclesiastes it says "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing, a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace."

God has made the world to have order and part of that order is that we need to work but we also need to rest. Farmers have found this with fields. In the bible God commanded for six years for farmers to plant crops and for the seventh to rest the land. It says "If you want to live securely in the land, follow my decrees and obey my regulations. Then the land will yield large crops, and you will eat your fill and live securely in it. But you might ask, 'What will we eat during the seventh year, since we are not allowed to plant or harvest crops that year?' Be assured that I will send my blessing for you in the sixth year, so the land will produce a crop large enough for three years. When you plant your fields in the eighth year, you will still be eating from the large crop of the sixth year. In fact, you will still be eating from that large crop when the new crop is harvested in the ninth year." This has been

found to be true for farming nowadays. One in approximately every five years the land is ploughed and tilled without planting anything. This is so the land can keep producing effectively, it needs rest.

One problem with working without resting is that we are relying on ourselves. We need to trust God as they did in bible times that He will provide.

If we have a job that is not completely directed towards building the kingdom of God, but just brings in money, then we need to look at the time and effort we dedicate to it. Don't get me wrong, it might be that you are bringing God glory and you are fulfilling His purpose by being in that position, but it shouldn't take away from our true purpose which is serving God. We shouldn't let our work take over our lives. We should rely on God for our food and clothing and not just working as hard as we can, because that is not what we were made for.

If we do have a job that is for the glory of God, then we need to look at who is getting the glory. If what you care about is God's glory, then it won't bother you to take time out when you need it, because that's part of God's plan and He is in charge. We should also be relying on the people around us to help when they can. We need to build them up and empower them and let them take some of the burden so they can have the joy of serving God.

In Exodus 18 we see Moses' father in law, Jethro, giving him some good advice. He comes to see Moses and sees that he judges the people all day. When Jethro asks Moses about it, he basically replies that he has to do the job because there are so many disputes between the people. So Jethro says "What you are doing is not good. You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone. Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you. You must be the people's representative before God and bring their disputes to him. Teach them his decrees and instructions, and show them the way they are to live and how they are to behave. But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you." We need to share our responsibilities with others. We need to build them up and give them a chance to serve and give ourselves a time to rest. Otherwise, as Jethro said, we will wear ourselves out.

God cares about your health and wellbeing. It doesn't do you any good to be exhausted. So it is good to work, but also rest is necessary. Our bodies are made to sleep to remind us of this. We can't go more than about 10 days without sleep and a few days without sleep can make us hallucinate. We need to sleep every night to remind us how important resting is.

An analogy of our Christian walk found in the bible is that we are like athletes. In 1 Corinthians 9 Paul says "All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing. I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should" Athletes have intense periods of training and they are completely focussed on what they are trying to do but they also need to have periods of rest to be as effective as they can be. When you are tired you won't be effective at whatever you are doing. You also won't be as effective for the kingdom of God. We are more likely to fall for temptation and not be as good as we can be if we are tired.

Now when I say rest, that doesn't necessarily mean not doing anything. Resting means different things to different people. To you it might mean spending time in your garden, doing gardening or reading, or it might mean going for a run or having a family day out. Resting looks different for different people but it's something that rejuvenates you and gets you ready to work again.

So be as effective as you can be. Work at the right time, rest at the right time and at all times trust and praise God.



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