

The Rhythm of Rest

Sabbath Keeping in the 21st Century

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Near and Dear to God

We are profoundly _____.
Jesus is the victim of _____ force.
If Satan can't make you bad, he'll make you _____.
Every minute, 148 people enter this world and _____ leave it without Christ.

Redefining Rest

As the people of God, we need to examine the normative, corrosive impact of overload and exhaustion of our 24/7 culture and commit to an exploration of the power & purpose of rest. We need realign our lives around the Biblically ordained rhythm “*Run hard. Rest well.*”

Exploring Rhythms of Rest

Daily

Stillness

Planned and unplanned ... stillness is a purposeful pause in the Presence of God.
Psalm 62:1

Sleep

Recognize & honor the fact that our need for sleep is not a design flaw.
Psalm 4:8

Weekly

Sabbath Keeping

*Sabbath is a deliberate, intentional pause from our work to “pray and play.”
Free from the demands of work, we are positioned to fully celebrate our
relationship with the Living God and celebrate the love we share with those He's
placed in our lives.*

Exodus 23:12

Yearly

Silence and Solitude (Personal Retreat)

Personal Retreat is the pursuit of God off the beaten path.

Luke 22:39

(offensively, defensively, forced)

A state of restedness (or lack of restedness) impacts us:

Physically	Sleep ... He is God. I am not. There's a steep price tag.
Spiritually	Stillness ... Enlarge your connection—Isaiah 54:2.
Relationally	Sabbath ... honor it. There are 10 Commandments, not 9.
Emotionally	Silence & Solitude ... Guilt-free restoration. Follow the Leader.

State of Unrest ~ Assessment Tool

Questionnaire

Place a check mark in front of every question that is 100% true.

- _____ I took all my vacation time last year.
- _____ In the last 4 weeks I've enjoyed 4 days off—days off that were refreshing and care-free...with minimal “work” around the house.
- _____ This last week I've had five nights of 7-8 hours of sleep.
- _____ I spend as much time talking *to* God, as I do *about* God each day, each week.
- _____ I took a full-day of personal retreat in the last 6 months.
- _____ I sat down and enjoyed dinner with my family 5 nights this last week.
- _____ The relationship I have with my spouse is vibrant, thriving, healthy, whole.

- _____ **Total check marks**

Scores

Score: 0-3 You are running on the fumes of an empty tank whether you realize it or not. There's a better way. It's found in the rhythm—run hard, rest well. A paradigm shift must take place in your heart. Rest is not a sign of weakness. It is a gift, a grace, a rhythm of life for those who surrender all—including the time it takes to rest. The vibrancy of your ministry, the well-being of your soul and the health of your family depend on it.

Score: 4 You are familiar with rejuvenating aspects of rest and renewal (well done good and faithful servant!), but gaps remain. You know how to run hard and you are aware of what it means to rest well. Now take a look at your physical, emotional, spiritual, relational reserves. What are your strengths? Where can you improve? Expand your horizons. What needs attention? Explore how “resting well” will bring new realms of vibrancy to an area where you're serving with a self-imposed limp.

Score: 5-7 Ah! The life-giving rhythms of rest are established in your life. You have adopted God's ways and not the worlds. The fruit of well-being is yours to enjoy—and pass along to others. Stay the course. Your life is a walking billboard. Be intentional about sharing the story of your journey into the rhythms of rest. You have a remarkable opportunity to light the way.

4 “C's” Plus

~ Why is quiet so important? God _____

~ Words of:

Hope
Healing
Holiness
Higher Calling

~ From 1990-2009 there was a 10% decline in people who claimed they were Christian.
83% *casual* Christians ... Moralistic Therapeutic Deists ... 17% *captivated*

The Journey

~The #1 threat to my intimacy with God is my _____ for God. (D. Willard)

~ My story

Rest well. Listen carefully. Produce nothing.

~ Inviting, Accessible, Relevant, Revolutionary

Run hard. Rest well. It's all about rhythm

Rhythm

~ In creation God established the dynamics of _____ & _____

~ Without honoring the Rhythms of Rest God established we serve
at best – with a self-imposed limp
at worst – we position ourselves to self-destruct....taking with us those we love.

~ Radical Paradigm Shift: wrong road map – Detroit or Phoenix

~ We know how to run hard. Do we know how to rest well?

What keeps me from being well rested?

Inviting

~ WDJJ?

~ Mark 6:30-31

...*Because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, “Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.”*

- Jesus recognized the need for rest—validated it and provided for it
- We have his permission and blessing to leave the needs of others unmet
- Taking time to rest will never be convenient
- Rest involves an intentional removal of demands and distractions

~ What has shaped our attitudes and beliefs about rest?

Our Culture ... The Puritan Work Ethic
 Our Church ... Idleness is the devil's play ground. Rest is a 4-letter word.
 Our Family of Origin ... More is caught and taught
 Our Personality ... Type A or Type B (Meyer's Brigg's ... "J" and "P")
 Our Baggage ... if I slow down I might start to think...to feel
 Our Current Workload/Stress Factors ... running a million miles an hour ...

\$64,000 question.....Where do we want to derive our understanding of rest?

Accessible

~ J curves of change.....5000 years of recorded history.....last 100.....next 20

~ 1960 prediction.....2009 reality
 The Culprit: *progress* – electricity and laundry

~ The Benefit are staggering, but so are the costs.

The glory of this age is obvious, but the resulting chaos of our fatigued and frantic lives is deafening and profound. It's extracting a high price from the well being of our souls. If we buy into its ways, it will not take long for us to be: exhausted, addicted, broke, stressed, sick, angry, lonely and unhappy.

Richard Swenson

~ Good News: There's a better way, but we need to demolish every faulty belief.

~ After each point rate the impact this has had on your state of unrest... 0 to 10

_____ My Personality

~ How are you wired? There is NO better way, just 2 different ways.

<p><u>Planner</u> Public organizer Starts work early ... loves lists! "Responsible/organized"</p>	<p><u>Go-with-the-Flow</u> Private Organizer Starts work closer to deadline "Fun-loving"</p>
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~ Planner's tend to be "driven" and have a hard time planning time to rest.

~ Go/Flowers tend to be "distracted" and have to "plan out" their rest.

The Church

~ The Church has failed...we are utterly ignorant of the power and purpose of rest, which leads us to defiantly disregard the 4th commandment. Rest is for those who are not committed and/or capable. There is an element of shame.

~ Point to ponder:

There is little discernible difference in the lives of believers and non-believers. Is it because we embrace the cultural norms of overload and exhaustion?

~ Have you ever been taught how to rest?

Our Culture

~ Productivity is *the* American virtue.

It is what we applaud. Overload is a status symbol, our busyness a badge of honor. R & R treads on our self-esteem. "There is no glory in rest. No social acclaim. We are never a hero because we rest." Dick Swenson

~ Who mentored a strong work ethic? Who mentored a holy rest? Rhythm?

Our Disregard of Limitations

~ Jesus lived in a body bound by limits: sleep, food, rest, refueling

~ John 4:6 (tired as we was from the journey, Jesus sat down) Matthew 14:13 John the b

~ When we hate the natural limits of our human-ness we show disdain for God's design.

Do I frequently desire to be more than I am? My calendar reveals this issue in my life. When scheduling I'm not always realistic about the limits of my time or energy. And as a result, my 'masked' self (super-human self), who does not want to disappoint others or wishes to appear more capable, says "yes" to too many things. My 'masked' self has agreed to something my real self cannot sustain. As hard as it is for me to face, this kind of refusal to live within my 'God-designed' limits is the root of many evils in my life... (creating for me a life that is) unmanageable at a level far deeper than the appearance of my closets.

Mindy Caliguier

~ Is our need for rest and replenishment a design flaw?

_____ **Our Inclination to Compare**

~ Load Limits

_____ **Our Inclination to be People-Pleasers**

~ Mark 1:35ff

~ Are we guilt-driven or Spirit-led?

_____ **Our Faulty-Beliefs**

~ Rest is a reward when my work is done.

Sense of physical “relief” after physically hard work.....The rest God established at creation is much more than mere relief, it is an invitation to something much, much more!

~ I'll take a break when...creating my own plan (which is never realized) and not following God's.

_____ **Our Idolatry**

~ What was the Children of Israel's greatest sin? What is ours?

~ What do I pursue with abandon? From where do I derive my greatest joy? Where do I invest my energy? What gets the best of my passion, time, focus, resources? Is it the pursuit of the presence of God?

~ “Time talks,” declared the cultural anthropologist Edward T. Hall. “It speaks more plainly than words...” *Receiving the Day* by Dorothy Bass. “How we spend our time speaks to our deepest values...” What would a log of your month reveal about your personal pursuit of God? Does this tendency threaten God’s place/priority in your life? Does a “workaholism” tendency place your family at risk?

~ If I am not willing to surrender my 7-day work week, for 6, productivity may very well be an idol in my life.

~ As Americans, we worship our work. We work at our play. We play at our worship.

~ Idol of Got-Tu Work or idol of Got-Tu Play.

\$64K Questions Revisited

What keeps me from being well rested? Has my answer changed?

Am I willing to allow God's Word redefine my understanding of rest?

How difficult will that be? Moving a mole hill or mountain?

Relevant

The Truth will set you free, but first it might make you miserable. James Garfield

1. What factors have had the most profound impact on your understanding of rest? (pg. 4-6)
2. What are the most refreshing/restorative things you do for yourself on a regular basis?
3. Is there a gap between who you are publicly and privately? What does it look like?
(When we constantly operate in the red, the probability of “burning out” or “acting out” is high.
Where are you with depression, irritability, anemic faith, relationship strain, lack of well-being?)
4. If time allows, take the survey below. In which area are you most rested? Least rested? How often to do take a personal inventory of your life? How often to do make alterations to your life based on that inventory? Who's someone you who could be an accountability partner with you in this endeavor?

Let's take a very honest, realistic personal inventory. Please give yourself a grade on a scale of 1-10. 1 = I am utterly and completely depleted. 10 = I have never been better!

___ Physically—Exhausted, unhealthy, sleep deprived, out-of-shape OR Rested, healthy, strong

___ Relationally —Irritable, impatient, lonely OR Fulfilled, connected, thriving, satisfied

___ Emotionally —Unsettled, anxious, pre-occupied, unhappy OR Content, joyful, free

___ Vocationally —Restless, discontent, dissatisfied OR Confident, fulfilled, focused

___ Spiritually —Empty, disconnected, going-through-the-motions OR Thriving, fruitful, alive

___ Rested —Bankrupt, exhausted, living-in-the-red OR Energized, nourished, peaceful

Revolutionary

The State of Unrest

If you do not carefully follow all the words of this law and do not revere the glorious and awesome Name of the Lord your God...you will find no resting place for the sole of your foot. There the Lord will give you an anxious mind, eyes weary with longing and a despairing heart. Deuteronomy 28:58, 65

The State of Being Rested

R Refreshing & Restorative

Six days do your work, but on the seventh day do not work, so that (you)...may be refreshed.
Exodus 23:12

He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul.
Psalm 23:2-3a

E Eternal – a lasting covenant

The Israelites are to observe the Sabbath, celebrating it for the generations to come as a lasting covenant. It is a sign between me and the Israelites forever... Exodus 31:16-17

S Sacred

And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy (Qadosh), because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done. Genesis 2:3

T Transformational

The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail... “If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight and the Lord's holy day honorable, and if you honor it by not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words, then you will find your joy in the Lord, and I will cause you to ride on the heights of the land and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob.” The mouth of the Lord has spoken. Isaiah 58:11-14

E Enticing

The righteous will flourish like a palm tress, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish in the courts of God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green, The Lord is upright; he is my Rock ...” Psalm 92:12-15

D Act of Devotion—both ways

“My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” (to Moses) Matthew 10:37

Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. Genesis 22:10
(Why are we willing to surrender everything to God but our time? Is it because it's most dear?)

Be Still and Know That I Am God

- ~ Love Languages
- ~ Sacred Pathways ... by Gary Thomas
- ~ Stillness is a purposeful pause in the Presence of God.
 - 32% of regular church goers have never experienced the Presence of God during worship
 - 44% of believers have never experienced the Presence of God in anyway whatsoever.1998 Barna Research Group
- ~ God whispers in your soul and speaks to your mind. Sometimes when we don't have time to listen, he has to throw a brick. It's your choice: Listen to the whisper. Wait for the brick. Unknown
- ~ WDJJ ... Psalm 131
- ~ Prayer is not about getting things. Prayer is about getting God and giving him our full attention.
"Mommy, listen with your eyes."
- ~ Stillness is not about going through the motions, but going face-to-face with God.
We'd rather talk **about** God than **to** God.
- ~ Math equation of 3 God + me + _____. God + me is full of mystery. Terrifies us.
What if God shows up? What if he doesn't?
Through stillness we gain access to the God who we can not see, feel, hear, but we can KNOW.
- ~ Mystery! Red Sea Sunday School story
- ~ Left brain. Right brain. (Circle / Dot Experiment)
- ~ How do wake up the RIGHT side of our brains?
Quiet and Creation / Worship and Wonder
The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard.
Psalm 19:1-3 (Jeremiah 51, too)

How do we embrace stillness?

1. Go outside
 2. Live in the moment. Focus your attention on I AM – the Present Tense God. Feel the breeze, watch the dance of the leaves, take slow deep breaths, wiggle out the tension in your neck and shoulders, follow a drifting cloud, smell the aroma of fall, listen to the hum of God's world.
 3. Allow your Wonder turn into Worship
 4. Focus on Psalm 23. *He makes me lay down in green pastures. He leads me beside quiet waters. He restores my soul.*
- ~ Revelation 8

How do we do this back home?

1. Try a prayer position that is new to you. It can wake up our sleepy soul.

Lift your hands in the air	Kneel
Lay prostrate	Take off your shoes
Dance	Take a prayer walk
Dangle your feet in a lake	Wiggle your toes in the sand
Sit in a chair palms up	Or sit as you always sit

2. To deal with your wandering mind (for it will wander. It's a matter of when, not if.) consider using one or both of these ideas as a gentle, guilt-free reminders on how stay attuned to the Presence of God.

If you are more of an **auditory learner**:

Light of the world, shine down on me
Living Water fill my soul
Jehovah Jireh – You provide
Mighty God, Prince of Peace, You are the King of kings.

Or, if you're **visual learner**:

The curtain leading to the Holy of Holies being torn in two
The eyes on Jesus
Jesus' nail-scarred hands
A descending dove
The majesty of God's appearance on Mount Sinai with Moses

~ To close, here's some thoughts from author Ruth Haley Barton.

The invitation to solitude and silence is an invitation to enter more deeply into the intimacy of relationship with the One who waits just outside the noise and busyness of our lives for a space within which meaningful connection can occur. It is an invitation to communion with the One who is always present even when our awareness has been dulled by distraction. It is an invitation to the adventure of spiritual transformation in the deepest places of our being. It's an adventure that will result in greater freedom, authenticity and surrender to God than we have yet experienced.

The invitation to solitude and silence is a winsome one but it is not casual; it is an invitation from God's very heart into the depths of our being. It warrants serious consideration because it is an invitation to a journey, a quest really, for something we have possibly been longing for all our lives.

*Be still and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.*
Psalm 46:10

Word of God Speak by Mercy Me

The Road Less Traveled

Sabbath Keeping in the 21st Century

Litmus Test

Are you happy, healthy, holy and whole?

Sabbath is the missing ingredient of many lives. When we don't heed this invitation we pay for the abuse of limits in the hard & painful currency of stress and exhaustion.

It's a gift of immeasurable value wrapped in a package we disregard. (grandpa's '99)

Sabbath 101

Shabbat is the Hebrew verb “to cease.” It's a radical command. Halt! God commands us to STOP.

S = sacred

T = transformational

O = (and a radical) opportunity

P = to enjoy the presence of God – free of the demands and deadlines

It's hard. We are accustomed to DOING things for God, but are not familiar with BEING with God. It's foreign territory.

One of our greatest virtues is our ability to achieve, create, accomplish, do. It is so attractive! Shabbat is the Divine Remedy for our socially acceptable addiction to activity.

Shabbat is an oasis in time, an exodus from the pressures of daily life...to transcend creation in order to meet the Creator.

Shabbat is not just a break from what we do, it is a portal into who we are.

(www.askmoses.com)

History Lesson

The Rhythm of Rest was woven into the fabric of creation.

The daily rhythm of night and day...wakefulness and sleep

The yearly rhythm of growth and dormancy...seasons of life

The weekly rhythm of work and Sabbath * (glass experiment)

* The human biological clock operated on a 25-hour cycle according to Juan-Carlos Lerman from the University of Arizona. Every 7th day we need to recalibrate.

Rest was only for the rich and famous. It was a luxury few enjoyed.

Exodus 16:21-13 (the gathering of the manna) reminds us that it was a part of Hebrew desire/culture...even after 400 years of captivity.

!!! The Ten Commandments

Exodus 20—ceasing from all work...everyone!

Deut. 5—Remember you were slaves...freedom from the captivity of activity

Exodus 23:10-13, 31:12-18, 35:1-3

The Commandment to Rest had a purpose...an infinite reminder that God is much more interested in who I am than what I produce. (Blue Tassels)

The Hebrew Calendar

The only named day was Sabbath..... 3 days until the Sabbath...2 days from...
It was pinnacle...the focus...the highlight~!

New Testament

There remains, then a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their disobedience.
Hebrews 4:9-11

Jesus was a Sabbath Keeper

Went to the temple (Mark 1:21/Lev. 23:3, 26:2)
and people's homes to visit (Luke 14:1)

Mark 2:27 ...*The Sabbath was made for man...*

A day of delight, not duty (Laura Ingals) 39 Rules/Col 2:8, 16, 22

Sabbath is a gift that is sacred, strategic and simple.

Sacred

Purpose ~ Qadosh (Genesis 2:3) Majestic...Holy

When I choose to rest, I am participating in what God calls holy.

Pattern ~ Divine Design ~ 7 X 0 =

If God says I can get my work done in 6 days, who am I to say I can't?

Priority ~ Will I be a 10 Commandment believer?

But if you do not obey me to keep the Sabbath day holy...then I will kindle an unquenchable fire in the gates of Jerusalem that will consume her fortresses.
Jeremiah 17:17

Leviticus 26 ~ wow

Strategic

Plan ~ How did Adam and Eve spend their first full day of life?

Rest feels: unproductive, unimportant, wasteful...But it is, ultimately not the reward for work well done, but a pre-requisite.

Pace ~ Good is the enemy of the best. (St. Louis wagon train on the Oregon Trail)

Preparation ~ Hassidic Jews

~ Thoughtful, intentional, a willingness to STOP

~ Where am I the most depleted? (lonely, disconnected, exhausted)

Simple

Pray ~ Renewal

...to foreigners...who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant—these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Isaiah 56:6-7a

~ Reflection... “remember” (161 times) “don't forget”

But as for me, I will always have hope, I will praise you more and more.

My mouth will tell of your righteousness, of your salvation all day long, though I know not its measure. Since my youth, O God, you have taught me, and to this day I declare your marvelous deeds. Even when I am old and gray, do not forsake me, O God, till I declare your power to the next generation, your might to all who are to come. Psalm 71:14, 15, 18

Ashinabe People = 1st snow to 1st thunder

Play ~ Relationships.....hurry

Love is patient, love is kind....It is not rude...it is not easily angered...

I Corinthians 13:4-5

~ Refreshment...Psalm 92...(A psalm. A song. For the Sabbath day) Ah!

The righteous will flourish...planted in the house of the LORD, they will flourish in the courts of our God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green... Psalm 92: 12-14

Seasonal

What do you need?

What does a family need? 10 Commandments of Family Sabbath

Anti-bacterial soap, monitors, boosters...Deut 30:19 *...I have set before you life and death. Blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and **your children** may life and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice and hold fast to him.*

Not optional: Ex. 34:21 “...even during the plowing season and harvest you must rest.”

21st Century Sabbath Keeping

Refuse to multitask. Refuse to hurry.

Do what delights!

Meals...ice cream and popcorn.....Ex 35:1-3

Traditions: roasting mini marshmallows over candles...

Avoid shopping

Sleep—offensively! Stronger, healthier, vibrant, loving, alert

Invite.....others to participate...force nothing: FFF

Unplug

Get outside.....feet up, breath! No Child Left Inside
www.discovertheforest.org

Laugh!

My journey: conniving...B-day cards are relational, photo-books/storytelling...motivation
Delight or Duty...If there is a smidgen of duty, I question my intent...not in fear of God,
but knowing that I am forfeiting the gifts God has for me that day. (Josh's story)

52 opportunities each year to embrace

Family Matters

Tag-team

Teach your kids (pine tree)

Sabbath

*"If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight and the Lord's holy day honorable, and if you honor it by not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words, then you will find your **joy** in the Lord, and I will cause you to ride on the **heights** of the land and to **feast** on the inheritance of your father Jacob." The mouth of the Lord has spoken. Isaiah 58:13-14*

Radical re-orientation

Strategic

Sacred

Satisfying

An act of Surrender....we are willing to give about anything, except our time

Take the gift off the shelf

Small Group Reflection...Points to Ponder

Week in and week out we cross the threshold of the Sabbath Day, whether we recognize it or not. Is your Sabbath Day any different than the other 6 days of the week? Why? Why not?

What aspects of Sabbath Keeping are most attractive, inviting to you?

What obstacles will you encounter on a journey toward Sabbath Keeping?

Sabbath has been celebrated for thousands of years, but its sanctity will not enter our weekend without our explicit invitation. Envision the blessings of Sabbath Rest. What would God ask you to cease from doing? What would He invite you to embrace? (24 hours may be an enormous leap. What about 12, 6, 3. What time frame is a good first step for you?

How would Sabbath Rest impact your happiness, healthiness, holiness and wholeness?

What is one thing you will add or subtract from your day next Sunday?

10 Commandments for a Family's Sabbath Rest

- Thou shall not hurry. Ease-th thy foot off the gas pedal within the center of thy heart. Cultivate wide margins and a slower pace through the hours of thy day.
- Thou shall slumber for eight full hours. Upon waking, linger in bed with a smile upon thy face. (Bonus points awarded for two consecutive nights of solid sleep.)
- Thou shall not yell in thy house, in thy garage nor in thy car prior to Sunday worship. (Multiple bonus points awarded for abstaining from impatience, frenzy and the antics of a huffy hyena during thy day of Sabbath Rest upon thy children or husband.)
- Thou shall not cook out of obligation, only pleasure.
- Thou shall consider laying thy head upon a round and fluffy pillow between the hours of 2 and 4.
- Thou shall bond with those you love (bond and not bind, unless they are under three and refuse to lay-est their head upon a round and fluffy pillow.)
- Thou shall laugh and smile and delight in all things through the hours of thy day.
- Thou shall unplug, go outside and breathe. Allow the sun to shineth upon thy face and the wind to bloweth through thy hair.
- Thou shall go face-to-face with God for an hour of quiet off the beaten path.
- Thou shall feel no guilt. Permission has been granted. The invitation has been extended. (And your name is on the envelop.)

A Candle Light Sabbath Prayer

Blessed are you, O Lord our God,
King of the universe.
You are the Author of Life and Peace.

You made the Sabbath Day. You blessed it. You crowned it with your Presence. You call it holy.
You have asked us to honor this day, to set it apart as special, as holy.
We do so now with joy.
Enter our home and hearts this night/day.

Almighty God, grant us and all our loved ones true rest on this Sabbath Day.
May the light of this candle remind us of the power of your Presence as You drive out from among us all anger and fear.
Send your blessing upon us that we may walk in the ways of Your Word and Your Love.

Heavenly Father,
We rejoice in the outpouring of blessing you have in store for us today.
We rejoice in the Presence of your Holy Spirit among us.
We rejoice in the beauty and splendor of the world you created.
We rejoice in the love of family and friends.
It is from You we receive every good and perfect gift.

Giver of life and love and hope, grant us Your peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Off The Beaten Path

The Power of Personal Retreat

- ~ Spiritual Growth One size does NOT fit all
- ~ Large group retreats teach us to learn, laugh, love. Personal retreats teach us to listen .
- ~ Beth Moore DVD
- ~ A holy life does not live in the closet, but it cannot live without it. E. M. Bounds (Matt. 6:6)
- ~ I comprehend how to worship God—to obey him—to serve God, but to KNOW Him & love him?

What is a personal retreat?

The intentional pursuit of God—off the beaten path of life.

What might it include?

Sabbath Celebration and Delight (Ex.23:12—refreshed, Mark 2:27 S made for)
Rest (Psalm 62:5, Matthew 11:28)
Withdrawal from demands and distractions (Luke 4:42 and 5:16—solitude)
Quiet (Mark 6) – unplug
Creation (Luke 6:12—head to the hills)
Food and a pillow (I Kings 19)
Authenticity (I Kings 19, Matt. 26:39)
Stillness (Psalm 131)
Prayer (Luke 22:41) Listening prayer
Spirit's Engagement (Luke 4:1)
The pursuit of God (Psalm 63:1—earnestly I seek you... Psalm 27)
Worship/music (Psalm 63)
God's Word ... (Psalm 19) Joey's story

Inviting

New Testament: Jesus' Invitation

...Because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest."
Mark 6:30-31

- ~ Jesus recognized the need for “retreat.” He validated it and encouraged it
- ~ We have his permission and blessing to leave the needs of others unmet
- ~ Taking time to retreat will never be convenient
- ~ Personal Retreat involves...
 - Jesus. It's a getaway with God where he has our full & focused attention
 - solitude...going away to a place free of demands and distractions
 - quiet..... T-shirt “Great things happen in quiet places.” (Is. 30:15)
 - rest.....feet up, head back, big “ahhhh.....”
- 1. - creation.....the heavens declare!

Approach to Personal Retreat

~ **Offensive** *But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.* Luke 5:16

~ **Defensive** *When Jesus heard what happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place.* Matthew 14:13

~ **Forced** *Jonah and the Big fish...*

God whispers in your soul and speaks to your mind. Sometimes when you don't have time to listen, he has to throw a brick. It's your choice: Listen to the whisper. Wait for the brick. Author Unknown

Old Testament: David's Treasure

I said, "Oh, that I had the wings of a dove! I would fly away and be at rest—I would flee far away and stay in the desert; (Selah) I would hurry to my place of shelter, far from the tempest and storm." Psalm 55:6-8

God's Presence—Psalm 63

But as for me, it is good to be near God. I have made the Sovereign LORD my Refuge. Psalm 73:28a

Desert of Judah

God's Perspective—Psalm 142

Send forth your light and your truth, let them guide me; let them bring me to our holy mountain, to the place where you dwell. Psalm 43:3

A Prayer from a cave

God's Purpose for my life—Psalm 57

I cry out to God Most High, to God, who fulfills his purpose for me. Psalm 57:2

The Cave of Adullam

Compelling

Jesus lived for one thing—to do the will of the One who sent him (John 4:34, 6:35, 17:4). Jesus' commitment to extended time alone with his Father affirms that this world is distracting and does not orient our hearts to God. Prayer placed Jesus in the presence of his Father. It's where he stayed **fueled, focused** and **fervent** about doing his Father's will. Intentional heart-to-heart time empowered and replenished Jesus for the task at hand.

...Launched his ministry

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert... Luke 4:1

...Refueled his reserves

Very early in the morning while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. Mark 1:35

...Shaped his decisions

One of those days Jesus went out into the hills to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he designated apostles... Luke 6:12-13

...Aligned his will to that of his Father's

"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." Luke 22:42

Mark *1:12, 35, 45 *2:13 *3:7, 13 *6:30, 46 *9:2, 30
Luke *4:1, 42 *5:16 *6:12 *9:18 *11:1 *22:39

Relevant

Hope	– Claim	Hagar in Genesis 16	Psalm 27
Healing	– Comfort & Connection	Elijah in I kings 19	Psalm 143
Holiness	– Crucify sin/surrender	Abraham in Genesis 22	Psalm 32
Higher Calling	– Confidence	Gideon in Judges 6	Psalm 20

Accessible

- Seasons of Life
- Fear “You want me to do what?” (Fear of the unknown)
 “I don't like to be alone.” (Fear for my safety.....I vs. E)
 “I'm afraid to take the time to think...to feel...” (Fear of unhealed hurts)
 “I don't have the time.” (Fear of not meeting someone's expectations)
 “What if God doesn't show up?”
 (What if the mountain don't quake or the bush don't burn?)

God's Job

To provide Restoration (Psalm 23)
His Presence
Revelation

Examples:	He revealed his glory	Jesus' transfiguration (Matthew 17)
	He released them for ministry	Mary (Luke 1:26ff) Moses (Exodus 3)
	He refueled and refreshed	David in the Desert (Psalm 63)
	He rebuked & redirected	Jonah's personal retreat (Jonah)
	He rejuvenated—body and soul	Elijah on Mount Horeb (I Kings 19)
	He wrestled him through a fear	Jacob's wrestling match (Genesis 32:22ff)
	He restored his heart & passion	Peter's breakfast on the beach (John 21)
	He was his refuge	David's cave expedition (Psalm 57)

My Job

~ Rest...Replenish...guilt-free!

~ Live in the moment.

Recognize beauty (Joshua Bell at the DC Metro station) Thin Place

I AM

When was the last time you looked for pictures in the clouds?
Went outside on a clear, dark night?
Watched the pattern of light dance on the leaves.
Dangled your feet in a lake?
Watched the sun rise...the sun set.

~ Come agenda-free.....pour out your heart, but remain open, not adamant

~ Listen....Be Still and Know (story of sheep)

Come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths. Micah 4:2

"Listen, listen to me...and your soul will delight in the richest of fare." Isaiah 55:2b

~ Understand there is no right way or wrong way to "do" personal retreat.

(deer stands, driving the open road, hospital chapels, kayaks, going barefoot!)

Practical

- Pick a date

Schedule it 2-3 months from now. 2-3 hours, 8 hours, 12, overnight

Make it a part of your Sabbath

Consider a yearly "plan" (birthday, Labor Day, anniversary.....)

- Place:

Drive? (Consider getting outside)

parks, churches, libraries, coffee shops, lake home, retreat centers, home

- People:

Invite another person

Accountability!

Follow Jesus' example

- Pack:

pillow, snacks, guitar, Bible, journal, a book/mag, sun/bug juice, fishing pole ...

- Unplug ... no lap top, no cell phone

- Plan....to enjoy a day of delight in the Presence of God ... Let FREEDOM reign

Sculpting A Day Away

Deceleration ~ unwind! Decompress! Read, whistle, kayak, nap...
Anticipation ~ day free of distraction, undivided attention! hike, journal, NAP
Adoration ~ sing, hike, read Psalms out loud
Meditation ~ read through a short book from the OT or NT or do a word study
Supplication ~ reflect on the promises of God...unload your burdens
Celebration ~ enjoy life! boat, fish, nap, snack, hike, read, journal ...
Dedication ~ choose a memento (a verse, a rock), create a journal
~ ask God when he wants you back

Transformational

Fresh catch
Fly Heavy

Word of God Speak—by Mercy Me

A Little Quiet Time

You are invited to pause—right now, to catch your breath and sit quietly with the Lord. In the next 20 minutes, you are completely free. You have nowhere to go. Nothing to do. No expectations, demands or requests are being made of you for the next few moments.

Sometimes this is a frightening proposition. We are not accustomed to a quiet and stillness. It may feel uncomfortable. We are wired for action...positioned to produce and perform.

I'd like to encourage you to deliberately live in the moment before you...with no care for what is to come. Attend to your senses. Breathe deeply. Sense the tightness of your muscles. Allow them to relax. Listen to the quiet murmur around you. Take note of the brightest splashes of color.

Then invite God into these sacred, set-a-side moments. Look Him in the eye and ask Him to make you attentive and receptive to all He has planned.

The purpose of this time is not to complete this material, you may not even look at it. The purpose of this time is to enter into the presence of God—fully and freely. This quiet time devotion is simply a launching pad. God has a destination in mind for you that is uniquely crafted to meet your need for this season of life. Go where the Spirit leads. Allow Him free access to every chamber of your heart.

Come Before The Lord

But I, in your great mercy, will come into your house;
in reverence will I bow down toward your holy temple.

Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my sighing.
Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray.

Morning by morning, O Lord, you hear my voice;
Morning by morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Let all who take refuge in you be glad;
Let them ever sing for joy.

Spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may rejoice in you.
For surely, O Lord, you bless the righteous; you surround them with your favor as with a shield.

Psalm 5: 7, 1-3, 11-12

Re-read the verses from above. What thoughts, emotions and questions rise up within you? Allow each verse to become your own prayer. Go slow. Feel free to linger.

Pause and Ponder

Acceptance and surrender are two attitudes that open many doors and deepen the roots of those who love Jesus. Yet they are difficult to fully embrace.

Acceptance means admitting there are things we cannot change. We leave the work to God and trust Him to be the agent of change 1) in the situation and/or 2) in the depths of our heart and the core of our attitudes. Acceptance puts an end to our futile struggles and frees our thoughts to focus on what is good, true and sacred...Philippians 4:8

Surrender means relinquishing my self-will and embracing the abundance I will find in God's will. "We must be willing to get rid of the life we've planned, so as to have the life that is waiting for us." (Joseph Campbell) Since God makes beautiful things out of the past, imagine what He will do with the present.

Read Job 22:21-27

Be Still

Listen. What is God saying?

Run hard. Rest well.

Run Hard

When we join in the never-ending rat race of 24/7, when we live with out breathing room, margin, playfulness and rest there's a price to be paid—and the price tag is often staggering for us and for God's Kingdom.

Rest Well

BLUE	“Bright Spot” and “One Goal”
YELLOW	A letter to yourself
Evaluation	

Bright Spot from the book “Switch”

One Goal (buy 1% milk)

Here's a potpourri ideas...

Give yourself a bed time

Take a weekly walk with your spouse

Cut your caffeine consumption in half

Commit to 5-10 minutes a day outside in the “green zone”

Commit to taking a personal retreat in the next 6 months

Commit to 3 hours of Sabbath Rest each week ... pray and play!

Be still and know ... every day

Wrap Up Plan

~ Be a model, mentor and the voice of invitation...

Martin Luther King Jr. often said the success of any social movement depends on its ability to show a world where people will want to go. The point is—that embracing the rhythms of rest helps us begin to paint a picture of that world, which is something that has to be done, because the price of not painting that picture is too high.

Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead, where there is no path and leave a trail.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

~ Closing Prayer Time

~ Evaluation

~ You're welcome to linger for as long as you like

The Lumberjack

Points to Ponder

The hard work of rest is the holy work of God.

One night alone in prayer might make us men, changed from poverty of soul to spiritual wealth, from trembling to triumph. Charles Spurgeon

Personal retreat casts your vision upward, drives your love outward and forges a radical transformation within.

Retreat! It's fire for your ministry—fuel for your soul.

Dr. Moody Stuart's rule for prayer: Pray till you pray.

You will never regret time spent in the presence of God.

Isaiah 29:13 *The Lord says: 'These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.'* Thomas Merton wrote: "The fact remains that contemplation will not be given to those who willfully remain at a distance from God, who confine their interior life to a few routine exercises of piety and a few external acts of worship and service performed as a matter of duty...God does not manifest Himself to these souls because they do not seek Him with any real desire." Rest is interior work in the presence of God.

God whispers in your soul and speaks to your mind. Sometimes when you don't have time to listen, he has to throw a brick. It's your choice: Listen to the whisper. Wait for the brick. Author Unknown

Deuteronomy 4:7 *What other nation is so great as to have their god near them the way the Lord our God is near to us whenever we pray to him?*

Exodus 33: 13-14 *If I have found favor in your eyes, teach me your ways so I may know you... The Lord replied, "My Presence will go with you and I will give you rest."*

I never close the door behind me without the awareness that I am carrying out a great act of mercy toward myself. Peter Hoeg

Nowhere can we get to know the holiness of God and come under its influence and power, except in the inner chamber. It is said, "No man can expect to make progress in holiness who is not often and long along with God."

(Seen on a t-shirt with a picture of a cocoon) Great things happen in quiet places. Author Unknown

Find rest, O my soul, in God alone...My soul finds rest in God alone. David, Psalm 63:5a, 1a

Come to me, all who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest. Matthew 11:26

(Martha) had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said... "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.

Luke 10:39 & 41

Resources

Websites-www. emotioallyhealthy.org ... Peter Scazzero ... rhythms/spiritual wellness
drivefaithhome.com ... wonderful tools to equip parents to shape children
worktolive.info ... GREAT secular site on work pressure
zoneinworkshops.com ... effects of technology addictions on family life
familymatters.net ... email discussion starters for dinner time/big kids
Shepherdscanyonretreat.org ... intensive support for leader's marriages
GracePlaceRetreats.org ... 5-day retreats for couples
Biblicalparenting.org ... outstanding parenting support/heart stuff
drannwellness.com ... great free articles on wellness / monthly newsletter

Overload

Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives

By Richard Swenson – Navpress, 1992

Thrilled to Death

Dr. Archibald D. Hart – Thomas Nelson, 2007

Effect of Technology

Fickering Pixels

Shane Hipps

Leadership

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality

Peter Scazzero

Leading On Empty: Refilling Your Tank and Renewing Your Passion

Wayne Cordeiro

Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership

Ruth Haley Barton

Sacred Pathways: Discover Your Soul's Path to God

By Gary Thomas – Zondervan, 1996

Family

Making Room for Life

By Randy Frazee – Zondervan, 2003

Good and Angry: Exchanging Frustration for Character in you and your children

Scott Turnasky

Sabbath

Keeping the Sabbath Wholly: Ceasing, Resting, Embracing, Feasting

By Marva Dawn – Eerdmans, 1989

Souvenirs of Silence: Finding Rest in Abba's Embrace

Brennan Manning

Stillness

Renovation of the Heart

By Dallas Willard – Navpress, 2002

Testament of Devotion

Thomas Kelly –HarperCollins, 1941

The Reflective Life: Becoming More Spiritually Sensitive to the Everyday Moments of Life

By Ken Gire – Chariot Victor Publishing, 1998

Invitation to Solitude and Silence AND Sacred Rhythms

By Ruth Haley Barton – Intervarsity Press

Evaluation

2010

Personally, what will you be bringing home from this experience?

What were the strengths of this one-day seminar?

What would you add, alter or delete?

Are you a _____ “Planner” or a _____ “Go-with-the Flow-er” from page 4.

On a scale of 1-5 (1 = poor and 5 = excellent) how would you rate the following?
Please add comments and suggestions.

_____ Morning Session “Rest Redefined,” Inventory and Small group

_____ Morning Session: Be Still and Know

_____ Afternoon Session: Sabbath Keeping

_____ Afternoon Session: Personal Retreat Time

_____ After Session: Sabbath Keeping

_____ Afternoon Quiet Time ...

_____ Afternoon Closing: Run hard. Rest well.

Do you feel prepared to attempt to embrace some Rhythms of Rest? Circle as many as you'd like and add your own:

confident excited unsure cautious reluctant determined

If you are unsure, why? What ingredients are missing?

Would you recommend this Seminar to others? Why or why not?