

# The Need For Rest

by Dean Taylor

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of intentional rest and Sabbath, highlighting the need to slow down, simplify, and deliberately live in God's presence. It explores the concept of holiness in daily living, the dangers of busyness, and the transformative power of taking time to rest and be still before God. The message encourages a deliberate focus on God, seeking spiritual strength, and living all seven days differently through the practice of Sabbath.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 11:28, Psalm 46:10, Isaiah 58:13, Joshua 14:12, 1 Peter 1:15, Exodus 14:13, Psalms 46:10

**Topics:** "Intentional Rest", "Living in God's Presence"

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## Description

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## Transcript

To rest from my work is to have faith that God is in charge. Okay, excellent. So I knew that this was going to be the last of my messages on the word holy.

And actually, I even added the one on the conscience last week, because I didn't really feel I was ready for this one. And because this one really hits at my, I think, my weakest point. And like a few weeks ago, I was having a really busy week.

And I was thinking, you know, I could never preach this sermon. Well, last week was probably my worst week since I've been in Boston. And so I realized I've just got to be really honest about my desire for this sermon.

And the sermon is about rest. It's about Sabbath. It's about taking the time that you need to away from the busyness of life.

And so I will start from that. I think I have a disclaimer slide here. But from the beginning, I'll say that this was a very encouraging and challenging study for me, personally.

I looked at it as a Bible study of saying, okay, Dean, this is an area that you are lacking in. And you need to see this area in your life. And so if you will have mercy upon me as I present this.

And I've had better times where I've expressed this part of holiness at times better in places in my life. And I want more of this. I want this mountain in my life.

And I believe God wants it, too. So looking at the 1 Peter 115 through 16, we've been reading this through the entire series. But as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct.

Because it is written, be holy for I am holy. And that is just such a powerful passage. The whole basis of our desire to walk in holiness and all of our conduct and everything we do is based upon because God himself is holy.

And I'm just so challenged by that. And we've talked about just trying just to some degree to meditate on how God is completely not like us. But yet through his incarnation and through Christ coming to earth, how he imparts this life to us and expects this life, as you see in this scripture from Peter.

It's such a challenging passage. So, okay, here's my disclaimer slide. Admission of my shortcoming.

So this is a Bible study for me, but I want this in my life. And I've had it at times better. And it's an area that I'm just really excited after going through this scripture.

I quoted this in a different... As this series started, we were outside. And some of these slides, I remember, oh, you know what? I didn't even have the slideshow back then. But here's the way I look at the word holy.

You know, I believe that my generation killed the word holy. The next generation buried it. And the younger generation today has turned and desecrated the grave.

It's something that's just so foreign to our culture. In my time, it was still my father would have just had just a general holiness. I mean, the way we went to the Alamo would have been... You didn't just run in as a little boy into the Alamo.

You know, it was, son, Davy Crockett died here. You know, it was part of my dad's Texas religion. And but the idea of just a time to stop, rest, think about what you're doing, walk circumspectly.

Those were the kind of things that just I think his generation took for granted. My generation sort of made light of it. Oh, we were free to do.

We can worship anywhere. We can do different things. And I'm afraid that the next generation is actually mocking the concept of holiness and mocking some of these things.

And I believe the loss of the word holy, the loss of holy is much worse, much more insidious, much more destructive than we realize. Theologically, socially, emotionally, physically, psychologically, physically, you name it, it's something that I think that we are suffering from. I mentioned this and now I have an actual picture for it on the first thing.

One of the one of the places, one of my favorite places on Earth is John Wesley's prayer room. Not my son, John Wesley. I hope it'll be like that for him, too, someday.

But the John Wesley in England, there's a few places that I've visited that I'm just like, wow, I love being here. I'm a history guy, you know, and John Wesley's prayer room. There it is.

You can see the picture of it. Hopefully it'll pop up. There it is.

John Wesley's prayer room. It was very simple. It was right off of his bedroom.

His bedroom was here and you went in there. And as we were on our little tour of seeing John Wesley's house, how many people have been here? If you go to London, you got to, it's not far. And you can see the Wesley home and he's got where Wesley lived and all that right there.

And then across the street is incredible graveyard and things. You're in there and you're just thinking, wow, how much time this man spent there praying, praying over souls, praying over the church, praying over his life. And you, and you just get this feel when you're in there.

And I just, I just felt so deficient, you know, and still, when I ponder some of these prayer lives and some of these, these, the way that some of these men and women sought after the Lord, I just feel like there's so much more growing that I need to have that place. I asked the tour, I said, do you mind if I just, I mentioned this on the first message, I think, but I just said, do you mind if I just spend some time in here? And I remember just praying for my family in that room, just praying for the church, praying for my life. It's a moment.

It's a place that, that's really spoke to me. So then, you know, in my, in my, my journey of reading through different writings, I mentioned this in another sermon too, but just the way they write the letters to mom, you know, the theological works, I expect to be sort of put on a little bit, you know, you, you, you put out your best foot for your theological works, but the way they write to mom is so otherworldly, so, and so different, I feel. And I, and many times when I'm just reading their letters, I, I feel a, a, a shallowness of, of how I, I, I just don't have the depth that, that many of these had.

And so now I'm like, even the way our media is, you know, I think of all the times that I spent at Sattler College and all the different things in the emails I sent, it's just all in emails, you know, and imagine if you had to take a pen and lick it and dip it in the ink well, and you had this paper and you're there scribbling that, just the whole act of it is different and there was something to it. And I, I wouldn't go back to that. Obviously I like email.

I like sending a WhatsApp message, but I just think that there's, there's some, there's more that's changing than, than we realize. So here's the part of the things I pondered. And again, I've said this, some of this is summary at the beginning here, just because everything can be holy, doesn't mean everything is holy.

So my generation, we said, you know, we don't need a special place. And this is very, this is very right. This is very true.

We don't need a temple. We don't need a, a, a special place to be holy. You don't need a church building.

You don't need these types of things because any place can be holy. It's frequently said, oh, this barstool could be holier than a church. And it's true.

But just because everything can be holy, it doesn't mean that everything is holy. The act of holiness, the act of making something holy is intentional, including our lives. And in every part of the things that we make holy, it's intentional.

It's something that we, as a definition, are setting apart for something special, whether that's our life, our prayer life, anything it is that that's setting apart for something special. So if everything is holy, then by definition, by the very definition of the word holiness, nothing is holy. Every room can be holy.

This is just a living room. But we are consecrating it unto God and asking God to meet with us here. That takes a, it takes something to do that.

Every place can be holy. And every hour of your day can be holy. You don't need a special time.

But is it holy? Taking that time, taking the hour. I'm going to be talking about that. You know, I thought of even like, you know, with communion and things, we were big on not saying you need a fancy chalice.

We don't need this, this gothic chalice to do these types of things. But, you know, sometimes, I don't know, maybe it's because I'm a little old fashioned. It's some effort to enter in the holiness of the real presence of communion, of these things.

It takes some time to enter the holy, to just, we're setting apart this moment. We're setting apart this time for holy. And I think our children can learn to appreciate that.

I think that our, I got that from my dad in the Alamo. You pick it up and children can follow that. And I think that there's something that even a common place can be holy.

A common cup can be holy. But is it holy? A common hour in your life can be holy. A common life can be holy.

But is it? But is it? And it's an important concept, not to be exaggerated, not to fall back into, that there was a time when you had a certain place. In the old covenant, that God wanted a certain place. In Deuteronomy 16, 1 through 3, I have just some short scriptures on this.

Observe the month of Abib and keep the Passover. The Lord thy God. In the fourth month of Abib, the Lord thy God brought thee out of Egypt by night.

Thou shall therefore sacrifice the Passover unto the Lord thy God of the flocks and of the herd in the place which the Lord has chosen to place his name there. And we see this over and over with the feast, with the different sacrifices, with the Israel itself. As a geography of Israel, there was a specific, very specific place.

A lot of trouble you get into with Jeroboam and these types of things. When you don't have this specific space. And this was changed.

And the new covenant, Jesus made it very clear in speaking to the woman there at the well. In John 4, 19, the woman said to him, Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. And this is a very important passage for us to ponder if we need a special place or a geography.

Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where you ought to worship. And Jesus said unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem worship the father. You worship what you do not know.

We know what we worship for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the father in spirit and truth. For the father is seeking such to worship him.

God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth. So answering the question, do we worship at this mountain or do we worship in these different places? You know, it's an important answer to this. And I've been to some really, I've been to some of those big places, you know, and I have to admit, I kind of like the architecture of it.

You know, when you walk into the Vatican, you're like, wow, you know, it's huge. You know, it's like the fonts of the apostles is six feet. They say, you know, mentioning all the apostles names, it goes like for six feet or something around there.

And you're walking in this and the architecture and all this, you're thinking this is impressive. But God has made it very clear that he don't need a specific spot to worship. And of course, there's something a lot is lost in the simplicity of everything.

This concept is important, and I don't want to lose this. In second Corinthians, I made some ellipsis, but just some of these basic thoughts of even the feast and the covenant and the circumcision and some of those things of the old covenant, how in the new covenant, those are in our heart. Second Corinthians three.

Things that talking about the things like that written not with ink by the spirit of the living God, not on not on tables of stone, but on tablets of flesh that is of the heart. But if the ministry of death written and engraved on stones was glorious so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses before the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away. And he goes on, how much more shall we? For if what is passing away was glorious, what remains is much more glorious.

Now, this idea of glorious is means it radiates like you couldn't see Moses faces. It brings light. And so although we don't have these particular spaces and particular feast or particular things, the radiance of that, the glory of God that shown like on Moses's face, how much more verse 15 there.

But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their hearts. Nevertheless, when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now, the Lord is the spirit and where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

But we all with unveiled face behold, as in a mirror, the glory of the Lord are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the spirit of the Lord. So this is this is an important concept. We see this in the early church in the early Christians.

They it was it was very obvious at the very beginning. They didn't go and start trying to create new temples. They didn't go and try to start creating a new country that God had were in the past.

The old covenant was basically could be summed up and come and see. And the new covenant was go and tell it was something that was expanding. It was something that was going out.

It wasn't going to be a certain geographical place that was defended by military, but something that was all over the whole earth. And this was important. And we see this in here at a very early work in the early church.

One of my favorites, the letter of to diagnosis. It says this in the next place. I fancy that he goes on to different explanations and he's he's explaining to someone else what Christianity was like.

And here's an interesting point about the switch from a particular place to a spiritual place or spiritual existence. So he goes in the next place. I fancy that our chief was chiefly anxious to hear about they're not practicing their religion in the same way as the Jews.

The Jews, then, so far as they abstain from the mode of worship described above, he was talking about the temples and things do well in claiming to reverence one God of the universe and to regard him as master. But so far as they offer him this worship in methods similar to those already mentioned, they are altogether at fault. For whereas the Greeks, by offering these things to senseless and deaf images, make an exhibition of stupidity.

The Jews, considering that they are presenting them to God as if he were in need of them in all reason to count it folly and not religious worship. For he that made the heavens and the earth and all things that are therein and furnishes us with what is we are in need, can himself need any of these things, cannot himself need any of these things, which he himself supply it to them that imagine they are given them to him. But those who think to perform sacrifices to him with blood and with fat and whole burnt offerings to honor him with such honors seem to me in no way different from those who show the same respect towards deaf images.

For the one class think fit to make offerings to things unable to participate in the honor, the other class to one who is in need of nothing. So this was an attitude of the early Christians that this was something, a clear change, a clear something that happened in the way they did this. But here's my caution.

It's the word anachronism, okay? It's the idea that anachronism is the concept of where we put our culture, our thinking, and we import it back into a different age. And so even in the Bible, we tend to think in these conversations when they're talking about coming out of the old covenant and coming into the new covenant, in our modern day, and I've seen it just change in my lifetime, we almost describe the early Christians, the times of Jesus, the apostles, in almost a foolish, a dirty sometimes, just almost certainly unholy way. And I think that this is our maybe attempt of our once again creating God in our own image.

And now the image of the 21st century in our postmodernism, we're once again doing this, and people have done this for every generation. So I want to dig in in this study and say, okay, well, how did they live their life? What was it like? What was Christianity like to Jesus and the apostles and the early church? Because here's some of the things that I ponder. The dangers of scriptural anachronisms.

Laziness is not holy living. Haphazard is not holiness. Sloppiness is not sanctification.

Absenteeism is not anointed. Carelessness is not Christ. And hurried is not holy.

And when we begin to just try to make this kind of a life, and I'm preaching to me, fit into this and try to justify it, we do ourself a double disservice. A double disservice. That letter is one of the earliest of the Bethlehem Diaries letters, and I was going to speak on that here.

So yes, while it is important for us to understand that any day can be holy, any hour can be a time that you spend the time with God and meet with Him. Any building can work. Any prayer doesn't have to be a written prayer.

It doesn't have to be a liturgy. It doesn't have to be those things. Any cup can work.

It can be holy, but we still need to ask, then what is holy about it? What about our day? What about our life? What hour are you really giving to the Lord? What place are you meeting that's holy? How are you praying unto God? How are you worshiping Him even in the communion? How are we coming before a holy God is the question. Is it holy? Is it holy is the question. So holiness by definition is intentional.

Is intentional. Now, here's something that's hard for me to understand. It's really hard.

Being still takes a lot of effort and particularly for me. I'm the kind of guy who is, I'm the guy who fills in the gaps in an awkward conversation. You know, I mentioned this in my book, but I remember one of those, you know, you got a few of those, you have some of those slow motion moments in your life that when you replay, they're like, I think it's like eternal moment.

They seem like it's a hundred years long, even though it lasts like a minute. And you're like, you know, you see yourself in slow motion. Well, one of those was when I presented that we were going to be conscientious objectors to my commander, you know, saluting there.

And then I laid the regulations on his desk and it was a hundred years until he said anything. It was like, you know, it was so quiet in there. And I remember just saying something like, I'm really sorry to cause you any trouble.

Something like that. And I needed to have more of a, let it sit, let it burn, let the holy silence play. And I need this more.

I need to be comfortable in that. And that's not my nature. Being still takes effort.

It's a lot of effort for me. Being still. Psalm 46:10 reads, be still and know that I am God.

So the point with being still, and I'm going to get into a little bit of the Sabbath thoughts, is that it's taking it out of my efforts. It's me. It's an act of faith where I'm trusting God and I'm not manipulating the situation.

I'm letting God take care of this. And so me being still is like, God, I don't know what to do. And so instead of saying just a bunch of dumb stuff until you make it really clear, I'm going to be still.

And I need more of that. Now, Jesus. So looking at Jesus, I want to know what was his routine for worshiping in both time and place.

And I did this study preparing this message. And this is the most convicting part of this message for me. Putting together, collecting the times and Jesus is still time.

And his time, he went to pray and those kind of things. And wow, let's look at these scriptures because they really challenged me. So we get in his teaching, we get in Jesus' teaching in Matthew 6, 5, how we should come before God in a purposeful place, in a purposeful time alone with God.

Matthew 6, 5. And when you pray, you should not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, for that they could be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their rewards. But you, when you pray, go into your room.

Some scriptures say the closet, small area. And when you have shut your door, pray to your father who is in the secret place. Amen.

Isn't that beautiful? Pray to the father who is in the secret place. And your father who sees in secret will reward you openly. And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathens do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words.

So the idea there is awesome. He's telling us that you should have this place that you go to. Now, these aren't Americans.

You know, they're dealing with some houses and things that are probably most likely smaller than any of the houses we live in. Yet somehow they found a place. And I really think it's good that you have a place.

Certain chair, certain closet, a certain place that you are meeting God in a secret place. And it says he will meet you there. That's that Wesley room.

It's that place, he says. But you, when you pray, go into your room. And when you have shut the door, pray to your father who is in the secret place.

And your father who sees in secret reward you openly. So I believe that since Jesus gave us this teaching, and I don't believe Jesus was a hypocrite. This is it gives us an insight of how Jesus prayed and how he came before the father.

And, you know, when I think of my life and I've shared this, I think, yeah, even in this series, on those big moments when you break through, aren't they almost always a moment like that? They're almost always this place that you've that this is the place where God meets with you. And so this is this is very important. And this this, I think we get a lot of, I think, in our in our teaching, particularly around here.

I was just reading a book, getting preparation for this message. And he was acting like it was almost a forgotten thing to have a quiet time now. And I praise the Lord.

That's I don't feel that's in our circles here. At least it's an all around here in Boston. We talk about it all the time.

And so that's praise the Lord for this. This is this is something we encourage and we must have it. And don't lose that beautiful thing that God is there in secret, special place, amazing place.

Now, these other ones really challenge me of how Jesus takes the time and breaks the routine to have this moment. Mark 630, turn your Bibles to this and follow with me because it's really powerful. Jesus is going through doing many of the miracles and different things.

The apostles are following him around. We get to Mark 630, then the apostles gathered to Jesus and told him all things. They had just come back from, you know, healing the demonics.

And they were like, wow, this is so great. We've been doing this ministry. We've been seeing the power of God.

The apostles gathered to Jesus and told him all these things. About what they had done and what they had taught. And he said to them, so this is interesting.

They've got it. They had demons running from them. They had teachings.

They were anointed. And they're saying, Jesus, we've got it. This we've done it.

And the first thing he says to them, come aside by yourself to a deserted place and rest for a while. He knew exactly what they need. For there are many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.

I highlighted it there. So they departed to a deserted place in a boat by themselves. So amazing.

They're from this mission thing. They're exhausted, but it seems they're excited. They're encouraged.

And he says, you need to you need to get away. You need to take a moment and you need to get with you get with God. And then he said they don't even have time to eat.

We do need to imagine it wasn't just, you know, this, I don't know, sort of easy life. I mean, it was very ministerially challenged. You know, they were running and they were they didn't even have time to eat.

Have you know everyone in this room? Amen. I've been there like this week. Yeah, I know all you guys.

So it's it's it's part of that. But look what Jesus does. So they get on the boat and they're about to say, OK, we're going to get together.

We're going to have a retreat. We're going to just spend some time, you know, refreshing and they get in the boat. And look what happens.

So they also says this for time's sake, I skipped it. So they saw that they were going and the multitude just said, look, there's Jesus and the apostles. Let's follow him.

And next thing you know, there's this entire crowd. So Jesus is looking around. He says he feels compassion on them.

He sees they're tired. He teaches them. And he's he's he's working from from all this different ministry thing.

Now he's he's ministering to him this way. And it says in verse forty two, so they all ate and were filled. And they took up twelve baskets full of fragments and of the fish.

Forty four. Now those who had eaten the loaves were about 5000 men. Forty five.

Now watch now. He didn't forget the purpose of what they were doing. Immediately, he made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he sent the multitude away.

So he said, hey, go there. And this is Jesus saying it's enough. This is really hard for me.

This great ministry opportunity. I'm going to have to say no. He sent the multitude away.

He did the extra thing. He was already going here. He knew the apostles needed this time to pray.

He fed them. He said he had compassion on them. He he fed them 5000.

Then he said he sent the apostles away, the disciples away. And then he sent the multitudes away. And watch verse forty six.

And when he had sent them away, he departed to the mountain to pray. That's that's amazing to me. Now, I've I've really appreciated it in my entire Christian life.

People have have emphasized family devotions. People have emphasized personal devotions. And and if it's if I miss those, it's my fault.

I've certainly been taught those things. And certainly the most rewarding times of both family and personal comes from that in my life. But if I could think of the times that I have said, you know what? I just got to get along.

I don't know. I was reading this and I'm thinking I could maybe count it on my on my hand. I don't know when I'm on a camping trip.

I'm going to go spend some time alone. But to break the flow and say, guys, I've got to go into the field and just be alone and meet with God. I can't think of how many times I've done that.

And this this got me as I studied this. And when the evening come, the boat was in the middle of the sea. And he was alone on the land to see Jesus.

They're really alone like a desert. The boat's gone. The people are gone.

And there's Jesus. Jesus taking the time to send it all the way to break the plans to do the things and say, I need to meet with God. It's a couple more.

Let me show you. Turn to Luke 514. Jesus was healing.

The lepers were cleansed. And he said, and just to prevent this, this whole mass, people following him and falling, you know, charging him. He tells him at verse 14, and he was charged to tell them, you know, don't don't tell anybody, but go and show yourself to the priest and make an offering for your cleansing as a testimony to them, just as Moses command.

But verse 15, however, the report went around concerning him all the more. And great multitudes came together to hear and to be healed by him of their infirmities. And then all this miraculous stuff's happening.

The ministry is succeeding. The power is going. So he himself often withdrew into the wilderness and pray.

Because of the success of the ministry, Jesus went and said, I got to get out of here. Wow, I've had my quiet times. And we retreat.

I have gone with Tanya several times. We've got a cabin in together. We've we've done this in many chapters in our life.

We've we've taken moments where we've done this. Usually it's at a reset time, a time, you know, like this isn't looking good. I need to meet with God here.

Jesus is doing it when things are going great. So things are flowing and the ministry is going great and everything is go. So he himself hid himself and withdrew into the wilderness and pray.

It was when things were going incredible and the people were flocking after him that he went and prayed. And that challenged me. That challenged me.

Look at Mark one thirty five. This one on our daily practice. Now, in the morning, having having risen a long while before daylight, he went out and departed into a solitary place.

And there he pray. I'm just wondering, I want Jesus. Why didn't you just get a candle? And there's your bed.

And, you know, but hours before the daylight, he leaves his house. He goes off into this this desert place. And I imagine him in this.

This is a solitary place and pray only by himself. The stars are out and there he is praying to God. Praying to the father.

That's just it struck me. It struck me that this this holiness of time, this this this this idea of getting alone and this stress of this is how the scripture is stressing this getting to a solitary place. And then finally, in Matthew four one, and Jesus was led up by the spirit to the wilderness after his baptism.

I have a feeling you Greek scholars can tell me that lead is like a driven. He's driven into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit. And I think that there's something to this and this this this crime.

Maybe you can feel it when you're on a camping trip. Maybe you can feel it when you're driving and you see that there's something in it. Just get alone with me and meet with me and pray.

I had in my my house in Pennsylvania that we have a big attic and there was this window in there and in the attic, huge as an old barn that was converted into a house. And there was a place there. And that's the closest that I have a place I can think of, of having a solitary place.

But here was even, I don't know, just seems so purposeful, so purposeful that he that he had here. It challenged me, challenged me a lot. How have others done this? Now, as I ponder this, there's been different people that have expressed this in different ways.

And even in my class that I'm teaching right now, we were just gone. We just got through talking about the desert fathers, so-called. And in the desert fathers like you have people that literally spent their life in in the field, in the caves of the desert and this kind of a thing.

And you ponder that and you like, OK, was was that what Jesus was doing? And then you compare like the kind of like what Wesley has done there with with, you know, his idea of of having this moment. But it seems like the Jesus model of this and people who have really changed history. Is it the holiness that they have in that time is purpose driven? It has an intention to it.

It has a mission purpose to it. It has something that's driving you. Solitude is not a means to itself.

In other words, it has a purpose. So I think of the desert fathers, if there's there's great stories, there's different things like that. But there's something to it that that I think it's something wrong about it that I'm challenged by.

So I remember just reading one of them just to prepare for the class that I just taught. And one of the guys were talking about it and he said. Even our inner, our inner voice distracts us and gives us get us away

from God.

So being in solitude helps you to deal with that. He said, but now we're dealing with so many people is the modern guy who went on that even your media and your songs and your life and your all that is just getting out of that considers to us like this crazy holiness that you're alone. They're like, no, it takes that just to get here.

And now from here, just to get all those distractions of your mind and all your to get to the other level, to get alone with God, there is a deeper level. And I'm really challenged by that. And it makes a lot of sense.

I'm easily distracted. I mean, I have to be careful not to pray too slow, because when I pray too slow, I'm like five different places. I have to keep a kind of a rapid speed in my conversation with God and or I'm just I'm an easily distracted person.

But this this quote from John Wesley, from his journal I read years ago, I bumped into it. I think it puts it in a good perspective. It's from his journal Monday, 9th, 1738.

He says, I reflected much on that vain desire which had pursued me for so many years. Of being in solitude in order to be a Christian. I have now thought I solitude enough, but am I therefore the near being a Christian? And then he says, not if Jesus Christ be the model of Christianity.

I doubt indeed I am much near that mystery of Satan, which some writers affect to call by that name so near that I had probably sunk wholly into it. Had not the great mystery of God just now thrown me upon reading Saint Cyprian's work. I wish I knew what he was reading.

Oh, my soul, come not thou into their secret. Stand thou in the good old past. Now, we know that Wesley had a lot of solitude with God.

But it was directed. So I'm bringing this up for the point. There's kind of a movement, almost a contemplated prayer, and it's almost an end of itself.

But what I see in Jesus, where I underline there, not if Jesus is the model of Christianity. Jesus gives us his teaching, and Jesus is the ultimate interpreter of his teaching. And so Jesus would go into these places and get charged, get right.

Or he didn't have to get right. He would get, I don't know, in tune with the father, however. And he would then be immediately thrown back into service.

It wasn't a means to itself. And I think this is an important point that Wesley and some of the other, even some of the famous people that maybe we'd have some differences with. But nevertheless, they're very, through history, have done some impressive things with it.

The other side of that busyness is no substitute for holiness. In our ministry, in our life, in our things. One of my favorite quotes I'm challenged by is a letter written by David Brainer to his brother in college.

And David Brainer was in New Jersey and through these different areas ministering to the Indian people, American Indians. And it's this quote. He says, I am in one continued, perpetual, and uninterrupted hurry.

And I've used that before, and I thought about it, and I said, wow. And divine providence throws so much upon me that I do not see it will ever be otherwise. May I obtain mercy of God to be faithful to the death.

I cannot say I am weary of my hurry, interestingly. I only want strength and grace to do more for God than I have ever yet done. Now, when we look at his life, he had a time.

Like Wesley, Wesley was very busy with ministry. It's not a sense that we just are living a life of idleness. We're not busyness either.

Now, David Brainer died at 29, two years after he wrote this letter, died of tuberculosis. So you can fill in the gaps with that. But nevertheless, he lived a life.

And he did have his devotional time, his time alone with God. But it was this and this hurry thing, it challenges me. And somehow this young man, as he writes this, I ponder the balance.

I ponder the balance. I have some quotes here from us, from a few famous Christians. Corey Tim Boone once said that if the devil can't make you sin, he'll make you busy.

There's truth in that. Both sin and busyness have the exact same effect. They cut off your connection to God, to other people and even to your own soul.

You know, when you find yourself, here's what I challenge I give myself. When I find myself, when you're talking to me, you look at me in the face and you're trying to ask me something or something, and I'm having to solve some other problem in the back of my mind and not what you're saying to me, I think that's really bad. I don't think Jesus was that way, that he was present at the moment.

And when I start doing that to my children, to my wife, you know, it's a problem. There's a, I was listening, it was one of these memes or something that I saw once and it said, my wife says I don't pay attention or something like that. And so the idea that my wife, when I'm talking to her, I need to be completely there.

My children, the people that are in my life, the students, the people I work with, that this must be something that I am totally in the moment. And I believe Jesus was like that. I can't imagine he was five towns down the road when somebody was coming to him and ministering.

The busyness makes you miss everything. It's the switch tasking as Fr. Finney once had us do that.

You're not doing any one of those very effectively. One of my favorite quotes here from John Bunyan, had a life of prayer, even in prison, would meet with God daily, praying, always could have left the prison if he just admits the king of England has the right to tell him if he can preach or not. And he wouldn't do it.

Could just walk out any time. And he yet had this prayer life in the prison and prayer. He said, prayer will make a man cease from sin or sin will entice a man to cease from prayer.

If this is not part of your life, if this if this solitude and this quiet in this meeting with God, then there's look for sin. There's something there in your life. And it's a few quotes here, even from philosopher.

I got this from a recent book. I read the Korean born German philosopher, but young girl Han ends his book, *The Burnout Society*, with a haunting observation of most people in the Western world. And he says this.

They are too alive to die and too dead to live. And this is just I mean, here, it's it's the busyness of life and what that does to it. Another quote, Walter Adams.

He was a spiritual director of CS Lewis. He says to walk with Jesus is to walk with a slow, unhurried pace. Challenge Brainerd's quote.

Hurry is the death of prayer and only impedes and spoils our work. It never advances it. Well, that challenged me somehow in the end to be busy or to be full with ministry and not have that hurried spirit.

And I think there's something in this attitude that we need. John Ortberg, a recent writer, said, For many of us, the great danger is not that we will renounce our faith. It is that we will become so distracted and rushed and preoccupied that we will settle for a mediocre version of it.

We will just skim our lives instead of actually living them. So here's the book I was just recently reading, studying for this. We went through this at the college and it's powerful.

It's the it's a book called The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry. And in this, he says he says Sabbath means stop. It gives a he says in this book, the Sabbath, the word Sabbath comes from us, the word Hebrew word Shabbat, the word literally means to stop.

He brings out the point. It's a good point. God did not need to rest like he's tired.

He stopped. The Sabbath is simply a day to stop. Stop working.

Stop weight wanting. Stop worrying. Just stop.

And I think of this, you know, one of the things with my my fasting discipline that I feel that I advanced in this in this year, I tried a lot of diets before a lot of different things. And the thing that just finally worked the best for me is just stop eating. It's really simple.

It's the best diet. You just don't eat. And so but but with that, there was some spiritual disciplines that just come along with it.

And the Sabbath thing somehow now that the fasting thing was something Tony and I went through this last year. This is something we're seeking to find our way in for this next year. Exodus 28 through 11.

You know these passages, but they're powerful. Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work.

But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. And if you shall do no work, you nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days, the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them and rested the seventh day.

Therefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day. And here's that holy word. How it's holy, it made it special.

So he makes the point in this book. He's five points out of that scripture. Remembering Israel is to remember this rest day.

Sabbath means rest. Don't forget to take this day off. You know, I can remember I'm old enough to remember when I was a little boy, there were laws in America on Sunday.

We call them the blue law. And stores were closed on Sunday. You just couldn't do it.

Now, granted, there's different ways that people were meaning this and different theological baggage that were on top of this. But nevertheless, it was a culture that we had. And I still to this day can remember we would go to the grocery store.

They would let you get like bare essentials, milk, bread, meat or something like that. And they literally had giant grocery stores, tape or ropes or something in front of the section that you could not buy. And I still to this day remember my brother and I were running.

It was on a Sunday and we were running and we and we came to the toy section. My parents would always, you know, go to the groceries and look at milk or something. Let's go look at the toys.

We often go look at the toys. And in front of me, there's this rope. And you couldn't admit you couldn't buy a toy on Sunday.

And I think that just how utterly foreign that is in our thinking today, how completely foreign it is. And the idea that even as a society, there was something that as a society we did. That was on purpose for that day, one out of every seven, he said.

He said, keeping it holy means to set it apart as special, not fudging. And God's rest after creation was number five. In Hebrews 4:11, it says, let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest.

Now it's talking about Jesus Christ and the new covenant and being in Christ, who is our Sabbath. Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall, according to the same example of disobedience. Now, it's not talking about that we should go and start a new Jewish Sabbath, that we should bring up the Jewish law or these types of a thing.

But it does at least mean. That when Jesus said, come to me, all who are labor and all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. It does at least mean that.

So in this rest, in this Sabbath, in this moment, in this taking this. Yes, we've got our theology. We're not going to bring back the covenants and the and the feast, you know, these different particular things and circumcision and all these types of things.

But there's a principle and something in there that God wants us to gather that we need of making this time and taking this time to be holy. And it at least means come to me all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. A Sabbath, the holy rest must be intentional.

In his book, he brings out language of Henry David Thoreau. It's funny, Tony and I didn't even know each other. And in juniors in high school, we both chose to do Henry David Thoreau's Walden Pine.

I don't know why I never would have ever heard of a transcendentalist or anything like that. So but it was something odd. And Tony and I got to know each other that year, but we both chose that.

And and so I remember, though, as a junior in high school, trying with all my attention deficit disorder to read Walden Pine. And it was really painful. I mean, like it literally hurt.

And so I think I could do a little better now. But he brings out Walden, which I guess is right around here, right? Very close. Wow.

I got it. I got to go there. Tony and I can have to have a date there.

And remember, that's that's awesome. You'll have to take me there. So he talks about this Walden.

And I just finished reading his famous memoir, Walden, about going into the woods for two full years to slow down and simplify. Now, I don't know. You know, this would be very challenging.

And then he said, let's look at this line. This is from Thoreau. Oops, oops.

Oh, no. Let's look at this line. I went to the woods because I wish to live deliberately.

See, it's two years in the woods to live deliberately. To front only the essential facts of life and see if I could not learn what it had to teach and not when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. So I don't recommend living two years in Walden.

But whatever the case, there was something that the point that I took there. Deliberately, deliberately simplifying your life is a calling that I feel in me as I'm looking at this study of what I what Dean needs is this in our church in Pennsylvania, Living Hope. We had a lady there who actually spent some time after she was Italian lady and she left in Italy and spent some time with Mother Teresa in Calcutta.

She actually met her husband there and they got married. And then some somehow ended up in radical circles and everything and came to actually her husband then died of cancer. And she was a widow there at our at our church in Pennsylvania.

And I was dealing with ministering ministry needs and different things like this. And I asked her, I said, I said, I said, what what was it like? I mean, the sister, I just imagine in Calcutta, there was this constant need. People were dying.

People were, you know, all these things that I mean, when did they ever say no? And she said it was very clear that they when they were serving, they were serving. And when they were not, they were not. And she said there was like a line that she was mentioning as a place where the sisters would go back there and pray or whatever they do back there.

And in that they knew that the sisters needed that and that that wasn't going to be that they can't have this scene if you're going to not have the other scene. And and it was very clear. And this is, again, something that I think that that the Sabbath type of thing needs is very clear.

No. Remember when Jesus and he sent the multitude away? Dean, you need better borders. You need to draw a line that this is when I can be there.

It seems to frustrate people more when I keep saying, I'm sorry, I tried. I'm really I'm really going to try. I'm really sorry.

I'm trying to. And you do that everywhere. And you find that you're just frustrating everybody.

And knowing this and being more. On purpose, I'm having my rest. You know, if we don't take this rest, if we don't do these things, you know what ends up happening? Crash.

Either happens by sickness. Yeah, a project falls apart. You have to then cancel everything.

And finally, it will pay. It's it's the this this need for rest, this need for taking a time will say you're going to have to pay attention to me and it'll finally happen. It's interesting.

When I was studying a little bit of how the the those sisters of charity live their life, it's interesting quote here that I found. This is from Mother Teresa, who won the Nobel Peace Prize. And again, I don't condone for sure her her her theology or her practice, but her the way she lived a life of service and things is very extraordinary.

And she said this, which I just pondered. The sister spend one day in every week, the spenders, the sister shall spend one day in every week, one week in every month, one month in every year, one year in every six at the mother house, where in contemplation and penance, which is interesting, together with solitude, she can gather in the spiritual strength, which she might have used up in the service of the poor. Now, I'm not condoning doing penance and those types of things in a house.

But what I'm amazed by this is in the busyness of their ministry that they have over there. They have like this mother house that they would have had that there's the work in Calcutta and that a day. So every every week they go there for one day or in their place, I guess it had to be close enough for them to do it every very clean a week and every month, one month and every year and an entire year there in solitude during for the service.

And just this intentional and this need when I was working with the missionaries there in Greece and the organization I was with, it actually had a mandatory call it. A mandatory furlough and a mandatory one day a month that you had to take as a day of rest. And so or at least be highly encouraged.

And so just realizing and we need to realize that that these things are a part of us, our need to be a part of us. So, OK, coming closer to the end here. And we'll wrap it up.

To rest from my work is to have faith that God is in charge. This is the hard part for Dean. Let your hands off.

You know what happened to me years ago? I was I got a cold, a really bad cold. And next thing you know it, I couldn't talk. And, you know, you have a bad cold and I had a fever and it was and it was OK.

Weeks gone by, two weeks gone by. And I said, OK, this is getting ridiculous. And I was at work, you know, and and everything.

And so I went to actually visit the ENT, the ears, nose and throat surgeon that I work with. And I went to him and and he said, OK, let me take a look. And they numbed my nose and did a little scope and look down.

He says, Dean, I hate to tell you, you have a paralyzed vocal cord. I said, you know, I couldn't talk. I literally couldn't whisper.

And I and so I, you know, eked out a well, well, you know, I'm a I'm a preacher. You know, I he says, yeah, I know we talk. We were friends.

And I said, well, just, you know, give it to me straight. He said, it's 50 50. I've seen people, they get better and some don't.

And I wish you'd have got on steroids about, you know, three weeks ago. You let it go this long. It's it's you've got some nerve damage now.

And I was like, wow, OK. And so it was like I looked at the scriptures to try to find some solace, you know, like, OK, and everywhere I found that somebody went mute wasn't good. It's like and people at work were going like, wow, a preacher who went mute.

What'd you do? I mean, literally, it was like, you know, the shame that was on me. I had like notes, you know, doing anesthesia. And you have to wake people up at the end of surgery, like wake up like a sign.

And the time that it hit me the worst, I remember going to Paul B. Martin's to get some bolt or something that I was working on. And there was an older guy there that was it was a hardware store. And I was trying to whisper to him that I needed the certain bolt and I could not do it loud enough.

And I just started crying and went outside. People started saying, you know, I heard about someone else do this. They walk around like this little microphone thing.

And I realized, OK, this is going to be me. Then finally, one of the ministers, I mean, actually, it was Melvin Kaufman, Junior's father. He came to me and he said, would you would you like to just you can write down your sermons and I'll preach them for you, your burden that you have for the congregation.

And I said, I really appreciate that, Brother Melvin. But I think if God went through this much trouble to get me to shut up, I'd better be listening. I'd better be listening.

And I realized that, you know, what is important is I thought I was as as much as I thought the whole movement was resting on my shoulders. And I needed to learn to be quiet and let God take over. That was a hard thing to go through.

Next thing you know, about six months later, it just started coming back. I could whisper. I could then swallow without coughing.

And then finally it came back. I remember we were out of the park once and I was with the children and I just started screaming a little bit to getting some volume. And I realized I can talk again.

It was a miraculous time. Exodus 14, 3 and Moses said to the people, do not be afraid. Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will accomplish for you today.

For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. Stand still and allow. So taking the day off means that something's going to be done that I don't need to do.

And that same book, Walter Brueggemann has a great line. People who keep Sabbath live all seven days differently. Here's an interesting point.

People who keep this day off live all seven days differently. It's true. Watch out for the Sabbath.

It will mess with you. First, it will mess with one day of your week. Then it will mess with your whole life.

But the seventh day, God has 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 his work of creating what he had done.

And this is what happened to me with fasting. I started fasting mainly for diet reasons, and then it starts messing with you. When that one meal a day that you get, you start wanting to do kind of carefully with

that one meal a day.

Do I really want to stick a corny dog in my mouth if I'm just going to eat one day? All right, so the last section here, the last thing, and then I'm going to close. During that whole fasting thing, Tonya and I looked at this whole thing, and we said, OK, let's really look at what God wants. And of course, you naturally go to Isaiah 58.

And as we look at Isaiah 58, he tells us what he really wants. And we wanted to claim these promises for our family in the way that he wants us. And this is this is what I want.

Go to the whole book. The whole chapter is incredible. But is this not the fast that I have chosen to lose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, that you break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out? When you see the naked that you cover them and not hide yourself from your own flesh, from your own humanity, then what's this promise? It's awesome.

Then your light shall break forth like the morning. Your healing shall spring forth speedily and your righteousness shall go before you. The glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.

Then you shall call. This is back where God is visiting you. Then you shall call and the Lord will answer.

You will cry and he will say, isn't that awesome? But he goes on, he says, you shall raise up the foundations of many generations. This is what I want for my family. You shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of the streets to dwell in.

I want to bring healing to the church. Verse 13, if now, though, this is the end of Isaiah 58. If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day and call the Sabbath a delight.

The book that I was reading really talks about this invitation to live in the delight. The holy day of the Lord honorable and shall honor him, not doing your own ways, not finding your own pleasure, not speaking your own words. Then you shall delight yourself in the Lord, and I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth and feed you with the heritage of Jacob, your father.

The mouth of the Lord has spoken. Praise God. My generation has killed the word holy.

The next generation buried it. I believe the younger generation today has turned and desecrated the grave. The loss of holy is much worse, much more insidious, much more destructive than we realize.

And I want it back. Joshua 14, 12 says, now, therefore, give me this mountain on which the Lord spoke in that day. For you heard in that day how the Anakim were there, that the cities were great and fortified.

It may be that the Lord will be with me at that mountain, the Lord be with me, and I shall be able to drive them out as the Lord said. So recapping. Psalm 46, 10 says, be still and know that I am the God.

I am God. Laziness is not holy living. Haphazard is not holiness.

Sloppiness is not sanctification. Absenteeism is not anointed. Carelessness is not Christ, and hurried is not holy.

And just because everything can be holy does not mean that everything is holy. And furthermore, if everything is holy to us, then by definition, nothing is holy. So while we look at this thing, our day, our hour, our building, our prayer, our cup of worship can be holy.

We still need to ask, is it holy? 1 Peter 1, 15, 16 says, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct because it's written, be holy for I am holy.

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