

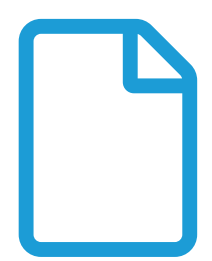
THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF REST



EVANGELISTIC
PRAYER
TEAMS

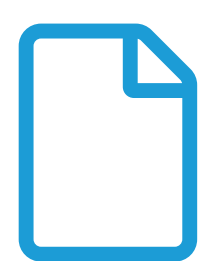
THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF REST

Course Overview



Course Summary

These studies explore how the biblical notion of rest impacts the way we approach our work and helps us stand out in our workplace.



Course Structure

1: BUSINESS AND REST

2: GRACE AND REST

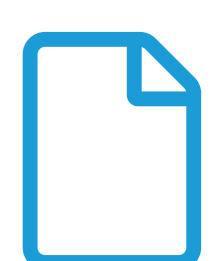
3: TRUST AND REST



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THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF REST

1. BUSYNESS AND REST



Introduction

Australia is known as the land of the long weekend, and yet our annual leave statistics suggest that we're not great at taking our rest. The average Australian worker has over 20 days accrued – yes! a year's worth of leave. Why do you think that is?



Big Picture

Rest doesn't come naturally because deep down we mistakenly think if we work enough we can hold off unemployment, old age, disease, ill health, and – ultimately – death.



Bible Passage

While you read – QUESTION?

“All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

²⁸“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

Matthew 11:27-30



Key Truths

1. Rest is not the freedom from all burdens – that’s laziness (it’s own burden). Rest is the replacement of a heavy burden with a light one – that of coming to Jesus.
2. The crushing burden of our own self-salvation in our work is replaced by the light yoke of living Jesus’ way.
3. Water Brueggemann said that “Sabbath (the Jewish day of rest) is a bodily act of testimony to alternative and resistance to pervading values.” That is, taking on Jesus’ rest displays to our world that our slavery is not to work, or ourselves, or our base desires and instincts. Rather our slavery is to Jesus, whose burden is light.

Thoughts? Questions?



Application

How might the light and easy burden of Jesus be seen in our lives?

When you go on leave do you find it hard to switch off? (Answering emails? Phone calls?)

If we cannot seem to rest what does that reveal about our trust in Jesus and the rest he brings?

When you first start working it can be easy to slip into bad habits of working back late just because others are doing it. It’s important early on to work out your boundaries. Do you really need to work back, or are you trying to impress?



Prayer

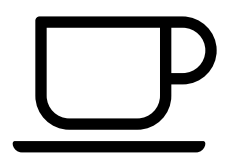
Pray that we would be happy to throw off our self-imposed burdens and take on Jesus' light and easy burden.

Pray that, even amid extreme busyness, our ability to rest would be testament to our obedience to Jesus rather than to the working world.

Pray that this would be evident to those around us.

Remember

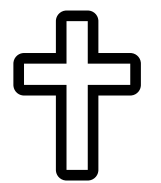
COFFEE



DINNER

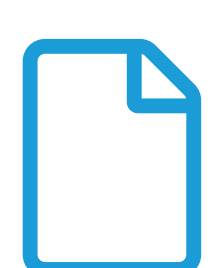


GOSPEL



THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF REST

2. GRACE AND REST



Introduction

If financial planning ads are to be believed, our goal in life is to retire with a comfortable lifestyle. But research tells us that retirement is a difficult adjustment. It can often result in depression and even the onset of severe physical ailments. Why do we find rest so hard?



Big Picture

God's gift of rest is a 'burden' to be enjoyed – not endured, but this doesn't come naturally. Rest from work is a wonderful gift of God.



Bible Passage

While you read – QUESTION?

One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grainfields, and as his disciples walked along, they began to pick some heads of grain. ²⁴The Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?"

²⁵He answered, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need? ²⁶In the days of Abiathar the high priest, he entered the house of God and ate the consecrated bread, which is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions."

²⁷Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. ²⁸So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

Mark 2:23-28



Key Truths

1. The Sabbath was a gift of God to his people for their refreshment and recovery; it was made for their benefit. It was set into the natural fabric of life in creation. Rest is a gift to be enjoyed, not a law to enslave people in heartless obedience.
2. Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath. He rules over the Sabbath. Just as the king of Israel was able to break food laws in the temple, so too Jesus stands over the Sabbath laws.
3. Jesus exercises his rule over the Sabbath by healing and restoring people (See Mark 3:1-6)
4. The sabbath rest is the gift of God. It is part of Jesus' 'burden' that is to be enjoyed, not endured. Rest from work is a gift from God that we should embrace and for which we can give thanks to God.

Thoughts? Questions?



Application

The Sabbath shows us that God cares about our rest. How does your life incorporate God's rest?

How might enjoying God's gift of rest help you stand out at work?

If you are someone responsible for others, how can you encourage your team to be well rested for their work?

If you are a recent graduate, when we first start working we can find that the things that used to relax us are no longer effective or you don't have the time to do them in the same way. What have you found helps you rest during the working week, or over the weekend?



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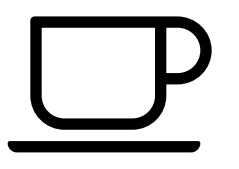


Prayer

Pray for each other that we will enjoy God's gift of rest and that it would be evident in our lives.

Remember

COFFEE



DINNER

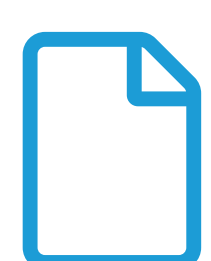
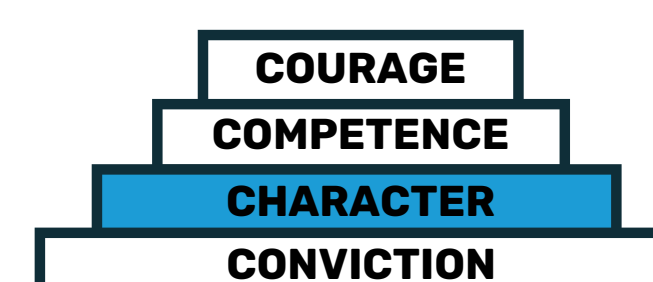


GOSPEL



THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF REST

3. TRUST AND REST



Introduction

We've all been there – working back late, going in to work on the weekend, or bringing work home to do over the weekend. It's just part of what it means to work in the modern world, right?

Could there be another way?



Big Picture

Rest doesn't come naturally. Enjoying God's rest means trusting in God's good provision and not our own efforts.



Bible Passage

While you read – QUESTION?

“Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. ¹¹ For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Exodus 20:8-11



Key Truths

1. Reflect upon the Sabbath in Israel's history. Put yourself in the wilderness with Moses, following the pillar of smoke or fire. No fridges, no processed food or preservatives. Food is what God provides in the manna for that day (or the previous day on the Sabbath). Now jump forward to when Israel is in the promised land. The manna stops and Israel is an agricultural society. You eat what is grown or raised. On the Sabbath you eat what was prepared the day before. God's rest only works if God's people have a deep trust in him.
2. Obeying the Sabbath laws out of obligation makes them a terrible burden. Enjoying God's rest requires an active trust in God; we rest in his providence.

Thoughts? Questions?



Application

We often find that we work back late, or on our weekend, or when we get home in the evening because things won't happen unless I do them. We're trusting in our own efforts and not in God to see our work done. Our lack of rest could be an indicator that we're trusting in our own hands – or perhaps in our boss or company – to provide for us. Rather than trusting in God's loving providence. But all good gifts come from the Father of the heavenly lights (James 1:17)

God's rest is enjoying his providence, it's not an inconvenience to all the work we need to do. What difference would our co-workers notice in our lives if we had this kind of attitude as we work?



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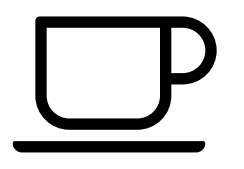
Prayer

Pray that we would have the courage to take our opportunities to rest and wouldn't be succumb to the pressure to work through our rest.

Pray that co-workers would notice the difference when we enjoy his rest as an exercise of trust.

Remember

COFFEE



DINNER



GOSPEL

