

## THRIVE AT HOME – Dial 91:1 – Week 2

### Monday – Rhythms Of Grace - Matthew 11:28-30

Life is busy and we seem to be constantly moving on to the next thing. However, Jesus invites us to walk and work with our hearts tuned in to His way of rest-filled living. I've learned to take time at the end of each day to reflect back over my day with the reflective tool used by Christians for centuries called the Daily Examen (below). The first two questions help me reflect with thankfulness on my day and take time to recall the way I've seen God through people who love me, and through nature. The third question allows me to consider where I've not experienced peace in my day and it's important to reflect and pay attention to whether I'm living with well-balanced expectations of work and rest. The final two questions remind me to pray for others I've met in my day and then end by asking God to help me live with His grace. Look at the questions and ask God to help you find the rest you need one day at a time.

1. Where did I see God in my day and when did I keep company with Jesus?
2. What am I thankful for?
3. Where did I experience something forced or ill-fitting?
4. What can I pray about from my day?
5. How can I ask God to help me recover my life and live in restful rhythms of unforced grace?

### Tuesday – Inspiration And Wonder - Genesis 2:2-3

This is probably one of the best-known verses on rest in the Bible. Countless people refer to it when they say, 'If God needed rest, then you do too!' Verse three says that God rested 'from all the work of creating He had done.' The previous verse makes it sound like He got done creating the universe in good time: by the seventh day He'd wrapped up. Maybe it could've taken more, but He was all finished and celebrated with a day of rest. What does 'rest' look like for God though? It says He rested from His work of creating, so what's the other work God does? I suggest, on that seventh day, God did what fueled His creativity. That 'rest' in God's eyes meant cultivating inspiration and wonder and drawing on His own endless innovative imagination. As the ultimate source of all these things, maybe when God rested He simply took in His creation. He walked the Garden of Eden He'd prepared and observed Adam and Eve as they enjoyed it. Maybe He spoke with them about how best to tend to it and where His favorite places were. We all in some way create with God. Whatever our job, family life or social status look like, we were designed by God to creatively cultivate and steward our environments. So, when God instructs us to rest, maybe it's not so much about napping and doing nothing, but actively doing what fuels that creativity.

### Wednesday – Rest A While - Mark 6:31

In this verse, Jesus was talking to His disciples. If Jesus and His men needed rest during busy ministry, then so do we. Interacting with people burns up physical and nervous energy. What many ministers don't realize is that food does not replace nervous energy – only sleep does. By sleeping for fifteen minutes first, they would eat less afterward. This practice has helped me maintain my weight and my energy levels so I can continue intense ministry as counselor and chaplain at the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Dr. Stephen Olford said people who don't take time out are like archers of history who didn't unstring their bows. The continually taut bowstring strained the bow's wood fibers. Then when they came to draw the bow, it snapped irreparably. Thankfully, God can restore broken-down leaders, but that need not be if they take rest breaks. Dr. Olford gave three guidelines for quality rest time: Rest – a good night's sleep, but also catnaps if necessary. Recreation – a light keep-fit program, walking or swimming. Relaxation – music, reading, or taking family time. Dr. Olford would take Mondays off: Sunday was King's day, but Monday was queen's day – with his wife. In Mark 6, the people found out where Jesus was. He was moved with compassion when He saw them, so He taught them about the kingdom of God, healed their sick, fed them, and sent them away with their needs met. Our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit, and we are custodians. Let's keep them in good shape for fruitful years of service, meeting people's needs, and bringing them to Jesus.

### Thursday – Creating Space - Proverbs 3:5-6

These days, it's all about the hustle. Moving from one thing to another, never slowing down. Busyness and burnout have become a badge of honor of sorts. But is that a good thing? Burnout brings discomfort, pain, and unexpected consequences for us and those around us. It doesn't just affect our physical, mental, or emotional health, but also our spiritual health. With so many things vying for our attention, if we're not careful, our spiritual life will start to take a back seat. If we don't create the space for communion with God, hearing the whispers of the Holy Spirit will get harder. Without realizing it, we slowly disconnect from God. Instead of being led by His spirit, we start taking our own direction and relying on our own understanding. If we never stop to rest and sit with Jesus, our focus starts to shift. Before long, prayer and reading the Word become church activities, and we start living for ourselves. We no longer live for Christ, but for what makes us happy.

But Jesus showed us how important it is to rest. He demonstrated it for us. He made time for fellowship with people. He got away to be alone with God. And we need to do the same. We need to rest, have fellowship with people. Put the tools and the electronics down and sit quietly with God. Pray and adore Him. Jesus' invitation to bring our weary hearts and exchange our burdens for His yoke wasn't a one-off invitation but an open invitation. He calls us to rest and find peace in Him. Because those moments with Him will sustain us in the hard and hectic seasons. Today, make time to rest with Jesus and find peace and joy.

**Friday – Rest For The Restless - Ecclesiastes 2:22-23, Psalms 62, Psalms 42, Matthew 11:28**

Many of us have an inner restlessness and we try to fulfill it through work, relationships, making money, or pleasure. But we forget God made us for Him. It's only with Him that we find true satisfaction. Psalm 62 says that we can find rest in God alone; then in Psalm 42 we read, 'As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you my God. Where can I go and meet with God?' King Solomon asked a very telling question: 'What do people get for all the toil and anxious striving with which they labor under the sun? All their days their work is grief and pain; even at night their minds do not rest...' (Ecclesiastes 2:22–23 NIV). Then we have the wonderful words of Jesus: 'Come to me all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest' (Matthew 11:28 NIV). Bono describes his U2 band's hit single, I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For – from their 1987 album The Joshua Tree – as 'a Gospel song with a kind of a restless spirit.' Maybe that's how you've felt. As if you've been searching and searching. Do you feel defeated and discouraged? The only answer to the vacuum in our hearts is a relationship with God, knowing the Father through the work of His Son as applied by the power of the Holy Spirit. And the nurturing of this relationship – resting in and rehearsing the Gospel – is the great purpose of our inner person. It's the very reason our hearts were created: to know, love, and delight in the God who created us for His glory.

## FOR FAMILIES

*Unpack this past Sunday's Next Gen at home to help your kids grow in their faith! Use a talk point in the car or around the table and have fun with the activities! Your home can THRIVE this week!*



Don't forget to put your KEY in a spot that reminds you to forgive daily!



**CRAFT: Giving to Jesus**

**Supplies:** Paper, Markers/crayons

**How to Make It:** Write or draw something that makes your heart feel heavy (anger, hurt, sadness, a specific conflict). When you are done, pray together and give your papers to Jesus. Bonus: Put them in a paper shredder or fireplace to represent that you are letting them go to Jesus.



**DINNER TABLE OR CAR RIDE QUESTIONS:**

- What are some ways we can give our hurt to Jesus when something feels heavy?
- Why do you think Jesus wants us to forgive others?
- What do you think forgiveness means? What do you think it does not mean?
- Is there anyone you need to say you're sorry to or forgive today?