

Hey everyone! I'm on vacation while writing this...that's not supposed to be a brag.

Anyway, I find myself being with the people I love and working. I'm sure you'll see the irony in a second. We've had this vacation scheduled since Christmas. The timing was perfect, right in the beginning of August. You see in June and July, I was going to be swamped with graduations, student ministry trips, CIY Conference and Camp. In late August, we would have our annual Kickoff weekend, Life Group Summit, Students going back to school, and most importantly my middle daughter, Eve, would be starting kindergarten when we got back—a break in the eye of the hurricane that is summer in the Hott house.

Well, you know what happened to those plans. But by some miracle we were still able to get away before we start re-planning fall. I needed the break; my girls needed the break. But why do I keep thinking about work? I continue to fight off the question, “Why rest?” and the associated guilt that comes with it.

The word “rest” appears in the Bible over 200 times. Even Jesus withdrew to be with alone with God as a form of rest. God made the Sabbath to ensure that His people and His creation would rest. God even rested on the seventh day of creation!

***2 By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so, on the seventh day he rested from all his work. (Gen 2:2)***

We are knee deep in an exhausting year, and the election is right around the corner! We need to take time to rest, at least mentally, as we navigate the next “new” normal.

This is all well and good, but it doesn't answer my question: Why rest?

The answer that comes to me while reading over these hundreds of verses about rest in the Bible is that ***we need it.***

I can only speak for myself, but I need rest so that I don't forget why I do what I do. If I don't take a break, then I lose focus on what's important. If I don't rest, then I don't take time to seek God. There were two points to the Sabbath—the first being rest for the creation of God and the second was so God's creation would remember Him. I said in my last encouragement that I was easily distracted. Work can become a distraction for any of us. If we don't regularly take a step back to be

with God—as the psalm says, “***Be still and know that I am God. (Psalm 46:10)***”—we risk burnout, strained relationships (with God and with others), and a barrage of other problems.

God knows His creation, and He knew we would need the reminder to rest. So I’m going to go and enjoy my rest. I hope you all can do the same.

Anthony Hott