

## Wednesday Encouragement

6/24/20

As you're reading this, I'm technically on vacation. I say technically for two reasons: Number one, I didn't leave town, so it's more of a staycation than a vacation. Number two, I am really not good at being on vacation and even though I am writing this in advance, by the time you read it, I may have scrapped the whole notion of my staycation. I'll even tell you my wonderful coworkers had doubts about how well I would do with staying away from the office. I don't blame them because my track record suggests that I'll struggle with it. And the over-thinking part of my brain thinks this is an insensitive time to take a week off with everything that's been going on. Know that if you need something this week, I can certainly make myself available.

But my goal is to rest and detach for a moment, and in that, take some extra time with God and with my family. Yes, there will be some overdue work to be done in my yard and around my house, but I'm also going to read my Bible (and not just for sermon-writing purposes.) I'm going to read a book that's NOT about church. I'm going to camp in the backyard with my kids.

I think we sometimes turn the idea of rest into a "concept of the past." I really love watching the Andy Griffith Show. Many days when I come home from the office and my kids are watching tv, I wait until the right moment to snag the remote, reclaim the tv as mine, and turn on Andy Griffith. What's funny is, something that used to annoy the kids, they now also enjoy along with me. And if you watch that show for very long, you see a time where there was a slower pace, a lot more porch-sitting, and, I believe, happier people. It seems unrealistic, which I think should tell us something very important.

Because I get that it was a tv show, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't acknowledge the contrast between it and our lives today. So many of us never slow down. And I know that some will claim they don't have a choice but to be busy. I've claimed that before myself, but it's not altogether true. What's probably closer to the truth is that we don't want to slow down. Yes we need to work. Yes we need money to live. Yes we need to take care of our homes. Yes we need to do things for our kids. But I guarantee you there is room, there is time you're not taking, where you should rest, even if it's just for a moment. Where you should rest in God and His word and His promises, even if it's just for a moment. I promise that nowhere in the Bible does it say, "Busyness is next to Godliness." "Or he who stays busy will prosper." In fact, I want to share a Psalm with you:

Psalm 127:1-2 (NLT)

1 Unless the Lord builds a house,  
the work of the builders is wasted.  
Unless the Lord protects a city,  
guarding it with sentries will do no good.  
2 It is useless for you to work so hard  
from early morning until late at night,  
anxiously working for food to eat;  
for God gives rest to his loved ones.

Do you know what I take away from that Psalm? A big part of our need to be busy is that we put so much pressure on ourselves to be providers for ourselves, for our families, even beyond our families. But first and foremost, we need to remember that God is our provider. You can work from dawn until dusk, but if the Provider says we need to rest, we need to rest and trust that He'll provide.

Now you may not be able to take a week off from whatever your normal is right now. But you do have the opportunity today and tomorrow and beyond to build more rest into your life. Stop and pray. Stop and sit down. Stop and read your Bible. Stop and talk to your spouse or your kids or your neighbor. Slow down and ask for God's blessing in that faithfulness. I promise you that you won't regret it.