

## Working Hard to Get Some Rest

(As addressed to the Grace Women's Fall Retreat, by Char Pelfrey, 2011)

Today's American culture applauds those who live life in the fast lane, persuading the average family to accept a hectic, cluttered pace as status quo. This mentality has permeated so deeply into society that even Christ's Church, living on caffeine and fast food, accepts and even boasts of our stressful daily routine as a reasonable service to God. Quiet meditation and rest have been carelessly placed on our "to do tomorrow" list but our Master Creator/Savior is not impressed.

Scripture was written by the Creator of man, knowing what we're designed to be and what we need. He taught us by example and wrote down the instructions regarding rest. As with any Biblical principle, they are not suggestions, they are commands. We dishonor God and the body He gave us when we think and act outside His plan.

I Thessalonians 5:23

This passage, among many others, defines and separates the three parts of our being. . . . Body (physical), Soul (mind, mental) and Spirit (spiritual).

Each part of our being needs rest and today we'll let God's Word break the three separate parts into easily identified pieces of who we are and how we are to protect each for God's glory.

**Definition of Level One Rest (the Body)-** A state of refreshing freedom from exertion, physical tranquility, a period of relaxing recreation; repose of restoring sleep (the body).

Jesus worked hard, at times to the point of exhaustion but that was only part of His day. He rested, enjoyed quiet time, replenishing the flesh. He took time to retreat into the beauty of His creation... the sea, the mountains, gardens and secluded olive groves. He utilized His senses- sights, scents, sounds, touch, tastes

of things He created to bring about a calm, restful atmosphere. God rested after 6 days of creation.

We cannot represent Christ well in a tired, run-down, weakened condition. We all differ in our ability to slow down and rest. Some of us can rest and relax on our front porch and others need to get away from home to really unwind. For some a Calgon can be relaxing, others are tempted to write out their grocery list. I am speaking of replenishing, purposeful rest, not laziness. Where is your best place to really rest your body (aside from required sleep)?

**Definition of Level Two Rest (the Mind)-** Freedom from mental or emotional anxiety, a calming quietness of the thought process.

II Corinthians 2:13 and 7:5-6

These passages are wonderful examples in scripture of mental rest/unrest. Paul expresses his worry over the absence of Titus. Later when Titus returns, he is comforted. How do we have mental rest when our teen is driving alone for the first time? When we have a weighty decision hanging over our heads that will affect the lives of others we care about, when a loved one has a serious illness? Can we just throw care to the wind? Does mental rest mean ignoring problems?

Wrestling with God is Biblical but there is a big difference between wrestling with God to supply wisdom strength, the reduction of fear, etc. and taking trials off by ourselves and dwelling on the anguish and misery.

How do we rid ourselves of the knots in our stomachs, the fear, and worry, even anger that can weigh so heavily on our mind? One method is to talk to ourselves in Biblical thoughts! Saturate our mind with God's Word specifically on peace and rest. Allow God to comfort. It is a fight to think Biblical thoughts when we are upset, a daily battle.

If our relationship with God is right, if and when we've done all we can do Biblically in a situation or for that person, then we need to mentally wrap our arms around the cross of Christ and rest in His care, holding on through the storm.

A troubled mind can be a habit, a conditioned way of life. It is totally out of line with God's plan and in violation to His Word. An extensive battle with a troubled mind can lead to physical sickness and will corrode relationships with those living with us.

Isaiah 26:3

Philippians 4:4-9

(Explain Think – Act – Feel Chart)

**Definition of Level Three Rest (the Heart/Soul)-** A confidence in God's sovereignty amidst diverse circumstances; belief in the authority of His Word and validity of His promises; a peaceful assurance that He has a plan and His plan can be trusted

Matthew 11:28-30

Psalms 116:7

John 14:27

As believers we can have an inner peace, a rest in our souls/our hearts unlike the world who grapples for purpose and meaning.

- We can rest in our souls because God is who He says He is, Sovereign!
- We can rest in our souls when we begin to know God as He truly is with correct theology, not what we want Him to be or was mistakenly taught

- We can rest in our souls knowing that peace is not the absence of problems, but the presence of God in the midst of problems.
- We can rest in our souls when we begin to view life as quick and temporary at best and then eternity with a perfect body, mind and soul to worship the Lord!

### **Conclusion-**

1. See the importance of each level of rest personally
2. Identify strengths/weaknesses of each in our own particular life (take quiet time to evaluate and put down on paper)
3. Write down personal plans for “rest” changes needed
4. Apply the plan and share with an accountability friend