**REST BEYOND LEISURE (SABBATH)**

Dr. Rickey McCray Jr.

The Way Church

Seven Weeks

We all wish life would always go just the way we planned. We wish we would always be healthy, always focused, always full of energy, always have the perfect plan, always have creativity. I’m sure we pray we will always hear God’s voice and follow God’s leading. However, life has a way of interrupting plans, preparations, well wishes and even interrupting us from hearing God’s voice. Sickness, unexpected bills, relationships, exhaustion, everyday pressures and responsibilities can take its toll. God’s voice can be a whisper from the past. Before you know it, you don’t remember the last time you spent real time with God and heard his voice.

Often, we think if we just get some rest we will be alright. However, even when we get sleep, we’re still tired. You can’t seem to get things together like you want to. You take vacations and need a vacation from the vacation. What can provide you rest that restores, renews, reminds and reenergizes? Are you in need of a rest that is beyond leisure? Are you in need of a rest that restores your connection with God, your calling and purpose? Perhaps you are in need of a rest that is beyond leisure.

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. To clearly define the meaning of sabbath rest.
2. To describe the biblical view of rest.
3. To identify the three principles of genuine rest.
4. Create a document that would list your own accomplishments, your reason why and what is next.
5. Identify biblical characters who rested.
6. Create your own plan of rest

**WEEK ONE: (January 29th)**

**WHAT IS THE SABBATH AND WHY DO WE NEED REST?**

“We are a tired people. Evidence of that fatigue abounds in a multitude of articles about health problems related to overwork and exhaustion.” Many of us are operating at an unrealistic and unsustainable pace. We have run at this pace for so long we don’t realize we are at the brink of a complete mental, spiritual, and physical breakdown. In this session we will talk about why rest is vital to survival.

**Assignments for Week One:**

1. Read Genesis chapter 1 and Genesis 2:1-3
2. Watch this youtube video: <https://youtu.be/hypNfi10JZo> “Redefining Rest - Slowing Down to Speed Up!” by Bec Heinrich
3. Take 5-10 mins each day to reflect on the day

**WEEK TWO: (February 12th ONLINE)**

**CLOSING THE LOOP**

It is very easy to get so focused on what is ahead that we forget to stop and say thank you to God for what he has allowed to be. When we don’t stop and reflect we leave things open and unresolved. Rest is about learning how to close the loop. This week we discover how looking back helps us to stay focused on what is in front of us.

**Assignments for Week Two:**

1. Read Genesis 45:4-8 Joseph’s ability to look back at what happened to him from a different perspective.
2. Journal at least 3 days this week. Writing down things you have accomplished, how God has blessed you, healed you, allowed you to overcome something, created opportunities for you, answered prayers, performed a miracle, etc…

**WEEK THREE: (February 19th ONLINE)**

**RETURNING TO THE ETERNAL TRUTHS**

What informs and influences your decisions and your behaviors? We all have a set of principles that we live by in order to stay consistent. Rest is about reevaluating those principles. Sometimes even determining if they are still true for us today. This week we will talk about what is our why, are reason for why we do what we do.

**Assignments for Week Three:**

1. Read: Jeremiah 20:7-11 At the place where Jeremiah wanted to give up he remembers why he began preaching.
2. YouTube: How to Find Your Calling From God by Francis Chan <https://youtu.be/MWr3rNuXYAs>
3. Write down your why. Write down your reason for why you do what you do?

**WEEK FOUR: (February 26th IN PERSON)**

**DEFINING OUR MISSION**

“When we rest in the biblical sense, we affirm our intentions to pursue a Christ-centered tomorrow” (Gordon 182). Rest allows you to determine where you are headed, based on what God is saying and not what your ambition and self-centeredness is saying.

**Assignments for Week Four:**

1. Read: Mark 1:35-39; Luke 4:1-21
2. Spend your alone time with God asking him what is your mission.
3. Journal: Begin to write down, to the best of your ability, what is your mission. Where is God calling you? It’s not about being 100% sure, it’s about starting the journey.

**WEEK FIVE: (March 11th ONLINE)**

**CHOOSING TO REST**

Rest is not something that will come by osmosis. Rest will come when we are intentional about forcing it into our schedule. Rest has to be a non-negotiable for you. This week we learn how to schedule rest.

**Assignments for Week Five:**

1. Read: Exodus 23:12; 34:21
2. Article on biblical reasons for rest: <https://biblereasons.com/rest-and-relaxation/>
3. Look at your calendar for the next 2 weeks. Where will you schedule rest? Put it on your calendar as if it is a mandatory meeting. Don’t let anything or anyone take that date and time.

**WEEK SIX: (March 18th ONLINE)**

**BENEFITS OF CHOOSING TO REST**

The sabbath was made for us. It was created by God to keep us replenished, restored and renewed. These benefits are waiting for us. This week we will identify the benefits of rest and how we can all live a more refreshed life.

**Assignments for Week Six:**

1. Read: 1 Kings 19:1-9
2. Journal: Write down some benefits you believe you will receive from resting?

**WEEK 7:** (March 25th IN PERSON) Celebration

Review