

WEEK 5 OF RENEW

THIS WEEK'S TOPIC: Rest

“Dear friend, I hope all is well with you and that you are as healthy in body as you are strong in spirit.”

3 John 1:2

In this fast-paced world, it's easy to get caught up in the whirlwind of busyness, neglecting the very thing that renews us – rest. The Apostle John's heartfelt wish for his friend's wellbeing serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of holistic health. God desires for us to thrive, not just spiritually but also physically and emotionally. As you explore this handout, may you be encouraged to embrace rest in all its forms and extend the same hope for wellbeing to others in your life.

Rest often feels like a luxury we can't afford. We live in a culture that celebrates busyness and productivity, where our worth is often measured by how much we can accomplish. We fill our calendars to the brim, juggling work, family, social commitments, and personal goals. The idea of slowing down feels counterproductive, even irresponsible. Yet, beneath this drive to keep going lies a deep exhaustion that we often ignore or suppress.

Do you possibly have a rest deficiency? TAKE THE QUIZ TO FIND OUT.	Y	N
Do you often feel tired when you wake up in the morning?		
Do you find yourself having difficulty concentrating?		
Are your emotions easily affected by the actions of others?		
Do you suffer from headaches, muscle aches, or generalised fatigue with no known medical diagnosis?		
Are your relationships with others strained because of your inability to stay connected?		
Do you find yourself spending more time doing things you have to do, rather than things you want to do?		
Has your view of life lost its expectation of excitement and adventure?		
Do you struggle to stay awake and focused when reading or watching TV?		
Do you depend on quick energy fixes like caffeine or sugar to help you get through the day?		
Do you find yourself craving comfort items at night like ice-cream or alcohol to help you wind down?		
Are you prone to abrupt moments of anger or unexplainable fits of crying?		
Do you often feel like your life is out of control?		

If you answered yes to majority of these questions you probably have a deficiency of real rest.

(Questions from Sacred Rest: Dr Sandra Dalton-Smith, M.D)

WHY IS IT SO HARD TO REST?

Why do we resist slowing down, even when we know we're overwhelmed? Here are a few possible reasons:

- Cultural pressure
- Fear of missing out
- Guilt and obligation
- Internal expectations
- Escapism

... How could some of these be impeding your rest?

A METAPHOR
FOR WHAT
REAL REST
SHOULD
LOOK LIKE:

Blessed is the one who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in Him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit. JEREMIAH 17:7-8

Rest is how God pours back into your life to bring restoration, renewal, refreshing, recovery, replenishing, rejuvenation, and revival.

Reflect on these 7 areas of rest from Dr Sandra Dalton Smith, M.D.

7 AREAS OF REST AVAILABLE TO YOU

1. SPIRITUAL REST

Your personal Spiritual Rest Strategy can include:

- Dedicated prayer / meditation time (5 minutes is a great start).
- Traveling praise and worship (no news or talk radio, only worship when driving).
- Edifying phrases / scripture / quotes in frequently visited places (office, break room, halls).
- Focused time in God's presence (relationship-building mindset).

What else could be meaningful rest for you in this area?

2. PHYSICAL REST

Your personal Physical Rest Strategy can include:

- Leisure walks / prayer walks.
- Sleep at least 6 - 8 hours daily.
- Drink daily water requirement first, before any other liquids allowed.
- Practise body fluidity by avoiding staying in the same position for prolonged periods.
- Active stretching exercises to release tense muscles.

What else could be meaningful rest for you in this area?

3 . M E N T A L R E S T

Your personal Mental Rest Strategy can include:

- Guarding your ear gates and your eye gates.
- Meditating on an attribute or characteristic of God.
- Journaling your thoughts, so that you can release them and not dwell on them.
- Redirecting your mind to a word or scripture of the day.

What else could be meaningful rest for you in this area?

4 . E M O T I O N A L R E S T

Your personal Emotional Rest Strategy can include:

- Find time to do work that brings you satisfaction.
- Spend time doing activities you love just because you love them.
- Have life goals that are bigger than yourself; see yourself as part of God's big picture.
- Acknowledge and deal with anger and negativity.
- Maintain a high self-esteem (without gossiping, envying or comparing yourself to others).

What else could be meaningful rest for you in this area?

5 . S E N S O R Y R E S T

Your personal Sensory Rest Strategy can include:

- Purposing to spend some time each day off your electronics.
- Adjusting the brightness of your cell phone and computer screens.
- Changing the sound of your alerts and notifications to something that is pleasant.
- Starting to enjoy more fruits and vegetables in their natural state.
- Spending time in silence.
- Making sure the room you sleep in is dark and cool.

What else could be meaningful rest for you in this area?

6 . C R E A T I V E R E S T

Your personal Creative Rest Strategy can include:

- Considering the last time you were awestruck. Get out in nature.
- Experiencing and enjoying the beauty present in your day.
- Creating Sabbaticals in your weekly calendar.
- Allowing room in your calendar to be wooed by creation.
- Visiting an art gallery.
- Spending time doing something creative without the pressure of productivity.

What else could be meaningful rest for you in this area?

7. SOCIAL REST

Your personal Social Rest Strategy can include:

- Supporting cultural education opportunities (spend time with those who are different from you).
- Staying connected with extended family and friends, but also have a few in your inner circle. Out of all the people Jesus ministered to, He focused attention on just 12 disciples, and only 3 who were in His inner circle - Peter, James and John.
- Valuing opportunities to celebrate life and love (birthdays, anniversaries, marriages).
- Developing strong healthy social relationships - real ones, not the social media kind.
- Building community wherever you are - treat people the way you want to be treated.

What else could be meaningful rest for you in this area?

REFLECT ON THESE BIBLE PASSAGES WHERE JESUS SPOKE ABOUT REST, THIS WEEK:

Matthew 11:28-30

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

This is the most direct reference where Jesus invites people to find rest in Him.

Mark 6:31

"Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, He said to them, 'Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.'"

Jesus encourages His disciples to rest after a period of intense ministry.

Matthew 12:8

"For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

While discussing the Sabbath, Jesus refers to Himself as the Lord of the Sabbath, indicating that true rest is found in Him.

John 14:27

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

Jesus speaks about giving His peace, which can be understood as a form of rest for the heart and mind.

REST IS NOT A LUXURY - IT'S A NECESSITY FOR A HEALTHY, BALANCED LIFE.

In a world that values busyness, it's easy to forget the importance of slowing down and recharging. True rest goes beyond physical relaxation; it touches the mind, heart, and soul. It's about creating space for peace, renewal, and deeper connection with God.

Let's be intentional about finding rest in our lives, trusting in Jesus' invitation to come to Him, find our burdens lifted, and experience the true rest that only He can provide.

