April 26, 2020 – Rest

The following devotional was written by a friend of mine before the pandemic began. He wrote about rest in the middle of a fast-paced world. Though our world has changed in the last few months in the way it operates, the ideas of needing to find rest still remains true and necessary.

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What does it mean to rest? To detach and rejuvenate? What does rest look like?

The importance of rest cannot be understated. Our humanity NEEDS it. We are created in the Image of God and He models the importance and action of rest; to take time away from the scheduled chaos.

But how do we embrace this idea? How do we define it?

One danger is thinking that rest ONLY means doing nothing or sleeping. Although these are forms of Rest, it is much, much more.

Rest is an action verb. It is intentional. It is doing something to refresh and renew your mind, body, and soul. This could take the form of hobbies, exercise, nature walks, quality time with a loved one, the list goes on. If it is an action that brings you peace amidst the fast pace of life, it is rest.

We are called to this space of rest. It is offered to us by Jesus, the giver of life and renewal.

Jesus says in Matthew 11:28-20 – “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”

Jesus invites us into His rest, His space. We are able to give our burdens over to Him and carry His yoke, His joy.

So when we find ourselves with clenched fist, with stress overwhelming us, with a bleak outlook on life and the future; let us remember we can make a choice. A choice to lay those burdens at the feet of our Savior who is strong and take steps to rest, to unwind, to remember who we are and whose we are. We are safe. We are at peace.

*Continue on next page for questions and reflections*

*Please take some time to answer these questions together, and pray as a family*

1. How have you been able to find rest during this pandemic? How are you searching for it?
2. Does rest look different to you now than it did 6 weeks ago? How so?
3. How is rest different from sleep or “doing nothing”?
4. What does it look like for you to be able to carry Jesus’ burden? Why does He say “my yoke is easy and my burden is light”?
5. Who have you been able to go to during this time, aside from your family, who has helped you process and lead you into a place of peace?
6. What is tiring for you right now? What has been preventing your rest?
7. Where do you see examples of resting in the Bible? Even though God did not make anything new on the 7th day, Creation was not complete without it. Where do we see examples of the importance of day 7 throughout the Scripture?
8. Continuing from the previous question – one of the 10 commandments is “remember the sabbath, and keep it holy.” What do you think this means in terms of rest? Surely, the commandment means more than “don’t forget to go to church on Sunday.” How is God urging His people to rest?
9. How will you commit to resting this week?