

Steward your time and energy with habits of rest.

HABITS OF REST

*Rhythms of Rest for a
Happier and Healthier You*

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Rest time is not waste
time. It is economy to
gather fresh strength...
In the long run, we shall
do more by sometimes
doing less.

Chuck Swindoll

What Are Rhythms of Rest and Why We Need Them ?

.The stress of living in overdrive is so common that we often fail to recognize how tired we are at the soul level. Do you need to establish rhythms of life that restore your soul and sustain your energy?

Maybe you've heard that there is such a thing as hurry sickness. A malady of this digital age, hurry sickness is "a continuous struggle and unremitting attempt to accomplish or achieve more and more things or participate in more and more events in less and less time." [i]

Does time manage you or do you manage time?

Do we recognize the various ways stress and exhaustion seeps into our days? Physical rest is only one of many kinds of rest we need to live the quality of life God has designed.

There seems to be a disconnect between the reality of hours in a day and the continual drive to get more done. Sound familiar?

Despite careful time management, productivity tools, and more multitasking, many of us have little or no margin. Defined as the gap between our load and our limits, margin helps us to pace our days. [ii]

Do you need margin in your schedule? Join the club--you've got plenty of company! One of the popular quotes from my book *Holy in the Moment* applies here:

"We all need time for our souls to breathe and our bodies to rest as chronic busyness is just a normal day in today's world. Pressured by culture, we've swallowed the lie that a busy life is a fulfilling life. More is better, faster is sooner, as if frantic is the new holiness." p. 78

The stress of living in overdrive is so common that we often fail to recognize how tired we are at the soul level. Friend, are you lacking the kind of rest that rejuvenates your soul?

JESUS INVITES US TO A RESTFUL WAY OF LIFE

Creating sustainable rhythms for life takes intention. It is a challenge to steward our time and energy, as well as the mental and emotional resources of our soul. But oh, life is so much better when we do!

In Matthew 11:28-30, Jesus invites each of us to discover how He can teach us to live in rest and rest in life.

"Come to Me, all 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 comfortable, and My burden is light."

It's interesting that Jesus using the image of a yoke to talk about rest. After all, a yoke is an instrument for work as well as for training.

We all need rest for our souls!

The Message puts it this way:

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”

The biblical meaning of the word *rest* has to do with ceasing from labor, recovering strength, choosing quiet, experiencing refreshment, and trusting God with calm and patient expectation. I could use more rest in my life, how about you?

With Jesus, rest can become a way of living that includes our work and effort. The spiritual meets the practical in organic ways that bring vitality to every area of life.

REST AND WORK ARE NOT OPPOSITES

We often think of rest and work on the opposite ends of a spectrum. Rather than opposites, rest and work are two sides of the same coin. They are far more integrated than we realize.

Jesus invites us into both a relationship and a way of living that is connected, active, and present.

Do we experience Christ in this way or do we flock to this verse when energy is depleted and exhaustion sets in? Consider this wisdom from Chuck Swindoll:

"In place of our exhaustion and spiritual fatigue, God will give us rest. All He asks is that we come to Him...that we spend a while thinking about Him, meditating on Him, talking to Him, listening in silence, occupying ourselves with Him - totally and thoroughly lost in the hiding place of His presence."- Chuck Swindoll

*Regular patterns of rest sustain your attitude,
energy, motivation, and well-being.*

Is Jesus inviting you to explore new rhythms of rest today?

THE ART OF REST BEGINS WITH SMALL STEPS

As you reflect on your need for rest, consider practices that can help you find patterns of rest and work that provide margin, connection, and refreshment on a regular basis. Which simple practices can you incorporate on a daily level? A weekly or monthly basis? Even yearly?

Need a little help getting started? Check out this list of ideas to help you experience the restoration you long for. How could a few of these routines enable you to refresh and recover from daily work, life challenges, and needs of family?

Ask Jesus to show you practical ways to experience His rest for your soul. As you listen to Jesus, write any thoughts He brings to mind. Which of these actions could empower you to be a good steward of your time and energy?

The idea here is not burden you more obligations to cram into an already packed schedule. Consider which practices could help you experience physical, mental, or emotional rest on a regular basis. Which ones could give you a little room to breathe and make time for joy?

Start small with one or two practices you can work into your day or week. Which habits could best help you focus on what matters most, being fully present to God, others, and yourself?

You might be surprised what Jesus can do with 5-20 minutes when you follow His leading.

Over time, create your own list of rhythms of rest with Jesus—follow His leading as to what you most need in this season of life. Let Him teach you how to walk and work with Him in the unforced rhythms of grace that will restore your soul.

Use the following checklist to identify rhythms of rest you most need right now.

“Let the life of Christ set you free from a rushing life that has no time for rest or the enjoyment of family, His creation, and most of all Him!”

—Michael Wells, *Problems, God's Presence & Prayer*

Daily Habits of Rest

- Maintain a consistent bedtime to get the rest you need.
- Connect with God in prayer through the day.
- Read and meditate on God's word.
- Eat regular meals to fuel your body and maintain consistent blood sugar.
- Take time for mental and physical relaxation, even if for short period.
- Set boundaries with work and technology.
- Protect family time.
- Resist the urge to respond immediately to non-urgent texts.
- Pray before accepting invitations and commitments.
- Engage in meaningful conversations that nurture relationships.
- Take short breaks during the workday to relieve mental or physical strain.
- Enjoy time outside for fresh air and sunlight.
- Exercise to get your body moving.
- Appreciate beauty in nature, art, or music.
- Turn off music, podcasts, or TV to provide periods of quiet.
- Leave early for appointments to prevent the stress of being late.
- Practice gratitude and name your blessings.
- Engage in deep breathing when you feel stressed.
- Drink only non-caffeinated beverages after 12pm.
- Turn off screens (phone, TV, or computers) for 30 minutes before bed.

Weekly Habits of Rest

- Observe the Sabbath in a way that works for you.
- Worship God and fellowship with other believers.
- Celebrate what you have accomplished this week.
- Make time for recreation and play.
- Seek moments of solitude and silence.
- Be social (in person) to enjoy time with family and friends.
- Schedule times of rest on your calendar .
- Read good books to engage your mind.
- Pray before accepting invitations and commitments.

Monthly or Yearly Habits of Rest

- Take vacations or staycations.
- Explore parks and museums.
- Step away for a partial or full day of prayer.
- Attend a Christian retreat or conference to nurture your spirit.
- Make time for a "down day" to rest and do things you enjoy.
- Plan something different to change up pace and routine.
- Evaluate the balance of work and rest rhythms over time.

NAME:

DATE:

My Habits of Rest

DAILY HABITS

WEEKLY HABITS

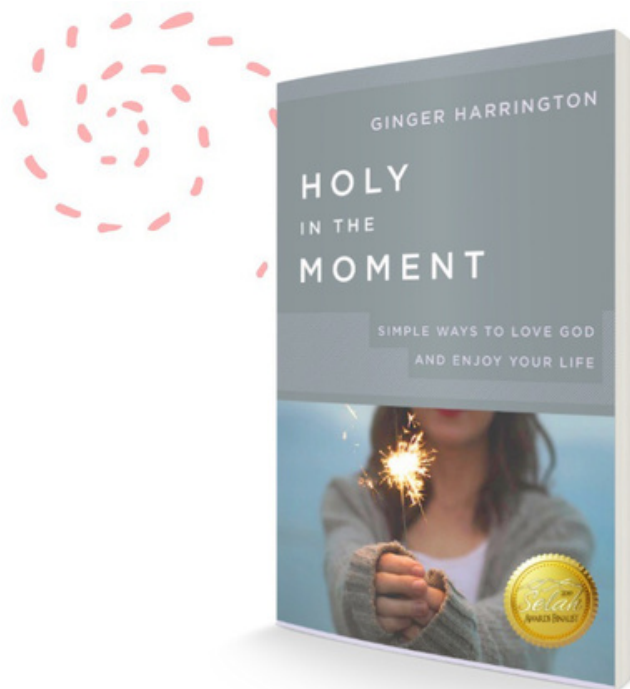
Discover your best rest.

Make time for the things that matter.

MONTHLY HABITS

YEARLY HABITS

NOTES



Cultivate life-giving choices to overcome anxiety, perfectionism, insecurity, and the things that hold you back.

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With each choice to trust God and rely on Christ, God does the sacred soul work of healing, wholeness, and holiness.

END NOTES

[i] Comer, John Mark. *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry* (p. 46). The Crown Publishing Group. Kindle Edition, citing Meyer Friedman and Ray H. Rosenman, *Type A Behavior and Your Heart* (New York: Knopf, 1974), 33.

[ii] John Mark. *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry* (p. 46), quoting Richard A. Swenson, *Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2004), 69.

[iii] Michael Wells, *Problems, God's Presence, & Prayer* (Littleton: Abiding Life Press, 1993) location 2, 154

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