



## Recovering Rest - August 2023

Scripture:

Matthew 11:25-30

**25** At that time Jesus prayed this prayer: "O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, thank you for hiding these things from those who think themselves wise and clever, and for revealing them to the childlike. **26** Yes, Father, it pleased you to do it this way!

**27** "My Father has entrusted everything to me. No one truly knows the Son except the Father, and no one truly knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

**28** Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. **29** Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. **30** For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."

This text has been particularly difficult for me to navigate because I have a difficult relationship with rest. I know I need it, but I also love working. The problem arises when we put our identity in what we do rather than in who we are. While a strong work ethic is praised in Scripture, it is perfectly balanced with a command from God to find moments of rest to sustain us for His work.

When Jesus calls us to rest, he challenges us to check where we are putting our identity. When Jesus calls us to rest, he promises that he will ensure that we find true rest.

Rest is a Biblical mandate. A survey of the 10 Commandments will lead to the discovery that violating the sabbath is one of the most acceptable sins of our generation.

Biblical rest includes a few key points:

1. True rest involves connecting with God
2. True rest includes an examination of our hearts
3. True rest invites us to spend time with loved ones
4. True rest encourages us to Serve others

One of the beautiful parts of this scripture is image of a yoke. For much of my life, I thought that the yoke that Jesus mentions was a lighter burden to replace the one I previously carried. I pictured it as a trade. However, yokes in the first century always connected two animals. But what he's actually saying is, "I'll put my yoke on you so I can help you carry what life brings your way."

Questions:

1. Do you find it easy or difficult to rest?
2. What are some ways that you rest?
3. What's the difference between taking a vacation and finding rest for our soul?
4. What have you put your identity in over the years?

