

## Rest

“Rest” has become a popular subject for authors in recent years. Personally, I am delighted to not be the only one writing about the subject these days. The need to understand and practice rhythms of rest by a rest-resistant world has never been greater. I am exceedingly grateful to those whose shared contributions have expanded my own comprehension of rest. I am currently reading a volume by John Koessler, *The Radical Pursuit of Rest*. John’s emphasis on rest as a gift from Jesus – as stated by Jesus in Matthew 11 – has caused me to sit up and take notice.

*“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30 –ESV)*

The yoke of rest that Jesus offers can be taken, but it cannot be seized by force. We do not manage ourselves into it, acquire it by bargain or even attain it by discipline. Rest as Jesus describes it must be done for us. On the surface it might sound like rest exists apart from Christ—as though Jesus could give us rest the way a parent gives a coin to a small child. But Jesus is the subject of the verb in Matthew 11:28 and we are the object. What Jesus says might be translated something like “I will rest you” or “I will refresh you.” This rest is as relational as it is experiential. We come to Christ and he refreshes us. We do not come to Christ, receive our rest and then go our way. By offering us rest, Christ offers himself. (John Koessler, *The Radical Pursuit of Rest*, page 32)

*How to Avoid Burnout* seminars that typically promote taking control of your life; learning to saying “no”; establishing time limits and boundaries around your work – all these things provide steps in the right direction that help make room for rest. Unfortunately, managing our work and reducing busyness is not the same as receiving the gift of rest that Jesus offers.

A.W. Tozer put it this way: Rest “is not something we do, it is what comes to us when we cease to do.” (A.W. Tozer, *The Pursuit of God*) As a recovering “workaholic”, I am either working or constantly thinking about the next thing that needs to be done. What I must continually relearn from Jesus is to “cease to do” in order to receive and experience rest. What about you?

### **Questions to Consider:**

- Do you think of rest as something you must work at?
- Do you believe that rest is something to be mastered, just like work?
- Do you think of rest as something you must earn?
- Does rest often elude you no matter how hard you try to rest?

**Stop running, working, reading texts and email. Wait for Jesus to give you rest.**

*“Look around and be distressed.  
Look inside and be depressed.  
Look at Jesus and be at rest.”  
(Corrie ten Boom)*

Jim Anderson  
[productiverest@brainerd.net](mailto:productiverest@brainerd.net)