

Arrested: Released

Meditation for a Sabbath Perspective

This week, meditate on these words in prayer each night before you fall asleep and/or when you wake up each morning.

Father, You are at work so I can rest in You. You are not panicked, rushed or overwhelmed. For this reason, I do not need to push myself to do more than I can. Help me believe that because You are at work and You have plan, everything that must be done today will get done in Your time and in Your way and the things that did not get done are not as important as I may think.

Help me remember I am completely accepted by You so I do not need to feel unworthy because of all I did not get done today. Help me to remember that although this world would drive me to make bricks without straw You never ask me to do more than I can do or be more than I am.

Give me courage to slow down and listen to You and to my own heart that I may feel my hurts, experience my joys and become aware of my brokenness. I believe I can do this work in my inner life because You are with me and with You I am safe. I believe with You I can face anything I find and You can turn all my trials to gold.

Monday:

As we have been learning, Sabbath is a practice and perspective that creates a quiet place in our inner life to be with, hear from and love God. Sometimes it is hard to create a quiet place with God, because we don't truly believe He loves us. Take time today to read, pray and reflect on God's love for you through these Scriptures:

Exodus 15:13 * Deuteronomy 7:9 1 * Chronicles 16:34 * Isaiah 43:1-5 * Jeremiah 31:3 * Zephaniah 3:17 * Psalm 86:15 * Psalm 136:26 * John 3:16-17 * Romans 8:38-39 * 1 John 3:1

If you struggle with God's love for you, ask Him to show you. Ask Him to open your eyes to all the ways He shows you His deep love. If you need to, talk to someone and ask them to pray for you to grasp how much God loves you. When we understand God's deep love, spending quiet time with Him changes from something we feel we have to do, to a time we treasure.

Tuesday:

This past weekend Paul shared Exodus 16:9-21. Please read this Scripture. In this Scripture, Manna is a metaphor for trust. The Israelites had to trust God. Only the manna they needed for the day was available to them. If they tried to collect more manna than they needed, the manna would breed worms and stink. If we do not trust God, we will also try to hoard more than we need. We will live in fear that we will not have enough, and we will fall into the world's trap. Instead of peace, we will be overcome with anxiety and stress. In other words, what we collect will cause our lives to rot. We will live for these things, instead of living

for God. Jesus talks about this in Matthew.

Read Matthew 6:28-30

It is imperative for us to learn to trust God for all that we need. God is enough. When we spend time with Him, we can grow to trust that He is always at work. We rest knowing He has everything in His hand. Otherwise we will work harder and harder fighting to scrap and maintain what we have. We will fret and worry. Our lives will begin to rot just like the manna did for the Israelites so long ago. Spend time thinking about your life. What are you having a hard time trusting God with? What are you working hard to maintain instead of trusting God and letting go? Sit quietly before God. Stretch out your hands with your palms facing up. Pray and ask God to take all that you are worried about. Ask His forgiveness for trusting in yourself rather than trusting in Him. Ask His forgiveness for relying on what you can do rather than what He gives. Ask Him to help you believe what He gives is good enough. Ask Him to reveal how He is at work. Ask Him for eyes to see His provision. As He shows you how He is at work, ask Him to help your trust in Him to increase.

Wednesday:

Creating a place of quiet to be with God, can be incredibly difficult. Our world is not a quiet place. Stunningly, our inner life is not naturally quiet either.

Read Isaiah 30:15

Finding a place of quiet to be with God will return our inner selves to a place of quiet. We learn from this verse that it is in this quietness our trust in God becomes stronger. As our trust in God strengthens, we are strengthened. This is completely opposite of what we find in the world. Our world says we are our strength. The more we rely on our own strength though, the further we will move from true strength and reliance in God. Our own resilience is finite whereas God's strength is infinite. If you are a visual learner, picture in your mind what God being our strength looks like to you. If you are an aural learner, listen to a song of God's strength an example would be "Mighty to Save" and/or "Victor's Crown". If you are a verbal learner, talk with someone about what God being our strength means to you. If you are a physical learner, exercise incorporating weights. While you lift weights think and reflect on how no matter what our physical strength, if our inner strength is not God's, then we will not be able to stand through all we will walk through in this world. However you best learn, pray and ask God to teach you how quiet with Him is where our strength in Him comes. Out of our being with Him comes the doing. Ask Him to teach you this as it is opposite of what the world teaches us.

Thursday:

Jesus trusted God to accomplish all the work God had for Him to do. Jesus didn't panic. He didn't rush. He loved the person in front of Him and He knew in God's timing He would get to the next person who needed Him.

Read Luke 8:40-48 & John 11

Do you realize Jesus had Sabbath? Throughout the Gospels we learn Jesus took time away from everyone else in order to be alone with His Father. Even Jesus created a quiet place in His inner life to be with, hear



from and love God too. We look forward to how this teaching will reveal itself more through the Gospel of Mark Series we will begin together this fall. For now, please look up these verses:

Matthew 14:13

Matthew 26:3

Luke 4:42

Luke 11:1

John 6:15

To know and become like Jesus, we learn to follow His ways. If Jesus took time to be alone with God, how much more should we as His followers? Ponder on Jesus needing time alone with His Father. What does this mean to you? Will you commit to follow Him in the journey of Sabbath in your own journey with Him? If so, tell Him in prayer. If you are not sure, tell Him your feelings in prayer. Pray and tell Him all you are experiencing as you take steps to create Sabbath in your life.

Friday:

What can you do daily, weekly, and seasonally for you as an individual, and you and your family to have time to rest, pray and play in God? Creating this time in your life will be difficult. This time will need to be a priority and you will need to protect it. It is vitally important that you do not schedule anything else during this time. Have time set aside for solitude and silence. Have time set aside for prayer being aware and responsive to God. Find time to quit work in order that you can contemplate God and His work. Listen to Him. Enjoy who He is. Also, take time to play. This is especially crucial if you have children. They need time to enjoy your presence as you teach them to enjoy God's Presence. Learn to be fully present and learn to be rather than do, do, do. Your children and your family will thrive as you make time with God and time with them a priority. Begin writing out your plan for Sabbath. If you are married, share your thoughts with your spouse. Plan a time to talk together as a family. Create small next steps that you can build into your life. Think of what you can do now and plan for what you can do a month from now, three months from now, six months from now and so on. Place some of the Next Steps Resource Books on your reading list. This will help as you continue this process over time. Remember this is a journey and you are taking steps to know and become like Jesus. Pray and ask God for His wisdom to help you take these next steps.

The Sacred Year - Michael Yankowski (available in @Home)

The Rest of God – Marcus Buchanan

Wholeheartedness– Chuck DeGroat

Invitation to Silence and Solitude - Ruth Barton Haley Barton

Choosing to Cheat—Andy Stanley

Margins – Dr. Swenson

Sabbath - The Ancient Practice – Dan Allender

Soul Keeping -John Ortberg

Emotionally Healthy Life & Church – Peter Scazzero

STORMY
TURBULENT
WORRIED
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BOUGH