

Honor the Lord with a sabbath

A FEW YEARS AGO, I WAS IN A MASTERMIND GROUP WITH some brilliant women when one of the ladies in attendance inspired and challenged me. She had no idea that while she was sharing her story of taking an entire year off from work to seek God, I was listening and feeling convicted! I was amazed and frustrated in my own spirit at how one takes a year off work to seek God?

I immediately dismissed the sentiment by telling myself that her business was much more established than mine and she's financially solid. Still, the mere suggestion of her trust in God to make such a huge decision, haunted me. I wasn't sure I could or did trust God in that way. Indeed, we all think we trust God, but I was beginning to see the seeds of the roots that hide well behind busy!

I worked so hard and forsook anything close to a Sabbath or rest because ... well ... maybe I didn't trust God with rest? I was shaken by that fact and needed to do some soul-searching. By nature, I'm a go-getter. I would quite possibly be a workaholic without God or family in my life. This concept of real time away from work was rubbing me the wrong way. I must be honest, I spent some good time trying to disarm and debunk the consideration that time off, time away, time out... was not only God ordained, but an indication of how much we trust Him to carry what we think belongs to us!

When God created the world in the beginning of Genesis, He did it all, celebrated, then did this thing called rest. He instructed us to work six

days and rest the seventh and called it Sabbath. In the new testament, He makes it clear that the Sabbath rest wasn't created to enslave us, but to set us free! It wasn't a rule that prevented progress.

The sick could be healed, the lame restored, and the hostages could be released.

I couldn't help but to wonder if what I was running from was a very real healing and revealing thing I needed in my own life? I can't tell you the number of times I went to bed at night frustrated at how long I worked and still didn't finish. Days I ran, ran, and did more running and when examined the outcome, progress alluded me. There wasn't much to show for all that running. Here I was listening to an astute businesswomen instruct us as to how she trusted God with her business and the fruits of her labor then set it apart to spend some time with Him.

I couldn't run from this revelation! It was time for me to figure out a way to reestablish a Sabbath in my life and "keep it holy." In my world, church is a bit like work. I love it, but it's my job. It's part of my regular workload. Before this moment, I never thought about the fact that I didn't even have a day off let alone a year! I wasn't trusting God by walking away from my work for even one day.

That was it, I started praying and asking for that kind of faith. I wanted to be able to trust Him in my "so called absence" to watch over and care for my labors. What a concept! Trusting God to care for your work while you rest.

Ever wonder who watched over the world when God rested? I'm convinced of two realities. One; He did! He's God! So, I can trust Him to watch over my work just like I trust Him with my kids, home, and everything else when I'm away.

Two; when something is built by divine design, the great architect builds his structures so great that they are able to stand self-supported for a time. I believe that a good build in your life and mine can also be self-supporting. Whether it's home or business, it's possible to structure it so well it too; can withstand the builder's temporary absence! "If you build it, He will come!" This is the one place this statement works. God will fill your build so that it can stand while you're away. The question is, "Do you trust Him to cover *your* "builds while you're away?"

Now, I didn't start with a year! I started taking a day off! One day a week, I ceased from my labors. I gave myself time to revive, restore, and heal. I'll tell you...My best thoughts and plans came on those days of rest! Recently, for the first time in ten years of ministry and work, I took a month off. This was big for me! It was big for my family, my friends, and believe it or not—my business! That sister was on to something! You will perform better when you are rested. You're at your most

creative when you are rested. Coming away from work is vital to building a lifestyle you love—a life of abundance and longevity!

Trusting God by honoring the Sabbath to keep it holy, simply means to keep it set apart! It is an important factor of building. The keys in this book are here to help you set apart time in your life to build stronger by creating a structure for a well-balanced life.

Just in case you need more convincing... If the words of a strange businesswoman and an author aren't enough cause for you to truly observe the Sabbath, allow me a moment to state my case. How's Jesus for an example? Mark chapter six shares a picture of how Jesus himself implemented this in His work. The gospel of Mark is a grand picture of not just ministry, but business and life! Highs and lows were the hallmark of this story, and the disciples were quite busy learning, leading, and ministering.

Mark six tells how the disciples and Jesus started out in His hometown where He was rejected. Jesus' own people couldn't accept the fact that the carpenter boy they watched grow up, was in fact God in the flesh here to save the world. Far too great an ask for them! From there, Jesus calls his disciples, gives them their marching orders and sends them out two by two to change the world. He gives them guidelines about how to minister, keep it moving, and travel light. In other words, he teaches them how to stay free of incumbents and stay focused on the mission. Even in tough times.

The message was poignant. Soon after they would gather news that the beloved John the Baptist had been beheaded. John the Baptist's death would come as quite a blow due to the fact that he was murdered over a vendetta. Herodias (King Herod's wife) had overheard John simply speaking the truth about her sorted affair. Scandalous! Being a disciple of Jesus certainly wasn't easy.

With sadness blanketing their hearts, they came together to regroup and give Jesus a report of how things went while many followers were coming and going. The Bible tells us they hadn't even eaten. Interestingly, the Bible says, "They had no leisure to even eat." Now that's busy! When eating is your leisure, you are BUSY! Sound like your workday? It would seem, such a time would be the perfect time to lean into work when so many are hurting, looking for answers, and there is ministry to be done, yet Jesus' leadership was the opposite of what most of us in ministry and business would do. We would head out, push ourselves through the trauma, and serve the people. Makes good business sense right?

The time is ripe. The followers of Jesus were becoming well-known with reputations on the rise. The Jesus brand was growing, and the team was being recognized.

Yet, Jesus was clearly on to something, time out was His plan. If this were an isolated event, you might say that it was just due to the grief and

knowing how his team felt. However, He does it again shortly after performing a well-known miracle. Even now, if you don't know much about the Bible; you've heard about the fish and bread miracle. Jesus feeds thousands from a little boy's lunch.

Did you know that immediately after this profound miracle, Jesus told them to, "Immediately get in the boat and leave to the other side." Note that Jesus dismisses the crowd who has already eaten and now want and may expect more of His ministry and teachings. With a never-ending stream of people in need of ministry and healing, he leaves.

The message for us? There will always be a workload! Always a to-do list and things that will need to be done. There will always be people who need help, and a company that needs attention. There will be good ideas in need of stewardship, and dreams begging for breath. Another load of laundry needing to be done and or kids wanting you to do on more thing! But from the beginning, with world creation to earthbound

ministry; the God of the universe still echoes. Man needs to rest! Humans only have so much capacity to think, decide, and work. Your mind, body, and spirit need rest.

Hopefully, by now you are convinced that whether you are killing it in business or managing HOME, or both, you need to make room in your life for a Sabbath. To clarify and define an end to the workday, the start of a vacation, or plain ole time off.

Building unfettered success your way requires well-balanced perspective so you can lead a well-balanced life! You can't control everything! You might as well decide now... to trust away your business and home to a very powerful God and learn to rest. **Let Him watch over your labors and rest to regroup.**