

# The Rhythm of Rest Personal Study

\*Adapted from the Rhythms of Renewal Study Guide

[Watch this video from Rebekah Lyons on Rest](#)

**Challenge** - Set at least three personal goals of rhythms of spiritual rest (found in Chapters 2-7) that you can practice in the coming week and write it below. Ask at least one trusted friend to pray for you, hold you accountable, and cheer you on as you work to establish those rhythms.

***My Three Goals are:***

Rest is more than just a nap, a break or a day off. The type of rest that this book is teaching us to implement is one of deep soul nourishing rest. God made us for hard work and meaningful engagement...no question. But God also created us with a need for rest, refreshment, and moments when our souls are recharged and renewed. Resting and establishing a rhythm of refreshment is not about weakness or laziness, it's about honoring our Creator and being more like Jesus.

Rest is so central to the human experience that Jesus built in a rhythm of rest into his life. He slipped away from the crowds and demands and found quiet time with his Father. Jesus was Immanuel, God with us. He was fully God and fully man. Yet he still made rest a cornerstone of his life. It was a priority.

This was a rhythm, he learned from His Father. As God created the heavens and the earth, he rested. He took a day off! God Almighty stopped his work... this is Him showing us how to live. God ordained and blessed rest. Rest precedes blessing. Let's follow His example and make this kind of rest part of our lives.

Rest is a gift, not a punishment! We were made for rest, and our loving God is ready to give us this gift, when we are ready to receive it. Let's commit to develop habits and rhythms of rest that set us free and refresh us to the very core of our being.

- ***What is the difference between experiencing deep soul rest and just vegging out to disconnect and seek escape? What are some ways that you have been resting that may actually be leading to more exhaustion instead of refreshing or recharging you?***
  
- ***What gets in the way of your living out this kind of rest, the kind that is filled with moments of quiet, reflection and soul filling refreshment?***
  
- ***What sacrifices will you have to make to establish better rhythms of rest in your life?***

*"Real Rest leads to Real Replenishment."*

## **Prayer for the Week:**

*God, thank you for showing us how to rest and commanding us to rest.  
Help me to avoid distractions and attempts from the enemy to thwart my rest.*

*I confess that I run too hard, work too much and stay too connected.*

*I confess that often I turn rest into escapism or disconnection.*

*I ask you for the courage to dig deep into these practices and fight for rest,  
not just the superficial kind, but the soul refreshing kind that only comes from You.*

*I ask that your Holy Spirit meet me in new life giving ways as*

*I seek to develop these new rhythms. Amen*

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## **Tech Detox**

Pick a day, a few days, a week or longer to do a detox. This detox can be from news, social media, TV, your phone, etc... Be honest with yourself about which of these (or maybe all of these?) keeps you from true soul rest.

If you need help on what this can look like, you can listen to Rebekah's podcast, How to Tech Detox - <https://rhythms-for-life.simplecast.com/episodes/how-to-tech-detox-andy-crouch>

➤ **What are you committing to? Who will you tell?**

➤ **After your detox, ask yourself:**

- **What did I miss?**
- **What did I NOT miss?**
- **What positives do I see to technology in my life?**
- **What negatives do I see from technology in my life?**
- **What do my boundaries/rhythms need to look like going forward?**

*"When I shut off social media, I begin to dream new dreams."*

# Get Quiet - Create Space and Listen

We can't listen while we are talking. So this practice helps us create space for God and for others in our lives.

- **Creating Space to Listen in our Relationship with God** - When we get alone, quiet, and slow down before the Lord, rest and depth can enter our relationship with Him.

When you are alone and quiet before God this week, try this exercise:

- **Listen Closely.** Just LISTEN and journal what starts to come to your mind. Resist the urge for it to be complete sentences or even complete thoughts, it may come in a word or a feeling. God, I feel \_\_\_\_\_. God, I am \_\_\_\_\_. Once you have listened, ask genuine questions about what you have heard... say to God "Tell me more" He might reveal some hard things, write those down too, don't run from them or seek distraction, have the courage to stay. Sit with your thoughts, failures, hopes, dreams, wounds, longings... He will meet you there.
- **Discern Deeply.** Learn to read between the lines and discern what God is really trying to tell you. What is good, what needs work, what truths does He need to deposit in your heart. After you have spent time listening, pray for discernment in what He is revealing to you.
- **Understand as best you can.** Being quiet and really listening helps us hear God's heart and His truth above your loud inner voice. It realigns our perspective, helps us see more clearly and brings order to our chaos. Example: I am scared.... God says Fear not for I am with you. I feel unlovable... God says, I love you unconditionally.

- **Creating Space to Listen in our Relationship with Others** - When we get quiet, slow down, and notice the people around us, rest and depth can enter our relationship with others.

When you are with your spouse, child or friend this week, try this exercise:

- **Listen Closely.** This means talking less and even seeking to stop thinking about what you will say next or trying to offer wisdom or a solution. Just LISTEN. Once you have listened, ask genuine questions about what they have shared, or about how they are feeling, or simply say "Tell me more" Listen to their heart not just their words. As you do this, let yourself feel what they feel and even quietly pray for them as you are listening.
- **Discern Deeply.** Seek to hear what they mean and want to say but don't actually put into words. Learn to read between the lines and discern what is deep in their heart. Pay attention to their body language, facial expressions and their tone of voice. When you do talk or respond, talk about what you might be discerning and not just what you hear... maybe start off with, "so what I hear you saying is..".
- **Understand as best you can.** Being quiet and really listening to people is not about us getting ready to launch into what we want to say or to talk about ourselves. It is about having real empathy for them, loving them well, and gaining insight into their joy, pain and desires. This helps us become more empathetic to others and helps us see when there is more going on under the surface.

- **Record a few thoughts or insights you have as you practice this:**
- **What keeps you from blocking off 15 minutes of quiet each day?**
- **List ways you might incorporate quiet into your rhythms.**

*"Without great solitude, no serious work is possible"*

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## **Heart Work - Examine and Confess**

This rhythm pairs well with the rhythm of carving out quiet time. Until you get quiet, you can't know what your heart needs to confess. This is why we have a hard time sitting still in the quiet, it can be uncomfortable to admit that we need to examine our heart and confess to the Lord. Peace cannot happen without the discipline of self-examination. We cannot heal what is hidden, our secrets lose power when they exit the dark, so let's bring them into the light.

Once you realize that you have some heart work to do, it's easy to spiral into regret, shame and guilt, but it is a much better practice to look forward and not backward, there is a path forward that is free of guilt, shame and anxiety. This heart work begins with examining and confessing which is our part and it ends with forgiveness and freedom which is God's part.

Instead of replaying the situation or wallowing in the "what ifs", ask yourself these questions:

- What do I need to confess?
- What do I need to release?
- What do I need to change?

**Read Proverbs 4:23** - "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it."

**Read Lamentations 3:22-23.** "The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness."

- **What comes to mind when you read these verses?**
- **How could confessing and releasing some of our burdens, sins and guilt to God help us find deep and lasting rest?**
- **Why do we cling to things like shame, defeat, guilt instead of releasing them to the God that wants to heal and forgive and free us from those things?**
- **Do you have a trusted friend or counselor to process this heart work with? If not, seek one out.**

*"It takes humility to surrender to God's order of rest."*

## Count Sheep - Deep Sleep

Getting quality sleep is vital to our mental and physical well being. There are some things we can begin to implement that might help us work toward getting a better night's sleep. Set yourself an actual bedtime and commit to stick to it. Build a bedtime routine that sets you up for success.

You can create a sense of winding down by:

- turning down the lights one hour before bedtime
- setting the temperature lower to encourage you to crawl under the covers
- ending your screen time (phone, computer and TV) one hour before bedtime
- listening to scripture meditation on an app like Dwell or Calm
- light a candle and take a bath
- doing a nightly brain dump to slow down your racing mind
- avoid sugar or alcohol at least 2 hours before bed

- **How many hours of sleep do you typically get in a night? If it is less than seven, why?**
- **What is your current bedtime routine? Do you see things you might need to eliminate to get better sleep?**
- **Are there some things you could incorporate into your bedtime routine that might help?**

*"Finish each day and be done with it. You have done what you could."*

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## Morning Routine

Starting our morning off with time in prayer or in God's Word isn't just a good idea, it's vital to setting the direction of our day. Henry Ward Beecher says, These early morning meetings with God are a time for Him to repair, restore, redeem and resurrect us and He knows that we need that! This time in the morning offer a feast the Father has laid out for me, offering me everything I will need as I set out for the rest of the day. Sometimes I begin my day overcome with grief, insecurity, discouragement, loneliness, and all I want to do is get on my knees and plead for grace and healing. God promises to be our comforter and help, but we have to give him an opportunity to do just that. If we don't make space for him, how will he meet us where we need him the most? There's no script, no race, no rules. It can be a quick prayer and devotional, a verse of the day meditation, a few minutes in your gratitude journal. We have no excuses, our phones have a million different apps to help us do this and they will even read to us while we make our coffee, so get started giving him the first minutes of your day and see what He will do!

### **Here's a favorite prayer from "Every Moment Holy"**

*Meet me, O Christ, in this stillness of morning. Move me, O Spirit, to quiet my heart. Mend me, O Father, from yesterday's harms. From the discords of yesterday, resurrect my peace. From the discouragement of yesterday, resurrect my hope. From the weariness of yesterday, resurrect my strength. From the doubts of yesterday, resurrect my faith. From the wounds of yesterday resurrect my love. Let me enter this new day, aware of my need, and awake to your grace, O Lord, Amen.*

**Read Mark 1:35 - "Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed."**

If Jesus himself recognized the importance of a morning routine, imagine how important it is to implement this rhythm into your life, it will help you emerge ready to face every day.

- **What keeps you from incorporating this rhythm of morning time with Jesus?**
- **What does your current morning routine look like? Is it hurried and hustled or peaceful and calm? Which do you prefer?**
- **What adjustments could you make to start your morning off more peaceful and calm?**

*"The first hour of the morning is the rudder of the day."*

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## **Sabbath**

Why is it so hard for us to stop? Put down the To-Do list, stop striving, leave the dishes and just be. You might have heard before, we are human beings not human doings...We cannot run well, if we do not rest well. But most of us are not good at stopping, because we feel like our value is so wrapped up in what we accomplish. We don't need to hustle to prove something God says is already true. Your value as a human being is not found in what you produce; it's found in who you are in Christ, so you can set aside some time each week to just focus on that without producing anything!

**Read Exodus 20:8-11 - "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy."**

Sabbath is not just a suggestion, it's a mandate... it is one of the Ten Commandments, yet we often think we have that one covered because we attended church on Sunday. When you look at the rhythm and pattern here, there is more to it than just attending church on Sunday. In the explanation of Biblical Sabbath, we see:

- Preparations made to "stop work and rest"
- Long, slow non-rushed meals around a table with family and friends with deep rich conversations
- Extra time spend in prayer and in God's Word
- Enjoying the Lord and all He has done for us

Set aside space for Sabbath this week at least 3-5 hours. As you prepare for this time of rest, refreshment and reset, think about what you can do to reconnect with God, reconnect as a family, reconnect with God's creation, reconnect with your community.

If you need more resources on how to "Sabbath", click [HERE](#) and go to Sabbath Rest Resources.

- **Why do you think this "Sabbath Rest" is so important?**
- **Why do you think it's so hard to do? What is fighting against it?**
- **What would a healthy life-giving, joy-filled day of rest look like for you and your family?**
- **What are some ways you could begin to incorporate this rhythm into your life?**
- **What did you discover when you stopped to "Sabbath" and took time to enjoy God and the things He has given you?**

*"The plans I have for you begin from a posture of rest."*