

BIBLE STUDY and REFLECTION

Finding Rest

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Peace and rest are about the last thing most people seem to be feeling these days. There's so much *stuff out there* pressing in on us that oftentimes it's difficult to just breathe. Busyness seems to be the *spirit of the age*. And for many people, it's not working.

Many people are feeling hectic, exhausted, burnt-out, worn-out, stressed-out, frantic, jumbled, agitated, tense, behind, anxious, frenzied, short-tempered, overloaded, overwhelmed, overworked, and under-paid.

Or is it just me?

Here are some things I've been thinking about stress and busyness recently. None of the concepts below are rocket science, but if we don't slow down to consider some basics in life, we're not likely to become the people God designed us to be.

- **I need to care for my heart.** This life isn't all about me and what I need, but if I neglect my own heart, I won't be in a position to offer others what they really need. Your heart matters. How are you caring for your heart these days?
- **Busyness does not necessarily equal effectiveness.** Contrary to the thinking of most people including the staff at most churches, bigger-better-more is usually not what people really need or want. Are you overloading volunteers with too much programming (or kids with too many demands) so instead of finding more life they're actually being crushed? How about you? Have you taken on too much in your own life?
- **Moving away from busyness requires saying NO.** People won't like it, especially if they've gotten used to you saying *YES* to everything all the time. Think carefully before saying *NO* to your boss or spouse or friends, but surely each of us has at least one thing we could say *NO* to this week to afford us some relief. What's one thing you could cut out to simplify your life this week?
- **There is a difference between being active and being too busy.** It feels good to be productive, to lay my head down at night knowing I've put in a good day's work, but that's different than scurrying around, frantically trying to *get things done*. Is your life running you? Do you find yourself jumping from one fire to the next? How could you be more intentional with your life?
- **There is power in focus.** Sometimes being too busy in too many areas means I never make a significant impact anywhere. When I spread myself / my time / my thoughts / my energy so thin, my effectiveness goes way down. Even for people who *do better when they're busy* - there seems to be a break-even point at which quality of work declines. What would your life look like if you were able to focus more clearly on one or two areas?

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What's God saying to you about the pace of your life?

Are you using busyness as an excuse, a way to avoid one or more core issues in your life?

How would your relationships and productivity change if you learned to slow down a bit?

*My soul finds rest in God alone;
my salvation comes from Him.
He alone is my rock and my salvation;
He is my fortress, I will never be shaken.*

Psalm 62:1-2

May we be filled with the rich life of Christ,
more now than ever before.