



## **WOW: Word Of the Week**

### **Resting**

**June 16, 2022**

When are you resting? When and how often do you seek spiritual rejuvenation?

The first chapters of the Bible speak to the rhythm of activity and rest. God created the world in six days that are described with the phrase, “evening and morning.” (That phrase may suggest that rest is preparation for work. In much of the world today, the order is reversed—after I have worked, I need to rest.) And after creation was finished, God rested.

We all need times when we rest and reset. Take the pressure off, relax, reset, refresh. Physically, our bodies need sleep; our muscles need “down time.” Strength comes from the rhythm of activity, resting, activity, resting. During my years in ministry, I spent a lot of time counseling. I remember a counseling credentialing workshop in which it was suggested that the emotional energy required in one hour of counseling was about the same as six hours of ministry activities. In counseling, and in emotionally stressful times of ministry—death, serious illnesses, accidents—the opportunity to step back and renew emotional strength is essential. The same principle applies spiritually—learning the value of rest will make our lives more productive spiritually. Many fail to do much for God because they are always tired, unprepared spiritually, emotionally, and physically.

When are you resting? How do you find spiritual renewal?

Many of us do not know how to rest, how to let go. We quit one activity but we immediately move to another activity. Our lives are filled with activities—morning to night. We manage to fill our lives with activities 24/7, often finding ourselves sleep-deprived, emotionally drained, and spiritually exhausted. How unlike the biblical descriptions of resting! Peter Scazzero says that God’s plan for our times of rest is not that we can have a day off which we are free to fill with other things—often things we call leisure. “Sabbath is a day set aside to stop, rest, delight, and contemplate the beauty of God.”

What a novel thought! Extended time each week, what I like to describe as “wasting time with God,” replenishing my soul, connecting with God and with my faith partners. Disconnecting from accomplishing anything, finding spiritual gladness and joy in God, others, and self.

The church often becomes a “partner in crime,” filling the “resting spaces” of our lives with a host of activities and offerings. Perhaps you too have found that “doing church” can be extremely tiring! When I learned this lesson in local church ministry, much of the extraneous was discarded and activities were more sharply focused.

To begin, I challenge you to try resting in your own life! Spend time with nothing to do except be with God. You may find it difficult at first! No agenda, no being distracted by everything you need to get done.

When you spend your “resting day” or “resting time” doing all of the things that you didn’t get done before, you are not really resting! It is hard to concentrate on God and spiritual matters when we fill our days with tasks, or with leisure and fun. We human beings are not good at silence and solitude. These are among the most difficult of the spiritual disciplines—and among the most rewarding!

When are you resting? I urge you to find time for spiritual refreshment. Begin now!