

## ***How TRUST GIVES REST, Ex.16:13–31, Ps.4***

Stop the World I Wanna Get Off #5

◆**Intro:** Some wiseacre once quipped, “They say you won’t die until you have accomplished everything you were supposed to in your life; well right now I’m so far behind I don’t think I’m ever gonna die!” Another fellow tried to bargain with God: “So the Bible says one day is as a thousand years to you, God. Then I suppose a minute would be like a life-time, and by comparison wouldn’t one, say, dollar be about the same as \$1000s to you? “Sure”, says God. Now our fellow carefully calculates and asks, “Ok then God, how about you give me one dollar?” “Sure, ...in a minute.” He could be waiting a while, couldn’t he? Time is something we can’t control, and therefore we are often in a hurry.

What does this reveal about us? Lets look at it.

◆Henderson writes, “We can't stop talking about time. It seeps its way into nearly every conversation. According to the editors of the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, time is the most frequently used noun in the English language. The titles of self-help books mirror our obsession with time: *One Year to a College Degree*, *Thirty Days to a Better Life*, *Seven Days to a Brand New Me*, even *Sixty-Minute Marriage Builder*. Still not quick enough to address your crisis? How about *One-Minute Father*, *Sixty-Second Stress Management*, *The One-Minute Healing Experience*, *One-Minute Therapist*, or *Sixty Seconds to Serenity*?” We are in a hurry. So when God comes along and gives us commandments to follow, which include taking a day off every seven to rest (“sabbath” in Hebrew), delight, and worship –we really wonder how he can

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expect such an unimaginable habit! How can not doing get it done?

◆Review: So far in our study of sabbath/rest, we've seen that 1) work is a calling and gift of God not to be despised but balanced 2) joining the Slow Club is actually good for the soul 3) legalism will ruin any sabbath practice, 4) God has much to say if we will stop to listen for him. 5) Today: how trusting God actually makes you time.

◆**1. The sabbath principle is a lesson in trust.** Keeping a day of sabbath rest is like boot camp for learning to believe and rest in God when the world starts spinning so fast you wanna get off. It's illustrated beautifully in the desert where Israel lived, eating manna for 40 years. [Keith Green has a song titled *So You Wanna Go Back to Egypt* in which he pictures the Israelites complaining about eating manna for so long: manna-waffles, manna-cotti, manna-burgers, ba-manna bread, you know... "In the morning it's manna hot cakes/ we snack on manna all day/ And we sure had a winner last night for dinner/ namely manna soufflé." ]

◆**A. Manna and sabbath both taught the same thing: obedient trust in the providence of God.** Manna taught trust because they couldn't gather more than a days need. They had to learn that God would take care of them again tomorrow! Sabbath taught trust because they didn't work or produce anything on the seventh day. They were not doing everything they *could do*, in the trust that God would make up the difference! And Jesus taught the same thing in the Lord's Prayer, right? What did he say? "Give us this day..." ? (our daily bread). He didn't tell us to

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ask God for a million dollars so we could take care of ourselves, or a years supply of groceries. He knows that having much is a danger to faith in God because we begin to think we manage our own life. But oh no, we can't. All the money in the world can't insure your cancer will go into remission. Owning islands and yachts won't give you a satisfying marriage. But living a life walking with God will. So he told his disciples to pray for *daily* bread, the manna lesson. Then go back the next day to God again and ask again.

◆ *"give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, 'Who is the LORD?' Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonour the name of my God." Proverbs 30:8, 9, NIV.*

◆ **B.** In verse 19-20 some are not buying the "daily" thing. They disobey and gather enough manna to fill the cupboards up. Can you blame them? They're just being thrifty, you know. And it was a good deal (free), so why not stock up? In fact, they'd be downright foolish NOT to save for a rainy day, right? The Bible does teach us to plan ahead. And they're not stupid... But when they stock piled it, it rotted over night. Ok, so no stocking piling. And when they went out on the seventh day of the week to find it, it *wasn't* there. God says, "I told you to stock up two days worth on day 6. That way you could rest on day 7 because

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manna and sabbath are both about trusting in me!” Not saving, and saving, are both about trusting God.

◆ You gotta admit that the math is a little contradictory. Six days you *don't* stock up, but for the seventh day you *do* stock up on day 6! I can just hear one of the Israelite men calculating. “Wait just a minute. How about I gather just a little extra every day and save it all week. Then I won't have to carry twice the load on Day 6 for Day 7. Or how about I just go out to the handy Desert Kroeger on Sunday too, and not save up at all? You know, get it when I need it. What if the Day 6 stock rots like all the other days? Or how about...?” Not saving, and saving, are both about trusting God.

◆ Why is that so hard to just obey? I'll tell you why, it's hard to obey God when you think you really rather be in charge of your own life. But having to be god leads to anxiety. Trust leads to obedience and obedience leads to peace. God wanted Israel to learn to trust him daily, when things were not even difficult, so that later, when tougher things came they would have trusting hearts that could handle even the worst of evils. That makes sabbath practice training camp for the tough times we know are coming, but can't really predict.

◆ **C.** So what kind of unrest have you faced? Do you face? Will you face? The doctor tells you something, and that suddenly becomes the sole focus of your week! Suddenly work doesn't

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seem as paramount as it did every other morning, does it. Someone you love dies, and suddenly all that time you spent on Amazon looking for the just right bean grinder doesn't seem significant at all. While before you kept daily tabs, suddenly stock prices aren't the first thing you think about when you awake. Someone at work has a bug in their blanket. Now everyone is tense around the office. No one wants to ignite an eruption. People vanish from the room when that person arrives. You have a boss that all the employees wish would just stay home. He or she dismantles people's spirits for the slightest flaw. How are you going to overcome? How are you going to be kind to your enemy like Jesus teaches, if you don't already down deep believe/trust that God's guidance works? How were the first century Christians brave enough to hold to their faith even though the Romans burned them as torches to light their gardens –if they didn't trust that God and his kingdom were worth dying for?

◆ In Acts 16 Paul and Silas are imprisoned. Long story short, they're chained in a dungeon so they sing songs of praise to God. There's an earthquake, all the doors fly open and chains fall off. The jailer is freaking out and about to slit his own throat, because the Romans would anyway if any inmate escapes. But Paul shouts, "Wait, we're all still here." You know what that means right? They could have made a run for it! They could have snuck off into the night. And

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what about all the other jailbirds? They didn't leave either! They're like, "What? Songs in jail? Earthquakes? Chains unlock themselves? There's some crazy spiritual stuff going on here, I'm sticking around to find out!"

◆ If early followers of Jesus could sing in prison, could live and die without the anxiety of what might happen, making them lose their minds or curl up in angry, frightened little balls, -do you think maybe deciding to trust God today might help us sleep at night? Which brings us to this thought.

◆ **2.** Sabbath-trust is the antidote to my worry. **The more I turn things over to God in trust, the less I live in worry.** When we worry, we assume that there isn't a God, or if there is, he isn't a good God, or at least he isn't sovereign. But we all know that messes, and wrecks, and misunderstandings, are inevitable so we will have to be ready to manage them. So we worry. Worry is basically believing that I must be in control when I'm not sure I am. We don't worry when we know we are able, right? If you know you can fix it, it doesn't fill you with anxiety when Jr. has a fender-bender, or daughter erases your hard drive. No biggie, I have a back up. We're good. But if you can't fix it, and you don't believe anyone else can, then you worry. And you know what worry does, right? It destroys you inside. One lady explained, "I always feel bad when I feel good because I just know that I will feel worse later." Poor lady, not even the good is good for her! She's creating her a "thing" where there isn't a thing! It's the

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rule of worry: "If you think it is and it isn't, it will become an "is" even though it wasn't." Where are you creating a "thing"?

Wouldn't you like to stop it?

◆A. To keep sabbath well, as a day but also as an attitude, we have to keep before us God's sovereignty and his providence; his ability to provide and his desire to provide. Listen to this great text in Isaiah.

◆*"For this is what the high and lofty One says--he who lives for ever, whose name is holy: "I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite. I will not accuse for ever, nor will I always be angry, for then the spirit of man would grow faint before me--the breath of man that I have created. I was enraged by his sinful greed; I punished him, and hid my face in anger, yet he kept on in his wilful ways. I have seen his ways, but I will heal him; I will guide him and restore comfort to him, creating praise on the lips of the mourners in Israel. Peace, peace, to those far and near," says the LORD. "And I will heal them." But the wicked are like the tossing sea, which cannot rest, whose waves cast up mire and mud. "There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked."'" Isaiah 57:15-21, NIV.*

◆Wicked here refers to those rejecting God. There is no rest for those who do not, or cannot believe that God is good and God is sovereign. If God isn't, we better start worrying. But the good news is... He is! He's pure. He's good. He's holy. He's high. And

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he comes down to live with repentant people wherever he finds them! Isn't that incredible?

◆**B.** What can you do to start turning things over to God in trust?

Well, some ways to begin:

◆1) Rehearse what you can be thankful for. Are you anxious.

Start thanking God out loud for as much as you can.

Sunday is a great day to give special attention here.

Declaring it into the world will help your soul hear it and your outlook will change.

◆2) Rehearse everything that points to God's power, sovereignty and goodness. Do that often enough and you will even be able to sing in darkness.

◆3) Choose to limit yourself in some way. This is an exercise in giving up my demands. Trust requires a giving up... Giving up of self-dependence, and independence. Giving up of desire, the demand that you must have life a certain way. To trust someone else means you must accept that the outcome may not be exactly what you want but they will work it out. If I see that my neighbor makes \$100,000 a year and believe that that is what would truly make my life a happy existence I have immediately created stress for myself. I must now achieve that. But I only make \$50,000 a year. But if I decide I can be grateful in a life of \$50,000 and a smaller house, and an older car, and a phone three models back -well then I immediately have a whole lot



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of less stress, don't I? A lot of us are stressed out because we think that the better house, the newer vehicle, and latest phone will in fact make us a happier family. But it doesn't, and now we have added the stress of paying for it all!

◆ If I trust God's commandments, it means I accept that I will live a life limited by the guidelines he draws, which I might have drawn differently -because he is wiser and kinder than I could ever be.

◆ 4) Take a true sabbath/rest day each week.

◆ 5) verbally hand a worry to God in prayer.

◆ **Conclusion:** Chic Fil-A, a Christian company, is know for the odd practice of being closed on Sunday. How can anyone compete with McDonalds, Burger King, Wendy's if they're not open every day of the week? Yet for the fourth year, Chick-fil-A has been named the nation's top fast-food restaurant. The chicken chain's massive growth in 2018 moved it into the No. 3 spot on the ranking of the largest restaurant chains in the US, with \$10.46 billion in American systemwide sales. On average, a Chick-fil-A location brought in \$4.6 million in annual sales in 2018, more than any other fast-food chain. (By comparison, the average McDonald's location made \$2.8 million.) And they follow God's sabbath command. They stop. They work a day less than their competitors. I could go on to sight Hobby Lobby that does the same thing. But what if you tried it?

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◆A.W. Tozer once said "How completely satisfying to turn from our limitations to a God who has none. ... For those out of Christ, time is a devouring beast; before the sons of the new creation time crouches and purrs and licks their hands." The sabbath principle is that you release anxiety by choosing to trust that the provision God gives you is the better world than the provision you would insure for yourself, if you really could.

◆Let's not fail to realize the greatest reason to trust God! Jn 6:35-40