

Avoiding Burnout
Mark 6:30 - 32

- I. "The Apostles...reported...all they had done and taught." Mark 6:30
- II. "They did not even have a chance to eat." Mark 6:31
- III. "Come...to a quiet place and get some rest." Mark 6:31
- IV. "Jesus, how could you even think about rest?"
- V. "Because My Father considers rest very important."
 - A. Father's work week, Genesis 2:2,3
 - B. Father commanded his leisure.
 - 1. God commanded His people to observe several religious festivals. These allowed the people to celebrate God's goodness and remember His kindness.
 - 2. Furthermore, God commanded His people to perform no labor during the festival days, Exodus 12:16; 31:16,17
 - 3. Leviticus 23 lists the festivals Israel was to observe. Not counting the Sabbath, these festivals added up to nineteen days of leisure each year.
 - 4. The dictionary defines leisure was "freedom provided by the cessation of activities, especially time free from work or duties.
- VI. Visible symptoms of ignoring God's command to rest.
 - A. Emotional and physical energy decreases
 - 1. Moses received wise advice, Exodus 18:17, 18
 - 2. Energy must be renewed or it becomes exhausted. Epaphroditus' good intentions did not prevent exhaustion, Philippians 2:25-30.
 - 3. Exhaustion decreases our effectiveness for the Lord. WE become sharp and irritable or depressed and withdrawn.
 - B. Relationships suffer
 - 1. Emotional and physical exhaustion makes seeking God less enjoyable and more difficult.
 - 2. Leisure allows us time to fellowship with those we love, Luke 2:41-44. Deprived of this time together, people we love feel disappointed and hurt.
 - 3. This leads to an unhappy marriage and children who feel hopeless, Prov. 13:12; 17:6
 - C. Interest in work declines
 - D. Decision making becomes tedious.
 - Mandatory rest schedules for airplane pilots help them remain mentally alert and relaxed so they can make decisions quickly and easily.
- VII. Why we fail to value leisure and rest.
 - A. Feel guilty for desiring leisure or rest.
 - 1. As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming when no one can work. John 9:4. Christians often

isolate such statements from the rest of the Bible. They believe that Jesus taught against rest and recreation.

2. Obviously, the entire Bible teaches that God not only believes in rest but that He also commands us to rest.
3. We need never feel guilty for obeying His Word.
4. Never confuse legitimate rest with laziness; they are very different. Laziness diminishes productivity. Legitimate rest increases our productivity in the Christian life and life in general.
5. We should feel guilty for disregarding God's command to rest and recreate.

B. Effort to compensate for prayerlessness.

- Commented*
1. Jesus ~~commanded~~ the church in Ephesus for their hard work, Rev. 2.
 2. However, He condemned them for leaving their first love.
 - a) God earnestly yearns for human companionship.
 - b) We meet his need for this companionship during private fellowship time or, what is commonly called "prayer."
 3. Christians who do not spend time with Father in fellowship (prayer) often endeavor to compensate for their prayerlessness by increasing their activity in Christian ministry and service.
 4. Prayerlessness then leads to powerlessness in Christian living and our effectiveness for God decreases.

C. Fear of peoples' opinion.

1. Fear of other's opinion motivated Peter to disobey the Lord, Gal. 2.
2. Prov. 29:25 says, "Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe."

D. Lack of faith in God's ability.

1. Lack of faith in God compels us to work harder and harder. After all, if God isn't helping us we must depend only upon our abilities.
2. Psalm 127:1,2 warns us against ceaseless labor. On the other hand, Isa. 64:4 turns our attention to the One who works for us.
3. "Don't work harder - work smarter"

VIII, What happens when we rest and relax?

A. Emotional and physical energy increases.

1. I Kings 19 shows a prophet who exhausted his physical and emotional energy. Drained of all strength, he ran from life's problems.
2. This chapter also shows how God helped him rest and relax. The Lord sent an angel to prepare two meals for Elijah. With the nourishment these meals provided, Elijah rested for 40 days. At the end of his rest, he was ready to resume his work for the Lord.

B. Appreciation for God, the Creator, grows.

1. Christians who live in the "fast lane" miss the opportunity to enjoy God's handiwork - their appreciation of His greatness never grows.
2. Through observing creation, Jesus grew in appreciation for His Father, Matt. 6:26 and 28.
3. Wise people slow down to rest and relax. Then, they see God revealed through His creation. I Kings 4:32-33.

C. Relationships flourish.

1. Relationships flourish when people share time together.
Jesus and the twelve spent three to three and a half years together. Through their fellowship, they grew close to one another.
 2. Rest and leisure allows us time for people. Time with others strengthens the bond of friendship in love.
- D. Zeal for work increases.
1. Prov. 25:16 warns against over indulging in anything you enjoy. So, over indulgence in work we enjoy diminishes enjoyment of the work. As a result, zeal for work decreases.
 2. Regular recreation and rest heightens the enjoyment we receive from work.
 3. Recreation enhances our productivity on the job.
- E. Heavenly Father rejoices over our wisdom and trust.
1. Prov. 10:1 and 23:15 point out that our wisdom brings joy to Father's heart.
 2. As we wisely obey Father's direction to rest and relax, He rejoices over us with singing, Zephaniah 3:17.

IX. How to obtain leisure time.

Even if we value leisure like our Father does, we still must purposefully and deliberately strive to obtain time for leisure.

- A. Believe there is time in your schedule for leisure.
1. God created leisure, Gen. 2.
 2. God planned our schedule, Psa. 139:16.
 3. Can you imagine the Creator of rest failing to place leisure time in your schedule?
 4. Believe that your loving Creator provides time in your schedule for rest and relaxation.
- B. Distinguish the important from the urgent.
1. Martha confused the urgent with the important. Therefore, she failed to take time for Jesus.
 2. Likewise, many of God's servants confused issues of life. They move through life dealing with urgent matters but overlooked the importance of rest, relaxation and leisure.
 3. We must consider rest as important as work. True, rest does not consume as much time as work, but they are equally important.
- C. Schedule rest and relaxation into your routine.
1. Christians who value rest and relaxation schedule it into their routine.
 2. If you fail to schedule times of rest, you will never "find time" for relaxation.
 3. Take an evening each week for your family. Place it on your calendar and allow nothing to interfere with this special evening.
 4. Take a day off each week - God did!
 5. Practice preventive relaxation. In other words, regularly scheduled rest-time prevents damage to our emotions, bodies and relationships. If you fail to practice preventative relaxation, you will pay the price in both unnecessary stress, a broken body and damaged relationships.