

A WISDOM STORY ABOUT REST

One man challenged another to an all-day wood chopping contest. The challenger worked very hard, stopping only for a brief lunch break. The other man had a leisurely lunch and took several breaks during the day. At the end of the day, the challenger was surprised and annoyed to find that the other fellow had chopped substantially more wood than he had.

"I don't get it," he said. "Every time I checked, you were taking a rest, yet you chopped more wood than I did."

"But you didn't notice," said the winning woodsman, "that I was sharpening my axe when I sat down to rest."

When we're on mission to do so many things in the busyness of life, there's a danger that we take our eyes off our spiritual lives as we get caught up in what we're doing.

Have you considered using a time of rest to consider how you might refocus and prioritise the important things in life?

Do you allow rest to shift your attention? How might you be more attentive to using the times to pause in the day, even for a few minutes, to refocus?

Jesus invites us to find rest in him. How does this apply to your life?

How might you find his rest and peace in the rhythm of your everyday life?



When you rest, you catch your breath and it holds you up, like water wings

Mark 6:30-32 gives to us an account of Jesus endeavouring to get the disciples to withdraw and rest.

"30 The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. 31 And he said to them, 'Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while.' For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. 32 And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves."

Prior to this Jesus has sent the disciples out to drive out demons, heal, and preach. It must have been an overwhelming time for them, and they come back to Jesus, eager to talk about what they had done, but they are faced with a crowd which is hungry. After performing miracles, the disciples do not suggest a supernatural solution; their focus is entirely upon earthly things such as the lack of food.

Perhaps Jesus could see that they needed "time out" not just to rest their bodies, but also so they could refocus their minds on the things of God.

Rest has a way of refocusing us. When we live at a busy pace, rest is the chance for us to rejuvenate and avoid burnout. But it goes beyond that. Rather than simply recharging us so we can tackle our week, rest can change how we fundamentally view our lives. Rest gives us the ability to refocus, to gain some perspective on the important things in life.



A THOUGHT TO REFLECT ON

God loved us so much that he was willing to leave the place of perfect rest in order to enter into the messiness and unrest of this world. Jesus became incarnate as a man who had "no place to lay his head" (Matthew 8:20) so that his followers can ultimately find real rest and know his peace.