

How to be a Healthy Follower of Jesus pt 5

Resting in Christ

- 1 What evidence do you see around you that we live in a busy, driven and distracted culture? Do you see this in your own life?
- 2 “It’s hard to cultivate spiritual life when you’re travelling through life at twice the speed of sound.” Why do you think this is?

Matt. 11:28ff says that Jesus gives us rest. Do we experience this? Hebrews 4 also talks of a “rest” that we can enter into, the rest won for us through the finished completed work of the Lord Jesus Christ (Heb. 10:11,12) It means we can STOP! We don’t need to anxiously keep pushing and driving to prove ourselves, find security, significance, acceptance, approval and a sense of being good enough. In Jesus we have all the approval we need – the Cross has achieved it all. We are not “the hands of Jesus” completing His project for he has finished it. When Jesus said “It is finished” He meant it!

- 3 How does Colossians 3:1-3 remind us that we don’t have to drive ourselves (or others) to complete the work of Christ? What are the implications of this for us? What then is our role if the work is completed?
- 4 How does the commandment to keep a Sabbath help us to remember the grace of God and that we can enter into a gospel-centred rest?

Deut. 5:12-15. The Sabbath was a symbol of salvation from slavery – the Israelites didn’t have to slave-away anymore. The Sabbath today for Christians is a symbol of the salvation we have in Christ and the fact that he has delivered us from having to justify ourselves. (We no longer have to try and make ourselves right with God).

Rick Warren says that as followers of Jesus, in order to remember constantly the grace of God in Christ and the fact that we can live in the rest that he has won for us we should:

Divert Daily Have a “Quiet Time” – spend time with God, reading His Word and talking back to Him about it in prayer. Allow Him to remind you of all He is and has done for you.

Withdraw Weekly Take a Sabbath, one day when you can particularly remember the goodness and grace of God and the fact that it’s not all down to you. For most people this would typically be a Sunday.

Abandon Annually Take holidays (or as they were originally thought of, “holy days”). You don’t need to go away but take extended time to be refreshed by the Lord as you bask in the knowledge that you are loved and accepted not because of what you do but because of what He has done.

5 Think creatively about how you can use the Sabbath principle to remember God and what He has done for you. How can you take time each day, each week and for extended periods during the year? What would a weekly Sabbath, for example, look like for you? What activities would help you to get off the treadmill? Consider the clothes you wear, the food you eat, the people you spend time with, the activities you do, the material you listen to, the books you read. What would most help you to remember God? What would help that day to simply be different? **You have six days for everything you need to get done but one day to enable you to particularly rest in God remembering that in Christ you can enter His rest for it is finished. Stopping is a prophetic sign to the world that we are people of rest, a rest found in Jesus.**

- 6 Make a plan for ensuring you and others take some positive steps forward in this area.

Useful Resources:

The Busy Christians Guide to Busyness, Tim Chester. An excellent book that really gets under the skin of our busyness. I can’t recommend a careful reading of this book highly enough. Read a chapter each Sabbath!

Serving Without Sinking, John Hindley. Another superb book that looks at how we can serve God with the right motivation and in a way that doesn’t end up hurting ourselves or others. Required reading for all involved in church based ministry *please!*

Distracting Ourselves to Death, an interview with David Wells and Arthur Hunt.

<http://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/distracting-ourselves-to-death-an-interview-with-david-wells-and-arthur-hunt>

A fascinating and sobering look at how technology especially digital technology is impacting our ability to know God.