

Today's Message: Soul Rest: Part 3

Before we appreciate God's gift of rest, it is vital we appreciate His gift of work!

"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

Jesus in Matthew 11:28-29, ESV

Four Interrelated Biblical Concepts:

Shavat – cease, stop, rest: Genesis 2:2; marked by Shabbat "Sabbath"

Melacha – work: Genesis 2:15

Nuach – rest: Exodus 20:8:-11

Itzavôn – hardship, pain, distress: Genesis 3:16ff; Genesis 5:29

Shabbat (or Sabbath) was originally set aside by God as a gift to mankind; a chance to cease (Shavat) his work, and to emulate his Creator, who likewise ceased His labor on the seventh day. This is later underscored in the giving of the Fourth Commandment. Here the pattern was explicitly laid out: cessation (shavat) from labors would yield to a time of rest (nuach).

In its original created state, work (melacha) was good, noble, the way man, the capstone of God's creation, could copy his Creator through his six days of tilling the Garden.

The pattern of six days on and the seventh day off was God's ideal, only to be corrupted by sin, which ushered in hardship (itzavôn) The advent of "hardship" into the created world perverted the nature of work...now work would compete with toil. From this point on, much of Hebrew history can be seen as an attempt to escape the consequences of the Fall and find rest. Example: Genesis 5:29

The recipe for relief: "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden" (itzavôn)

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Pastor Kent Chevalier

September 3 & 4, 2016

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Small Group or Personal Reflection Questions:

1. What does Genesis 2:1-3 tell us about the relationship between work and cessation from work? What does Exodus 20:8-11 add to this understanding?
2. What was God's original intention for man, as revealed in Genesis 2:15?
3. Read Genesis 3, especially verses 16-19. What happened to God's original plan?
4. Does your job fit the parameters of what God intended work to be, or has it deteriorated into toil?
5. How can God's people better their circumstances and find soul rest from their labors?

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