



REFLECTIONS

Grace OPC

Thoughts on Rest

By Pastor Brian De Jong

*Mark 6:31 And He *said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a secluded place and rest a while." (For there were many people coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.)³² They went away in the boat to a secluded place by themselves.*

One of the chief benefits of a sabbatical is a time of rest from the normal rigors of ministry. This is what I have experienced over the past seven weeks, and it has rejuvenated me even more than I anticipated.

This experience has provided opportunity for reflection on many things, including the need for regular rest. So let me share some thoughts on rest, both in regard to ministry and to life more broadly speaking.

My first thought is that ministry can be very demanding for those who are diligent in serving the Lord. Jesus and his disciples experienced this in Mark 6. Many people were coming and going so that the Savior and his disciples didn't even have time to eat. Prolonged work drains us physically so that we need refreshment – food, drink and sleep. Going without those three things can wear us down until we have little energy for service. All work, including the work of ministry, is designed to use up those stores of energy that we accumulate. Then, in the end, the tank is empty and needs refilling.

Secondly, we see that time away in seclusion for the purpose of rest is legitimate because Jesus makes it legitimate. He invited his workaholic disciples to break away from the crowds and to vacate the area. They took a boat and sailed to a secluded place by themselves. Not only would this afford them physical refreshment, but the spiritual refreshment of time alone with Jesus. All believers need that one-on-one time with the Savior, free from distractions. We need to be able to concentrate on Him, and be cared for by Him.

Third, we must confess that God has made us to need rest, and He has provided for us in this regard. The daily pattern of work and rest was established from the beginning. As the sun sets, man lies down to sleep. Through sleep God refreshes us physically and emotionally. Then again, one day in seven is a Sabbath – a day of rest where we can set aside our worldly employments in order to rest from our labors. The pattern for this was set during creation week, when God worked six days, and rested on the seventh day. He made that Sabbath day holy and He blessed it.

Fourthly, God has commanded us to rest in the fourth commandment. We read in Exodus 20:9-11 these words: *Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a sabbath of the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your*

female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. 11 For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and made it holy. That is God's command to His people. On the Sabbath day you shall not do any work. You must rest!

A fifth thought on rest ties in the gospel component, as found in Matthew 11. Jesus gives this invitation: ²⁸ *Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.* ²⁹ *Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.*

Finally, there is an eternal heavenly aspect to rest. This is unpacked by the author of Hebrews in Hebrews 4:8-11 *For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that.* ⁹ *So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God.* ¹⁰ *For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His.* ¹¹ *Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience.* Simply put, our eternity will be that perfect Sabbath rest where we will enjoy uninterrupted fellowship and communion with our God and all His people.

Having experienced and enjoyed a time of rest during my sabbatical, I am ready to get back into the swing of ministry for the second half of 2021. Rest is for the purpose of further service. Yet the ongoing need for rest (daily, weekly and periodically) is a component of life that I now more deeply appreciate.

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Mnemonics...

- **6/24 Mini Golf Outing**

Chapter 14: Men Who Are Down

NO man's lot is fully known till he is dead: change of fortune is the lot of life. He who rides in the carriage may yet have to clean it. Sawyers change places, and he who is up aloft may take to take his turn in the pit. In less than a thousand years, we shall all be bald and poor too, and who knows at he may come to before that? The thought that we may ourselves be one day under the window should make us careful when we are throwing out our dirty water. With what measure we mete, it shall be measured to us again, and therefore let us look well to dealings with the unfortunate.

Nothing makes me more sick of human nature than to see the way in which men treat others when they fall down the ladder of fortune. "Down with him," they cry, "He always was good for nothing."

"Down among the dead men,
Down, down, down,
Down among the dead men
There let him lie."

Dog won't eat dog, but men will eat each other up like cannibals and boast of it, too. There are thousands in this world who fly like vultures to feed on a tradesman or a merchant as soon as ever he gets into trouble. Where the carcass is, thither will the eagles be gathered together. Instead of a little help, they give the sinking man a great deal of cruelty and cry, Serves him rights All the world will beat the man whom fortune buffets. If providence smites him, all men's whips begin to crack. The dog is drowning, and therefore all his friends empty their buckets over him. The tree has fallen, and everybody runs for his hatchet. The house is on fire, and all the neighbors warm themselves. The man has ill luck, therefore his friends give him ill usage: he has tumbled into the road, and they drive their carts over him; he is down and selfishness cries, "Let him be kept down, then there will be more room for those who are up."

How aggravating it is when those who knocked you down kick you for not standing up. It is not very pleasant to hear that you have been a great fool, and there were fifty ways at least of keeping out of your difficulty, only you had not the sense to see them. You ought not to have lost the game: even Tom Fool can see where you made a bad move. *"He ought to have locked the stable doors!"*—everybody can see that, but nobody offers to buy the loser a new nag. "What a pity he went so far on the ice!—that's very true, but that won't save the poor fellow from drowning. When a man's coat is threadbare, it is an easy thing to pick a hole in it. Good advice is poor food for a hungry family.

"A man of words and not of deeds—
Is like a garden full of weeds."

Lend me a bit of string to tie up the traces, and find fault with my old harness when I get home. Help my old horse to a few oats, and then tell him to mend his pace. Feel for me, and I shall feel much obliged to you, but mind you feel in your pocket or else a fig for your feelings.

Most men who go downhill meet with Judas before they get to the bottom. Those whom they helped in their better days generally forget the debt or repay it with unkindness. The young sucker runs away with sap from the old tree. The foal drains his mother and then kicks her. The old saying is, "I taught you to swim, and now you would drown me," and many a time it comes true. The dog wags his tail till he gets the bone, and then he snaps and bites at the man who fed him. Eaten bread is forgotten, and the hand that gave it is despised. The candle lights others and is burnt away itself. For the most part, nothing is more easily blotted out than a good turn. Everyone for himself is the world's golden rule, and we all know who takes the hindmost. The fox looks after his own skin and has no idea of losing his brush out of gratitude to a friend.

A noble spirit always takes the side of the weak, but noble spirits do not often ride along our roads. They are scarce as eagles; you can get magpies, hawks, and kites by the score, but the nobler breed you don't see once in a lifetime. Did you ever hear the crows read the burial service over a dead sheep before they eat it? Well, that's wonderfully like the neighbors crying, "What a pity! How did it happen? Oh dear! Oh dear!" and then hurrying to work to get each of them a share of the plunder. Most people will help those who do not need it; every traveler throws a stone where there is a heap already; all the cooks baste a fat pig, but the lean one gets burned.

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"In times of prosperity friends will be plenty:
In times of adversity not one in twenty."

When the wind serves, all aid. While the pot boils, friendship blooms. But flatterers haunt not cottages, and the faded rose no suitor knows. All the neighbors are cousins to the rich man, but the poor man's brother does not know him. When we have a ewe and a lamb, everyone cries, "Welcome, Peter!" The squire can be heard for half a mile, if he only whispers, but Widow Needy is not heard across the park railings, let her call as she may. Men willingly pour water into a full tub and give feasts to those who are not hungry, because they look to have as good or better in return. Have a goose, and get a goose. Have a horse of your own; then you can borrow one. It is safe to lend barley where the barn is full of wheat, but who lends or gives where there's none? Who, indeed, unless it be some antiquated old soul who believes in his Bible, loves his Lord, and therefore gives, hoping for nothing again?"

I have noticed certain gentry who pretend to be great friends to a falling man because there are some few pickings yet to be got off his bones. The lawyer and the money lender will cover the poor fellow with their wings and then peck at him with their bills till there's nothing left. When these folks are very polite and considerate, poor men need to beware. It was not a good sign when the fox walked into the hen house and said, "Good morning to you all, my very dear friends."

Down men, however, must not despair, for God is yet alive, and He is the friend of the friendless. If there be no one else found to hold out a hand to him who has fallen, the Lord's hand shall not fail to bring deliverance to those who trust Him. A good man may be put in the fire, but he cannot be burned. His hope may be drenched but not drowned. He plucks up courage, sets a stout heart to a stiff hill, and gets over rough ground where others lie down and die. While there's life, there's hope. Therefore, my friend, if you've tumbled off the back of prosperity, John Ploughman bids you not to lie in the ditch, but up with you and try again. Jonah went to the bottom of the sea, but he got to shore again all the better for his watery journey.

"Though the bird's in the net,
It may get away yet;
Though I'm down in the dust,
In my God I well trust,
I will hope in Him still,
And leave all to His will;
For He'll surely appear,
And will banish my fear."

Let it never be forgotten that when a man is down, he has a grand opportunity for trusting in God. A false faith can only float in smooth water; but true faith, like a lifeboat, is at home in storms. If our religion does not bare us up in time of trial, what is the use of it? If we cannot believe God when our circumstances appear to be against us, we do not believe Him at all. We trust a thief as far as we can see him; shall we dare to treat our God in that fashion? No, no. The Lord is good, and He will yet appear for His servants, and we shall praise His name.

"Down among the dead men!"
No, sir, not I.
"Down among the dead men!"
I will not lie.
Up among the hopeful,
I will ascend,
Up among the joyful,
sing without end.

Mini Golf

We are going to be Mini Golfing at Tom and Jerry's in Plymouth on June 24th at 6pm. This is a great evening to invite family and friends to!



“If any of you should ask me for an epitome of the Christian religion, I should say it is in that one word—*prayer.*”

- Charles Spurgeon



June Birthdays

Anna TenPas 1st
 Olivia Boss 3rd
 Charlotte Arndt 4th
 Cameron De Jong 8th
 Jonah Mamazza 8th
 Lynn Jensema 14th
 Harlan Harmelink 15th
 Sandy Kaeiser 19th

Josephine Will 21st
 Griffin Froh 22nd
 Leila Ver Velde 22nd



June Anniversaries

Bob and Debbie Boss
 June 12th 45 Years

Howard and Audrey Voskuil
 June 22nd 59 Years

Mark and Stephanie Friberg
 June 14th

Dan and Sara TenPas
 June 18th 27 Years





Showing forth the excellencies of Jesus Christ

Grace OPC

June 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24 Mini Golf at Tom and Jerry's	25	26
27 Lord's Supper	28	29	30			



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Corn and Bean Salad

*Drain and mix all together in a large bowl

1 15oz can of:

- Black-eyed peas
- Pinto beans
- Black beans
- Baby butter beans
- Northern beans
- 2 cans shoepeg corn

Add 2 small jars diced and drained pimentos

1/3 cup sweet onion, diced

1 cup green pepper, diced

1 cup celery, diced

Bring to boil and add to above

1 1/2 tsp salt

1 tbl water

1/2 cup cider vinegar

1/2 cup oil (corn)

1 cup sugar

Refrigerate overnight!





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Spurgoen Corner

“The kindness and love of God our Saviour.”
Titus 3:4

How sweet it is to behold the Saviour communing with his own beloved people! There can be nothing more delightful than, by the Divine Spirit, to be led into this fertile field of delight. Let the mind for an instant consider the history of the Redeemer’s love, and a thousand enchanting acts of affection will suggest themselves, all of which have had for their design the weaving of the heart into Christ, and the intertwisting of the thoughts and emotions of the renewed soul with the mind of Jesus. When we meditate upon this amazing love, and behold the all-glorious Kinsman of the Church endowing her with all his ancient wealth, our souls may well faint for joy. Who is he that can endure such a weight of love? That partial sense of it which the Holy Spirit is sometimes pleased to afford, is more than the soul can contain; how transporting must be a complete view of it! When the soul shall have understanding to discern all the Saviour’s gifts, wisdom wherewith to estimate them, and time in which to meditate upon them, such as the world to come will afford us, we shall then commune with Jesus in a nearer manner than at present. But who can imagine the sweetness of such fellowship? It must be one of the things which have not entered into the heart of man, but which God hath prepared for them that love him. Oh, to burst open the door of our Joseph’s granaries, and see the plenty which he hath stored up for us! This will overwhelm us with love. By faith we see, as in a glass darkly, the reflected image of his unbounded treasures, but when we shall actually see the heavenly things themselves, with our own eyes, how deep will be the stream of fellowship in which our soul shall bathe itself! Till then our loudest sonnets shall be reserved for our loving benefactor, Jesus Christ our Lord, whose love to us is wonderful, passing the love of women.

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Morning, June 4th, C.H. Spurgeon

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