

Jesus Invites His Disciples to Rest (Sometimes)

March 24, 2019

THE
DISCIPLE
MAKER

Open: How have you seen rest as important to your routine?

Read: Mark 6:30-42

Discuss:

1. In verse 31, Jesus suggests that he and his disciples withdraw for a period of rest. What do we learn about rest from Jesus' statement? What corollary Scriptures would support such an understanding of rest?
2. Why would the environment that Jesus suggests as a place of rest (vv. 32-33) prove refreshing to the disciples? What sort of environment helps you find rest and refreshment?
3. Though the disciples were expecting a time of rest, in verse 33 their story takes a rather unexpected turn. What circumstances led Jesus and the disciples to postpone their plans for rest? How do we know when to rearrange our plans for rest?
4. Jesus is about to surprise the disciples with another miracle. What aspects of the miracle described in verses 37-44 stand out to you? What do these observations teach us about God? How should this miracle affect our faith when we feel exhausted? Share an experience when God multiplied your resources to enable you to do what you didn't think you could do.
5. In verse 45, what confirms for us that Jesus is still aware of the disciples' need for rest? Even Jesus withdraws for rest in verse 46. How should spiritual disciplines, such as prayer, fit within our practice of rest? What spiritual disciplines bring you the most refreshment?
6. As disciples we can err on the side of not getting enough rest or of resting excessively when there's work to be done. How can we make sure that we avoid both extremes?
7. How would you summarize what Jesus wants his disciples to know about rest from this encounter? How have you been involved in encouraging others to get God-honoring rest?

Apply: Would you describe yourself more as a disciple in need of rest or more as a disciple who is refreshed and ready to serve? What should be your next steps and when will you take them?

Pray: Pray for wisdom for our church family in the practice of rest. Ask God to help others in your group know how to be refreshed in order to best serve others and glorify God.

Mark 6:30-42

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.

³³ Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. ³⁴ When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. And he began to teach them many things. ³⁵ And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, "This is a desolate place, and the hour is now late. ³⁶ Send them away to go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat."

³⁷ But he answered them, "You give them something to eat." And they said to him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat?" ³⁸ And he said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see." And when they had found out, they said, "Five, and two fish."³⁹ Then he commanded them all to sit down in groups on the green grass. ⁴⁰ So they sat down in groups, by hundreds and by fifties. ⁴¹ And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people. And he divided the two fish among them all. ⁴² And they all ate and were satisfied. ⁴³ And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. ⁴⁴ And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men.

⁴⁵ Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. ⁴⁶ And after he had taken leave of them, he went up on the mountain to pray. (ESV)