

# The Divine Ordinance of Work and Rest

By Jeff Noblit

sermonaudio.com

**Bible Text:** Mark 6:30-32  
**Preached on:** Sunday, June 11, 2023

## **Anchored in Truth Ministries**

1915 Avalon Ave.  
Muscle Shoals, AL 35661

**Website:** [www.anchoredintruth.org](http://www.anchoredintruth.org)  
**Online Sermons:** [www.sermonaudio.com/anchoredintruth](http://www.sermonaudio.com/anchoredintruth)

Clear for all the world to see. That's the passion of my pastorate is that we would be the kind of church that does God's work, God's way, by God's power, for God's glory, that our ministry would cause other people to see us and say, "They can't do that. That's not of them. That must be God at work there." We'd never arrive at being perfect in that, but we should be striving toward that.

I don't know that I've ever done this before in these decades of preaching to you, but I had a good amount of work done on the older ladies in the church, which is the next section of Titus, and then a truckload of stuff parked at my house and I don't mean material stuff, I mean spiritual stuff, uh, things pertaining to our world missions and our Anchored in Truth ministries and I have poured a lot of energy into that this week. So I thought, you know, I don't think I can do the rest of Titus justice. So I'm going to go to one of my cyclical messages this morning, that means I try to recycle these basic truths through ever so many years. And by the way, this is one that usually folks really like. They really like the truth of this message, and it's it's needful, especially since we're coming on up on our July jubilee. You know, Israel was given this, uh, cycle of jubilee years, and among other things, they rested. And so in July, we kind of take off from small groups. We pull back and rest a little bit. And, uh, so, uh, with that coming up, I thought I would do this message. And then of all things, I was exercising Saturday morning, listening to our podcast, and a thought came to my mind, and I sat down and wrote eight pages of notes on a whole different sermon. So you're getting three this morning. No, I'm not serious. We're going to do the cyclical one and then do the other one, and then, ladies, hopefully get to your section of Titus next time, or three weeks, two weeks from now, basically.

All right, Mark 6, would you turn there? Mark 6, we have a a a part of the narrative of Jesus' ministry that has great truths of application for us today in the church, uh, for our work in the church, and for our work in the world. Some some great biblical precepts we can glean here. Would you look at it there, Mark 6:30 through 33.

30 The apostles gathered together with Jesus; and they reported to Him all that they had done and taught. 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.

Let me begin by reminding all of us this morning that work, work is ordained of God. It's honorable. Both your work in the world and your work for Christ through your local church, it's honorable. Work was given to Adam in the Garden of Eden before sin entered the garden. So work is not a bad thing, it's a good thing. Work is essential for human flourishing. You do better if you work. It's beneath human dignity to live on handouts when you can work. Work is of God. It's ordained of God. It's a part of God's plan for us.

Now, when Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, they took some of the blessedness off of work and was added to that task a toil and something of a burden which God did not originally intend. The book of Proverbs, for example, is chock full of exhortations about hard work and rising early and being diligent. Remember in the New Testament in 2 Thessalonians 3:10, uh, the Bible says there were some people in the church that, uh, evidently had gotten caught up in that, the Lord's coming at any time. The Lord's coming at any time. And so they became lazy. The Bible says they were undisciplined and busybodies and that typically goes together. Somebody that's not having to work and do their part, they tend to drift into being into things they don't need to be in. They don't stay in their lane, become busybodies. And so Paul said, "I think I can fix this for the church at Thessalonica. I tell you what," here's what Paul said, "let it be the rule that if they do not work," you know the rest, "they do not eat." The Apostle Paul could cure the homeless problem in San Francisco in probably two or three weeks. Find the able bodies living on the streets, taking the handouts, lovingly but clearly letting them know, "Your food's gone until you try to do some work." Was it Michael Jordan that is actually quoted as saying that he was going by a homeless person one day and they kinda, I gave Michael some verses, or rather several sentences of, "Could you help me? I need this. I would like to have that. I'm down on my luck, would you help me?" And Michael Jordan said, "Well, if you can say that, you can say, 'Welcome to McDonald's, may I take your order, please.'"

Work is of God. It's a sin not to be striving to work if you're well-abled and your body is able. Well, now look, there are folks who need care and need a hand up, and we ought to always be gracious and compassionate there but you know as well as I know, we live in a world where they have turned the safety net of our social welfare programs into a hammock and that's not of God. It's it's it's actually demeaning to those people. It is hurtful. It is robbing them of self-dignity and the the human flourishing and doing well, or well-being of their, themselves rather in this life. Galatians 6:5 reminds us that each one shall bear his own load. The Bible knows nothing of a non-working or non-serving Christian.

Work is the divine ordinance of God, but also rest is the ordinance of God. So we want to be balanced. Have you ever heard a pastor talk about balance before? The Bible has these so many balancing truths. There is a place for rest. Rest is likewise ordained of God so I've entitled this message, "The Divine Ordinance of Work and Rest." And maybe you need to repent on one point or the other or at times both of them. You know, just like work was ordained before the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, so rest was ordained of God before the fall. We see in Exodus 20:9 through 11, as as Moses is is

reviewing God's work in the very beginning, and he says, verse 9 of Exodus 20, "Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 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. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested," this is God now giving us the model, "rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy." Now, we know we've moved to the first day of the week in the new covenant. I'm not talking about all the intricacies of that doctrinal debate, but I am saying this, there is a cycle of work and rest that God's ordained even before sin came into the picture. It's ordained of God.

One New Testament scholar notes that in the gospels, there is recorded 11 different times that Jesus pulled away from the people to rest, and if Jesus needed to get away to rest, you and I need to have cycles of getting away for rest. Matter of fact, the last week of our Lord's life, he was ministering in Jerusalem all during the day but every evening, he would leave Jerusalem, leave the city where the people were, he would journey out to a remote area where there was an olive farm and that's why we have the Garden of Gethsemane. The word Gethsemane is a transliteration of the Greek word into English. It literally means, if you translate it, olive press. The Gethsemane was a place where they actually pressed the olives to get the oil. So Jesus went out to that olive farm every evening and that's where he relaxed and restored himself before he went back in among the people back in Jerusalem on the next day. He followed this principle.

In Romans 15:32, Paul writes to the church at Rome and he says, "so that I may come to you in joy and by the will of God find refreshing rest in your company." I think what Paul was saying there is, "I have a lot of places I go where I'm opposed, where it's difficult, the churches are carnal and worldly and self-consumed and it's it's frustrating, it's it's tiring, it's exhausting, but I have some churches," I think the church at Philippi would probably fit here, "and here at the church at Rome where where you're mature enough, you'll let me come in and get some R&R. I wanna find rest with you faithful saints there in Rome." And I've always thought it not peculiar but interesting as Paul writes his letter to Philemon, and you notice from the context of the letter that he and Philemon have a close relationship and he really trusts in Philemon. He knows Philemon supports him for the right reasons. And Paul just kind of abruptly in the letter says, "By the way, Philemon, get my room ready." He just knew that Philemon would be glad to let Paul arrive there and have a comfortable place to rest. Sometimes Paul went to a city and he had to rest in the jail but when he could, he went to a wealthy home like Lydia, Aquila and Priscilla, or maybe even Philemon, and had a comfortable place to retire and restore himself.

The idea of rest in the Bible is to be rested up or refitted so that you might be more effective in future service. We practice that here on our ministerial staff, and it's something that, um, uh, we've worked hard to teach in our church plants, in our partnership churches, and Anchored in Truth Ministries, and that is to take good care of your pastor. Give them some time away. And it's amazing how the thinking here is so shallow and so really unbiblical. Uh, Jason Johns is preaching our fall outreach, uh, this year and Jason just told me he's going to be through here, and he's going to stay a week in our area in July, because he says, "My church has given me a month off because of what

you've been teaching, Brother Jeff." You ought to say amen right there. I got him a month off. But, you know, he's been through warfare and strife and divisions. Those kind of guys need some rest to retool, to refresh.

And by the way, so do you. Your work exhausts you. Your work drains you emotionally and mentally and physically. It is of God that you make sure you have the proper cycles of rest coming in there. Some of you, maybe like your pastor, you didn't comprehend this for a long time until God gave you bodily ailments to where you had to submit because we were so proud, we thought things couldn't happen without us. But rest is right. It is of God. It is good for us.

We have a policy for all of our ministerial staff of taking their study breaks, taking their vacation, and then every 10 years, they get a little mini sabbatical. It's not much of one, but a mini one, so that, and, uh, I think the staff would tell you, but the pastor gets on us about get away. I don't want my guys grinding it out, worn out, depleted, without zeal and passion, because they're just doing the stuff. I can hire a moron just to do stuff, I want men to be prayed up and energized and refueled and effective and have some vision and have some ideas about what can we do and how can we do it better. That requires some retooling and some refitting, if you will.

So Jesus in Mark 6 has these apostles, uh, and disciples that he sent out to minister and engaging in the warfare of the ministry, and then he brings them back, the Bible says, and says, now, now, verse 31, "Come away by yourselves to a secluded place and rest for a while." Well, I., that's introduction. I. The God of work. I want to go back to chapter 6 and look way back to verse, uh, 7. Would you do that? Chapter 6, back up to verse 7. Let's just sprint through this real quick, all right? Down to verse 13 anyway.

Mark 6:7, "And He summoned the twelve and began to send them out in pairs, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits; and He instructed them that they should take nothing for their journey, except a mere staff no bread, no bag, no money in their belt but to wear sandals; and He added, 'Do not put on two tunics.' And He said to them, 'Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave town.'" Now, the point is, I've had guys tell me that, well, he told them not to carry a bag, not to carry tunics, not to carry extra bread, all this stuff, because they ought to have nothing and just suffer for Jesus. That is nonsense. That's raping the text. That's not what he's saying. He's saying the people you minister to should take care of you. That's what he's saying. It's a reciprocal thing. Share all good things, the Scripture says, to those who are teaching the word. He's not telling them to... Now, if it requires that, that's fine. If it requires losing all and still ministering, that's fine. I I I can say this with a clear conscience, maybe you'll test me one day: you could not pay me a penny and I'll still do what I'm doing. I will still do what... I can't not do what I'm doing. And Paul was willing to do that. But Jesus' point was, take good care of those who minister to you. Now, that's not really the message I'm giving you this morning. I just want to give you the context of these men going out and doing their labors.

Verse 11, "Any place that does not receive you or listen to you, as you go out from there, shake the dust off the soles of your feet for a testimony against them." They went out and

preached that men should repent." By the way, that's not a very popular message, that men should repent, turn from all things you're presently looking to and trusting in and turn to this one, Jesus Christ. "And they were casting out many demons and were anointing with oil many sick people and healing them."

So as we look at verses 7 through 13, understand this is a one-time ministry approach that doesn't apply to all seasons of church history. Christ was on the earth, there was a special anointing of the Holy Spirit giving them signs and wonders and miracles so that it would testify to the truth of who Jesus was. So there's some things here that simply don't apply to any of us today in church work. However, the principle in here is the same. It's the same for any of us. It's the same for us in ministry. It's the same for you in your secular work, as you might want to call it. And by the way, I'd like to say this. We use the word secular to differentiate, perhaps, our primary work for the Lord in the local church, but that's that's a misnomer. Brother Chad, it's all the Lord's work. It's all spiritual. It's all about representing Christ. You don't chop this thing off when you go into work on Monday morning. It's a continual... You came in here to get re-energized and refueled and re-fired and re-cleansed so you'll be better on Monday to represent Christ in the workaday world.

So he tells these guys, I'm sending you out to do what is given in a more permanent, uh, fashion in Matthew 28:18 through 20, where he says, "Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything whatsoever I've commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." That's the work. We are all in partnership together to perform. Whatever other things you do for Christ are good and wonderful, but that must be done. As a team, as a local church together, we're to make disciples. That's the idea of bringing them to faith in Christ. He didn't say they'll be mature disciples, but the moment one genuinely believes they're a disciple and they begin their maturation process in Christ. He said, "Go and make disciples." This is all from Matthew 28:18 through 20. Where do we go? "Go and make disciples of all the nations, to all the world," he says.

So our scope is is is worldwide. That's why we have Anchored in Truth missions literally around the globe. Baptizing them, he says, and teaching them. That's the local church. There's gotta be little collections of believers all over the world where they're baptized and they identify with that local church of believers, said, "I'm one of Christ's now. I'm his disciple and I wanna be His disciple in concert and in fellowship with this local church." And then they're to continue under the teaching of the pastor-teachers to mature in the faith.

That's the primary work spiritually we're called to do but that does not leave out your responsibility in the day-to-day work world, and you take the principles of being committed to work and work well for your employer as a witness and a testimony of Jesus Christ. God forbid any man wear the name of Christ and be slothful and undisciplined and disobedient to his employer. It's the ordinance of God. "Well, pastor, you don't know my employer." I don't have to know your employer because I know your God. And I know my God. I don't think I ever worked for anyone when I was a young man that they didn't say, "If you need a job, you can get one here." I just had too much

pride not to try to outwork everybody else. And you ought to have that attitude. Don't you go to your office, don't you go to that factory, don't you go to the place of that employment and say, "I'll see what I can get by with." That is not Christian truth. Work for your employer like working unto the Lord, the Bible says.

Well, that leads me to A) our sub-point under the God of work, integrity in our work. Integrity means without wax. It means genuine and true all the way through, and that again applies to our work in the church and our work in the world. Sometimes in the church setting, we run into folks, and sometimes very sincere folks, and they keep using the personal pronoun, "Well, I've got my vision for how this is supposed to go. I've got my burden for this. Well, I've got my convictions. They're this and this, and my conscience." I don't know why you need all of that. You got this. This is God's conviction. This is God's burden. This is God's conscience, if you will, on the issue.

So let's exhaust what the book tells us to do and let our emotions catch up with that, and you've done that well as a church because when we began reforming this local church many, many, many years ago, including me, we weren't really excited about all the things we were laying out. I mean, literally 30 plus years ago, when we started strongly emphasizing a personalized strategic embracing of global missions, it wasn't very exciting because we grew up in Baptist church where if they said it's mission Sunday, we tried to find a reason to go to the lake because it was boring. But now we've learned this is one of the most exciting things we could possibly be a part of. But it took having some integrity to do it because it was the right thing to do.

Now let's parallel that over to your work environment. You work hard for your employer. You give him a little extra. The Christian does not go by 40 hours work or 40 minutes, what's the word? Working eight hours a day, 40 hours a week for 40 hours pay, you don't go by that, you go by, "I wanna do what other folks would do, and then some because I'm working for my employer like working unto the Lord." Could I charge you, and a lot of you, it's not a wicked thing, you're not a rebel, but you just get slothful into the thinking of your coworkers. Don't judge them, just don't be like them. Work is ordained of God.

The integrity of work is seen in in verse 30, as the apostles, notice chapter 6, verse 30, "The apostles gathered together with Jesus; and they reported to Him all that they had done," D-O-N-E, "and taught." So in Christian circles, we have for many decades now tried to emphasize, if you're gonna teach others, be doing something in your own local church first. Strive to be living out the reality of what you're teaching. And there in your work environment in the world next, well, tomorrow morning, make sure that you're a doer, not just a talker about what you might do or might would do. Make sure you're a worker. Have integrity in your work.

You know, in Christian truth, it's more important to be something than to teach something, although teaching is essential. We all understand that. Christianity, in many ways, is more caught than it is taught. We must strive to do the truth and to teach the truth. When, uh, brothers show up and say, we're interested in your pastoral training institute in Anchored in Truth Ministries, I will often tell them, I say, "Well, look, I want you to understand something. About 70% of your training is being in a healthy church

and just watching it so that you know what it feels like, what it tastes like, what what it looks like. About 70% is being in it and doing it, and about 30%, though essential, is the classroom instruction. And the classroom instruction should be an overflow of the doing of the church or ministry you're a part of." That's called integrity. None of us have arrived there but we ought to be striving for integrity in the church and in our secular employment.

Well, encouragement. No integrity, I'm sorry, is the first thing under the work of God. And then accountability. The Bible says they came back in verse 30 and reported to him. Reported to him. Accountability is important. Be accountable in your work life. Make sure you don't mind anybody checking up on what you're doing. "Well, I did all these other things and he or she don't appreciate all that work I did, but they're concerned about this area." That's okay. Just keep striving to learn what your employer wants and try to please them like working unto the Lord. And you know, I've seen young men do this through the years. They talk to me about this work environment and that work environment, I said, "Look, here's what you do: you don't just work hard for those that are pleasing and nice and good, you work hard for all of them like working unto the Lord and watch how God will bless you." Those guys get ahead quick in the world.

I was so blessed to have been taught this principle right after I was saved and I'll never forget going into Dr. Bob Pittman's office. I was the associate pastor and said, "You know, I've learned something. I'm supposed to honor you as my authority in everything I do and every way I do it and I want to commit to you that today my job is to make you the most successful pastor in the Southern Baptist Convention." And I believe I kept that commitment best I could.

Well, accountability includes encouragement. Encouragement. Accountability encourages us to go further and if you are the one in charge of a business, a supervisory role, you're to hold people accountable with a tone of encouragement. The Bible does tell those who are masters, parallels our employers, "Don't exasperate those. Don't don't just beat them down. Have an accountability from them, but do it with encouragement."

Notice Jesus sent these disciples out two by two. Ecclesiastes 4:9 says two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. In other words, they were there to hold each other. One gets weak, the other one holds him up. The other one gets weak, the other moves him on, pricks him on, encouraging him to keep on in the work. In our businesses and in our work-a-day environment, we have our Philemon Fellowship, and the Philemon Fellowship is there not as an absolute, not as a final authority because the Bible don't give us real specifics, but it does give us the principle that we can help encourage each other to have real faith in the workplace. We can encourage each other to view our business as being here, yes, for good profits, that's good and well, but higher than that, to be a ministry and a tool that honors Christ and his work in the world. We need encouragement to do that, one to the other.

So, accountability includes encouragement, but it also includes edification, which is kind of the other side of the coin of encouragement. We edify each other. Proverbs 27:17 says, "Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another." In our quest to be good workers,

church or the world, we need continual commendation and when necessary, correction. Commendation and correction. Now, one of the primary ways that God has ordained that you get your commendation and that you get your correction is through God's ordained lines of authority. So glad this was taught to me as a brand new early Christian. It just, it just, when I heard, I mean, you understand, I didn't grow up in a Christian environment, and I was something of a rebel and a pseudo-intellectual, and I I I just thought I had it all figured out, and and God had to quickly crush that arrogance. And I learned God's ordained authority structures in the earth and when I saw that, I thought, "Yes, yes, I submit to the God-ordained authority and trust God." It's powerful how that works. Do you do that? Like husbands having authority over their wives. Wives don't submit because they're diminished or weak or not important. They submit because God's ordained a structure for society and what's best for the home and the children. And God will cause that wife to flourish and be blessed. And by the way, when a wife submits to her husband, she opens the channel for God to get ahold of him. So the lady says, "Lord, I'm praying now, Lord, I'm I'm praying for my husband, and he's a rascal and You get him. I'm gonna submit to him, but You get him straightened out." Ladies, try God on that. You gotta be sincere about trusting God's principle. Children, obey your parents. Go unto your parents and say, "I'm gonna strive to honor your authority over my life." And young people, as you do that with a heart to please God, God will work on your parents to your benefit.

You and I live in a world of abject rebels, rebelling against all of God's ordained structures and principles but the church ought to be a place where we model to the world the better way. Your elders in the church, you obey your elders, submit to your elders, love your elders, hold them in high esteem, give them double honor, be in subjection to them. Those are all Bible phrases, New American Standard. Why? Because they're smarter? No! God's giving them a responsibility he doesn't give you. They have an accountability for souls that you don't have. And that's God's ordained way. Now, certainly, in all of these, there's a place for respectful appeal. If an elder misses something or is blundering on something, sure, there's a place to respectfully make an appeal, for a wife to respectfully make an appeal to her husband, or even children to respectfully appeal to their parents but we must have real integrity in the way we function in this world, in our work, and often, that comes through those lines of authority.

Well, II, aren't you glad we're shifting off the God of work and now we come to the God of rest? It's like in one of those old-fashioned revival meetings I was talking about earlier. Uh, I remember reading the story of one of those meetings and they were in their seventh or eighth night and the preachers had only been preaching on the wrath of God and the sinfulness and depravity and offensiveness of man before a holy God, and the people were just feeling totally crushed under the weight of that preaching. And one brother stood up and said, "Is there no balm in Gilead?" Well, here's your balm. Verse 31, here's the balancing truth, "And He said to them," that's Jesus, said to these apostles who came in with their account, being accountable for the work they had done, he says, "Come away by yourselves to a secluded place and rest a while." This speaks of, now listen to me, this speaks of our Lord's perpetual concern for his children. Did you know God cares when you're tired? God cares when you're emotionally exhausted and hurt because you



have been mistreated, misunderstood, slandered or undermined because people hate your witness in the workplace. God cares for his weary children.

So in Mark 6, Jesus first leads the disciples into battle and now Jesus leads the disciples into rest, but God leads in both and I think there's an important truth for us here. I think one of the primary reasons you need rest is because you're not God. The Bible says, "He who keeps Israel neither sleeps nor slumbers." So every time you get tired, here's what you ought to do, "Hallelujah, I'm not You and You're not me! You don't need rest. You don't get tired. You're always strong, but I'm weak and I'm exhausted and I'm humbled afresh before You, the Almighty, never tiring God." So see, there's a good teaching lesson, spiritually speaking. It's that perpetual reminder to say to ourselves, "There's only one God and I'm not Him."

So let me give you these quick, quickly let me give you these conclusions for practical application on rest. First one, are you weary because you are worldly? Why do you get busy and just automatically conclude that the Lord's work is the thing that needs to go out of your schedule? Who told you that? "Well, I'll stop going on Wednesday night. I'll I'll stop going to the meetings that apply to me on Sunday night. I'll I'll miss more church on Sunday morning. I mean, I'm just busy." Look, there's a season or two of that. I understand that. I'm not talking about legalism, but the mentality that if I'm weary and tired, then some things at church need to go, now that might be rarely true, but it's rarely true. Matthew 6:33 says, in effect, "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things that you're worried about making sure you have will be added to you." Maybe you're making the wrong choices and you've spread yourself too thin. Maybe you need to drop Kiwanis or Rotary or Pilate or Gideons or Cancer Society or Heart Society or band boosters or athletic boosters. I don't know that you need to, but maybe you need to. Maybe that's why you're too weary. Maybe Johnny needs to drop football, or basketball, or baseball, or soccer, or wrestling, or cross country. Maybe not, but that could be why you're weary. Or maybe Susie needs to decide between cheerleading, band, piano, voice, tennis, softball, gymnastics, and the swim team. May not be an issue, but it could be. Are you weary because you're worldly? Ladies, maybe you don't need to work outside the home and stay home. I can't tell you if that's God's will. The Bible's not that simple on that point, but it could be true. And I've said many times before, I'm real concerned about a lot of our ladies. You're doing too much. Too many of our ladies are doing too much. Might be a reproof to us men. Men, maybe you need to drop some hunting trips and fishing trips. You can tell what my hobbies are, can't you? long weekend football trips, or maybe turn down overtime at work every now and then, as long as your boss is good with that?

Are we worn out because we're too worldly? 2. Get away with Jesus. Get away with Jesus. When you pull away from the grind and have your vacation time or your days off, not in a heavy way. Don't don't put your work boots on with Jesus. That's that's what I do when I prepare to preach. I I put on work boots. And it's really a hard task for me to not put on my work boots, but just read a Psalm or two and just fellowship with the Lord in praise maybe, but try to find those times in your getaway where you get away. That's what these guys did. They got away with Jesus to a secluded place. Now these brothers

can tell you very often if we go on a deer hunt or something, we talk about the things of the Lord almost constantly because we can't cut him off. It's just a part of who we are. We've had wonderful family devotions on vacation before. Sometimes I've taken a little book and me and my son-in-laws are just, not heavy, just read through it and discuss some things there. We hadn't done that a while. I've noticed they've been kind of slipping on me a little bit. I'm going to have to get back in there and do a little bit more of that maybe, I don't know, or take them out to the farm and make them work some more like they did back when they were courting my daughters. Then after they got married, the work ended, just phew, gone. Now, I have to depend on young preacher boys who want to spend time with me. I say, "Okay, okay, get up at six in the morning. We're going to spend the day together." It's called farm discipleship. Ask Brother Matt. He's done some of that. Matter of fact, if you listen to the last podcast, Matt and, um, Jake stayed on both threw me under the bus on that. They really did. They talked about that farm discipleship stuff.

Thirdly, get away long enough to restore yourself. Wow, and I just can go from my own experience. I used to take a week off, but I'd preach the Sunday I came back and finally, a pastor told me, "Why do you do that?" I thought, "Well, I thought that's what you do." And he said, "At least take two weeks, once or twice a year, because the first week you're away from things, you just start to relax. Then the next week you can relax." And that came to my July study break and a couple weeks of vacation every year. And it really does, I come back so fired up. I'll never forget years ago, I had one of my three, if not four, it's only been three or four, severe muscle spasm events with my back. I'm talking about the stuff that puts you on the ground and there's no amount of, I'll grip my way through this, you have to submit. It just paralyzed me. Severe muscle spasms, they put you in the hospital, they pump you full of morphine and three or four days later you go home and try to take it easy. Well, I'd been through one of those episodes, and I couldn't do anything but lay around for about 10 days to two weeks, and I just kind of studied on the next text. And it was so refreshing, so refueling to me. And I'll never forget one of our elders at the time, after I came back after that two weeks of just laying around and studying and meditating on the text, he said, "Man, you need to have your back go out more often. That was a good sermon." Well, what about you as a mom, though? You need some times of refreshing. You need some times of retooling. And a dad needs some times of refreshing, and you need times of retooling. Take your breaks. Told you you'd like this sermon. It's the ordinance of God.

Get away long enough to restore yourself. And of course, rest in the right proportion is a stimulant but too much rest is slothfulness. I've shared this before, but it's so true for so many of us. Take off the harness. Take off the harness. You can't take your rest, but take the burden and responsibility on your shoulders with you. Those who've worked with these workhorses, some of you worked in the logging woods with workhorses, and they got those horses out at daybreak, and they put those harnesses on, and the horse just tenses up. He knows it's ready for the whip, it's ready for the order, and he's tensed up, and he's driving hard all day long, pulling those logs out of the woods. And you bring that old workhorse in in the evening, and you take him down to the corral. If you just put him in the corral, but left the harness on, you'd probably kill him eventually because when

that harness is on, he's tensed up for work. But I've seen it before. You can take that horse in and pull that harness off and put it in the corral. He bumps, he jumps, he runs around, he shakes his skin and then finally he goes, phew. Well, you're gonna have to take the harness off. You got to find the way to put the cell phone down and separate out away from the responsibility. Well, that's hard for your pastor and it's hard for me to call it sin, but often it's sin not to separate and take the harness off.

E, or fifth, learn to take mini breaks. I remember what a therapy was for me in a time of real difficulty, and the pastor, and I'd put on those headphones and put on some good preaching, I'd just go walk. I'll never forget James Dobson of Focus on the Family Ministries. His father was a pastor, and he talked about his father went through a season of real depression, and he said he exercised his way out of it. There's something to that, by the way. Exercise is helpful to kind of clear things up. So maybe a way to have a mini break, maybe lose some weight, is exercise. So consider that. Having a hobby. Shooting a bow for a couple hours for me maybe. I'll never forget J. Vernon McGee and Dr. Gray Allison, the president of Mid-America Seminary, both told me in like the same few weeks of time, or I heard J. Vernon McGee, I didn't talk to him, I talked to Gray Allison. And they said they loved to read clean murder mysteries just to kind of separate and take the harness off and take a little mini break for a couple hours. Some of y'all like to read like that. Miss Pam does that in her sewing. She said, it just revitalizes me. She gets in her craft room and she will sew things and do things and it restores her.

Don't, don't, well, next, expect it to be difficult. If you're kind of a driven person person, kind of a type A person, it's going it's going to require some discipline. If you're going to have to realize it's an assigned duty to rest when I need rest. So submit to the Lord's ordinance and not your emotions. You say, "But pastor, if I do that, I could I could lose a good deal for my business." So? God might give you two next week you weren't looking for. I'm not talking about slothfulness, of course, but the appropriate amount of rest.

Under the thought of it being difficult, I I read this years ago, you know, Charles Haddon Spurgeon is, so many of us are Reformed Baptists, he's sort of a standard bearer for us. And I've told you the story before, Charles Spurgeon was at the train station. He's waiting to get on a train, because you had horse and buggy and basically trains in those days. He had a heavy schedule, a lot of preaching on it. And, um, another Baptist preacher came up and very piously said to Mr. Spurgeon, "Mr. Spurgeon, I'm going to go to third class and save God's money." And Spurgeon said, "I'm going to first class and save God's servant. God has plenty of money, but his workers are few." Well, for that first pastor, he he didn't understand his need for rest like Dr. Spurgeon understood that, and restoring himself.

Well, the last one, get counsel from older, wiser folks in your vocation. Look to those who've been down the road further. You ladies in your homemaking, no matter whatever else you ladies do, and that's why I think so many of you have to do too much, but you are called to be a keeper of your home from the Scriptures. You need to look to older ladies and say, "Tell me what you did right and tell me what you did wrong. I've got to find a better balance in this thing and find some respite in it sometimes." And our Mentoring Mondays are designed to help do that. Business owners talk to others who

own businesses, and maybe you're a supervisor, a director, have responsibilities in a company, find from others who've been down the road, "How did you separate? How did you restore yourself?" Brothers and sisters, are you listening to me? I want you to do well for 40 and 50 years, not crash and burn at 25 or 30. I said this before, one reason in my 60's I've still got passion about what's going on is you didn't burn me out. You tried to help me restore myself to do what I must do, preach God's word. Factory workers, whatever it is, find those brothers or sisters who've been down the road, be humble enough to say, "Tell me practically, how did you do this in the home? How did you do this at work? How did you break away?"

Now, I always say this on this topic because it's needful. There might be an exception and that is for the younger men and I would say probably the younger ladies also. When you're starting, it just takes long hours. It just takes some burning of the candle at both ends, but still then you've got to be careful. But what you'll find is if you'll be diligent in the first third of your life, you'll find the middle and last third is not so crushing with the burdens of work and requirements. But there must be continual cycles of work and rest. God created everything in six days, and on the seventh day, he rested. Downtime is needful to rest our body, our soul, our mind, our emotions. It is essential. It is God-ordained. But one final thought. Our need of rest is also a parable about spiritual truth because spiritually speaking, we are wearied, and spiritually speaking, we are troubled, and spiritually speaking, we are tired in our sin. And that's why the Bible says, Matthew 11:28 through 30, Jesus speaking, "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. 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. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." In the context, those people were laboring under the legalisms of the Jewish Pharisees who just piled burden upon law upon burden upon law upon burden upon law, and Jesus said, "If you'll come to Me, I'll put something on you. I'll put My yoke, but My yoke is love and grace."

You can rest – listen to me, listen to me – are you resting in the magnanimous, unlimited, enduring, never diminishing power of Jesus Christ? That's your rest. That's your rest. That's why in Hebrews, nine times as the writer of Hebrews writes to a Jewish congregation, they've come to faith in Christ, but they still want to go back to the old burden of the law and put on work salvation. Nine times the writer says, "Enter into His rest." That's salvation. So many of you are struggling and wondering about, "Do I know, am I saved? Have I been convicted enough? Have I repeated enough? Have I sensed it enough? Do I have any love for God enough?" No, no, stop it and rest. You say, "Jesus, I'm tired of worrying about this stuff. Tell you what I'm gonna do, I'm just gonna sit down on You and rest. I'm tired of thinking I can quit sinning. I've been decided I can't quit sinning. I'm not gonna stop trying to quit sinning, but I'm probably not gonna quit sinning, so I'm just gonna have to rest and if You don't save me, I'm sunk." Some of you are analyzing your sins so much, trying to stop sinning, and the real way to stop sinning is to analyze Jesus more and rest. Rest.

Now, I could meditate on this a while and about it come apart. This is good. Rest. One of the best things God's done for me, one of the best things God does for you is put you in a

place where you can't fix it and you either gotta die or rest in God and his sovereignty.  
Rest.