

Celebrating God with Your Rest

I. Celebrating God with Your Sleep

- **We please God with our sleep when we recognize that He is the one Who provides it.**
 - Psalm 127:2
 - God is not pleased by the unbelievers' sleep because they consider it an act of chance or of their own doing.
 - Are you thankful to God for your sleep? As you go to bed tonight or wake in the morning, take some time to thank the Lord for the rejuvenating sleep He provides.
- **We please God with our sleep when we trust Him as we go to sleep.**
 - Psalm 3:5, 4:8, 37:7 Daniel 6:18-20
 - How many of us are like Darius, fretting about things over which we have no control when we should be sleeping? As you go to sleep tonight, you can please the Lord by thanking Him for sovereignly doing all the things you never really had control of anyway.
 - This includes things like keeping your heart beating and your lungs pumping, but it also includes protecting you, your family, and your home, keeping the world spinning, and so much more.
- **We please God with our sleep when we sleep at the right times.**
 - Proverbs 6:9, 20:13; I Thessalonians 5:7; John 3:19
 - The Bible says that you can sleep too much if you're lazy.
 - The Bible also illustrates that you can sleep at the wrong times. Matthew 26 is very interesting in that the disciples chose to sleep when they should have been praying.
 - And it's also very interesting to realize that the Bible provides many examples of people who didn't get enough sleep simply because they chose to be awake and sinning instead.
 - Take careful stock of your sleep patterns. Do they glorify God? Is He pleased with the amount of your sleep and the timing of your sleep?
- **We please God with our sleep when we please Him with our waking.**
 - Proverbs 3:21-24
 - God deserves our worship every waking moment of the day. But it's in those waking moments that we become the people whose sleep also pleases the Lord.

II. Celebrating God with Your Rest

- Genesis 2
- God did not need to rest.
 - God obviously did not need to rest because He is never fatigued.
 - He never needs to catch His breath or regain His strength.
- God rested from His work on the last day of the week as an example of healthy rhythms for His creation. Exodus 20:8-11, 31:17; Mark 6:31
 - God ordained that the Children of Israel would have a cycle of work and rest every day and every week. Every day they would wake and sleep, but then every week they would work for six and rest for one. That's not to say they would sleep for one full day, but God expected them to cease from labor. That's what rest means. It means to take a break from something, and — in this context — it's taking a break from work.
 - Just like the Jews, we must sleep every 24 hours or suffer intense and even fatal consequences. And also just like the Jews, there are numerous health benefits to taking a break from our work.

- Many times Jesus invited and even pushed people to rest. It was Jesus Himself Who designed us to need sleep. He designed us to flourish when we have cycles of work and rest, and we can celebrate Him with our rest when we submit to those cycles in order to please Him.
- God also rested to symbolize the experience of faith in Him.
 - Hebrews 3:12-4:13
 - Even though the Children of Israel would have to work hard to capture and cultivate the Promised Land, God is illustrating the blessing of entering the land as rest. It's the blessing of obeying God. But the nation disobeyed God, and so they were not allowed to experience the blessing of God. They weren't allowed to enter His rest — the Promised Land.
 - In the Good News — the Gospel — we too have received promises. And we need to believe that word in such a way that it profits us — namely that it produces Christlikeness in us. And if we have truly been born again — and subsequently conformed to the image of Christ — we too have a future rest to which we look forward.
 - The key we need to grasp here today is that when God rested from Creation, He was giving us a picture of the believer's relationship with God. We're born into this world that — because of the fall — involves thorns and sweat and toil, but that will all one day end, and we will enter the rest God has promised. And we definitely should celebrate God by praising Him for those future realities. But what about our present rest?
 - Matthew 11:28-30; Jeremiah 6:16
 - Our weekly and daily times of rest are designed to be physically refreshing, and they're also designed to picture the future glory of eternal rest with our God, but they're also designed to provide much needed spiritual refreshment in the here and now.
 - We're not saying that the promises of Matthew 11:28 refers only the dedicated times where we stop working and put our feet up. God can and does provide soul rest even in the midst of trial and work and persecution. But we know that God deserves our worship and praise every moment of the day, and that definitely includes our rest and relaxation.
 - Are you weary physically? Are you heavy-laden spiritually? Christ wants you to rest on Him. Take His yoke on you, learn from Him. Jesus is gentle and humble in heart; He is divinely happy to condescend to us and give us the rest we need. His yoke is easy. His burden is light.
 - We find rest when walk the paths God's prepared for us — in His holiness, in His righteousness. But He also gives us the choice to refuse Him.
 - Revelation 14:11-13
 - Our rest will never do the physical and spiritual jobs God intends if we do not put Him first. Those who reject Him in this life will not only experience unsatisfying rest in the here and now, they will also experience a restless eternity.
 - God's people need to live in the reality of the future rest He's promised. They need to allow their temporal rest to draw them to praise the Lord for their future, eternal rest.
 - But we also need to understand the very real and practical plans that God has for our temporal rest. He wants it to rejuvenate us physically. He wants it to refresh us spiritually.