

Celebrating God with Recreation

I. The Necessity of Recreation

- Exodus 23:12; Mark 6:31-32
- You are human. You are finite. You cannot push and work and run and grind without end or you will die. And even if you don't push yourself to death, you will hurt yourself physically, spiritually, and relationally. This is why God, in His wisdom and love, commands His people to recreate.
- When we think "recreate," we picture ourselves having fun. It may even be the intense fun of playing basketball. But the word means to re-create something. The idea is that our bodies or our spirits or both have to be fixed, and our re-creation is doing what's necessary to address the issue.

II. The Joy of Recreation

- Ecclesiastes 3:12-13, 8:15, 12:13; James 1:17
- To be able to enjoy the fruits of our labor is one of the beautiful gifts of work.
- The fear of the Lord is key in our recreation.
- Recreation is a gift. It's a good and perfect gift that God intends for us to use the right way. And this gift is designed to bless and benefit us. But only when we use it to please the Lord.

III. The Danger of Recreation

- I Timothy 5:13; Proverbs 21:17; Psalm 37:4
- Humans are fantastic at taking the beneficial gifts of God and absolutely trashing them.
- Though they may appear identical on the outside, idleness and recreation are two very different things.
- Re-creation is the joyful and necessary gift from God, but idleness is the perversion of God's gift.
- The satisfaction that God gives when we fulfill His will is pleasure beyond comprehension. But the paltry pleasures of our sinful lusts leave us feeling empty and — eventually — they destroy us.
- When we love that kind of pleasure, it will leave us spiritually — and often physically and financially — bankrupt.
- Perverting this gift of God is easier than others because recreation is generally so much fun. In fact, when it comes time to figure out what we're going to do on vacation or how we're going to use our downtime, we naturally think about doing things *we* want to do. And that's not necessarily bad.
- The problem comes when God's will is not our highest priority. When we engage in Failed Worship, our recreation will displease God and be dangerous to us. This is where idolatry, sensuality, laziness, and idleness will creep into our lives.

IV. The Approach to Recreation

- Psalm 127:1-2; Colossians 3:17; I Corinthians 10:31
- One of the biggest lies of workaholicism is that "*I* have to get *this* done." Are there legitimate things we have to get done in order to please the Lord? Yes. But workaholicism believes two lies. The first is that we believe we have to complete more than we actually do, and the second is that we believe that *we* are the only ones who can do it — the burden falls squarely on our shoulders.
- But Psalm 127 reminds us that God is the one *Who's* doing the work. Unless He is at work in the situation, our work is vain and failed.

- This means that we must not only be comfortable resting — knowing that our work will only succeed as the Lord blesses it, and that He provides for us even when we're resting — but we also need to approach our recreation from the standpoint that if God isn't in it, it's vain.
- We won't be re-created unless we do so to the glory of God.

V. Elements of Recreation

- **Hospitality**
 - Hebrews 13:2; Romans 12:13
 - Since the Lord commands us to be hospitable, we can obviously please Him in so doing, and I believe the Scriptures are replete with examples of how to do this. The Greek word translated "hospitable" refers to loving people. The English word also speaks to creating a healing environment. Do you hear the word "hospital" in "hospitality"?
 - When we show hospitality in the way God commands to the people He commands in order to deepen our redemptive relationships with them in the power of the Holy Spirit . . . God is glorified. But when we invite people to our homes who should not be there or engage in activities that are sinful, or we even invite the right people and do the right things, but we do it for our sole honor and glory, then God isn't pleased.
- **General Celebration**
 - John 2
 - Weddings and birthdays and graduations and anniversaries are legitimate times of celebration. However, it's easy to be so focused on celebrating the people that we lose sight of giving God the preeminence He deserves.
 - We must be diligent to keep God as the focus and observe the celebration in ways that please Him. For example, drunkenness is not appropriate. It also wouldn't be Christ-honoring to celebrate a wedding that displeases the Lord. But when we gather with God's people to praise Him for what He's done in our lives, there's great re-creation to be experienced.
- **Holiday Celebration**
 - The Bible has a lot to say about festivals, feast days, and holidays. And each of them was to be enjoyed by God's people for God's glory.
- **Sexuality**
 - The Bible has a lot to say about sexuality. Sexuality is a re-creative experience when it's between a husband and wife to the glory of God.
 - Sexuality was created for a pure and glorious reason, and it can definitely be used to please God and be re-creative. Therefore, it's our responsibility to engage only in the sexuality that pleases the Lord and flee fornication.
- **Sleep**
 - I Kings 19:5-6; Jeremiah 31:26; Proverbs 3:24; Psalm 3:5; Ecclesiastes 5:12; Matthew 8:24
 - Though other forms of recreation require that we do it to God's honor and glory, sleep that truly re-creates us must be approached in a way that pleases God. Sleep is sweet when we trust God.
- **Sabbath**
 - Exodus 20:8-11; Genesis 2:2-3; Hebrews 4:9-11; Isaiah 58:13
 - As we work and relate with each other and recreate and eat and drink, we should be diligent to avoid disobedience and give God the preeminence He deserves. This is how a true disciple of God lives, and this lifestyle will be a testimony to the future rest we will enjoy for all eternity with Him.