

Everyday Rest

Establishing healthy life-giving rhythms handout

Refuel Conference 16/11/24

There are five life giving habits or rhythms in Genesis 2 which, if we practice them, will help us “have life and have it to the full” (John 10:10). This assumes we are in a right relationship with Jesus to begin with. There is no everyday rest, no true soul rest, outside of Christ.

Enjoy beauty Gen 2: 8-9a

The trees were “pleasing to the eye”. Who’s eye? Adam and Eve’s, God’s. God saw all that he had made and it was very good (Gen 1:31). God enjoys beauty. Taking time to appreciate beauty brings us contentment/rest/Shalom because we are made in his image.

1. *How do you appreciate beauty already (think broadly about beauty; it can be found in unusual places)?*
2. *How could you build greater appreciation of beauty into your life?*

Dig your garden Gen 2:15

This is not about literal gardening! This is about stewarding as a life-giving rhythm or habit. There are three areas to reflect on:

- Stewarding where you live – your house/flat/garden/room.
- Stewarding your body – for example, exercise/diet.
- Stewarding your work life – if we do no work at all (in the broadest sense of the word) we become depressed because God made us to work. Note however that work can become all consuming. God rested after his work of creating (Gen 2:1). See also 4th commandment (Ex 20:8).

1. *How are you “digging your garden” already?*
2. *Is there any area where you can “dig your garden” more effectively?*

Practice self-control Gen 16-17

This does not sound like a life-giving rhythm or habit does it? But God exercises self-control. He chooses, he decides, and he created people with the ability to do the same. So, when we exercise self-control we feel better for it, because we are reflecting his image. This is not a negative thing. It’s an act of freedom which brings dignity and contentment. People are slaves to whatever has mastered them. 2 Peter 2:19.

1. *Can you give examples of where you practice self-control already?*
2. *What are the benefits?*
3. *Are there any areas where exercising greater self-control would be the right thing to do?*

Be creative Gen 2:19-20

Adam named the animals. He was free to develop the garden. We are all creative because we are made in the image of our Creator God, even though we may feel we are not creative.

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1. *How do you do express creativity already (again, think broadly – simply re-arranging things can be an act of creativity)?*
2. *How could you develop or express more of your creativity?*

Embrace others Gen 2:18

We could do all these first four habits in isolation, but we are made for companionship, irrespective of whether we are married or not. People who are relationally isolated tend to have poorer health outcomes. When we embrace others, we embrace ourselves.

1. *How do you embrace others (show love) already?*
2. *What can you do to practically embrace family/neighbours/work colleagues in the next few days?*

The missing habit.....Gen 3:8-9

We are made for relationship with God, so we need to practice the presence of God, not run away from him. One way we can do this is to talk to God as we engage in the five other life-giving habits.

Conclusion

Practicing these habits will have time implications, but focussing on use of time, rather than on the habits, can in itself be a tyranny that kills rather than gives life.

Jesus said, 'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, 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.' (Matth 11:28-30)

Reference

The 5 habits of deeply contented people; Andrew Page, 2016.