

DEVOTIONAL OF THE MONTH

Women's Health and Wellness



The Importance of Rest

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We have all been there. We have walked bravely in obedience, loved fiercely, fought battles, prayed intensely, given generously, played hard, faced opposition, weathered storms, kept the faith, and found ourselves ... utterly EXHAUSTED.

There is a prophet in the Old Testament named Elijah. He was weary from all the “doing,” and he knew a thing or two about exhaustion. You can read about him in 1 Kings 18 and 19, and I encourage you to do that.

After a long journey, Elijah collapsed by a broom tree and allowed himself to feel the full gravity of his unraveling. He withdrew from everything to be alone and quiet with God. Elijah came to the end of himself beside that tree. He was surrendering his control and allowing God to do what only God can do. Elijah slept by the tree, and God sent an angel to wake him with food and water. He was sustained by that food as he journeyed on to a cave in Mount Horeb. At the cave, he was tormented by a strong wind that tore the mountains and broke rock. Following that, he experienced an earthquake and a fire. Elijah waited to hear from the Lord, but God was not in the wind, the earthquake, or the fire.

Soon after the fire, Elijah heard a sound. It was a low whisper. Undeniably, it was the voice of the Lord.

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“I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.”

~ Ezekiel 36:26



“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

Matthew 11:28-29



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Rest is not easy for most of us, but there is great value in entering a sacred pause. In this pause, we realize that our supply of fortitude, along with any earthly resources to supplement it, is not inexhaustible. Elijah withdrew from an overly crowded life to be alone with God. He retreated from the clamor and hustle but still needed to silence the noise within himself to hear the Lord's whispers.

When we finally quiet our souls, it is in the silence that we discover the deeper things of God. We move away from the lesser things of life so that God can show us “more” – more of his grace and eternal love. Remember John 3:30, “He must increase, but I must decrease.” Surrendering will call out the Divine Rescuer to provide rest for our souls. This deep point of surrender will bring us to the crossroads (Jeremiah 6:16) where we decide if we are going to trust that God alone is really enough.

The Lord has shown me in every season of life that he is enough for me. Currently, I find myself at a new crossroad. As a mom, I have been blessed with the opportunity to love three sons into adulthood. The latest juncture in our home life is now called

“the empty nest.” I recently stepped away from an overly cluttered career. My heart to serve in ministry is also going through a refinement period as I prayerfully discern where God is working and how I can join him in that work with the gifts he has given me. Indeed, it is a time of resting in the Lord.

My acceptance of the invitation to walk the path of surrender means yielding my gifts, my heart, and every area of my life to God. It means decluttering the lesser things and being refreshed by living water. Resting with him enables my eyes to see what he sees while remaining at peace in the veiling of that which he has yet to disclose.

Join me in the journey with him, deeper still, as we open his holy Word to find that it is alive and active. His Word will allow us to know him more profoundly, to consider his ways, discern his truths and trust his promises. We will conclude, God alone really is enough!

Lord, give us wisdom to know when we need your rest. We trust the gentle holding of our hearts in your hands. Our hope is in you. You are our rock and our salvation. You are our fortress. We will not be shaken. Amen.