

Rest in His Love

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by

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“Come to Me, all you 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. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” Matthew 11:28-30

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It had been a rough week. Friday rolled around and I could feel the exhaustion of a week settle in on me. My time had been filled with homeschooling the kids, cooking, keeping up with loads of laundry, teaching at the co-op and preparing my lesson for my Sunday School class. I still had to pack all of our clothes for a weekend trip to visit family. As the afternoon wore on, I felt progressively worse and a fever and chills set in. It quickly became apparent that I wasn't going anywhere.

My husband decided to still take the kids to see their grandparents so that I could stay home and rest. As my family was heading out the door, my six-year-old son came over to me with his sad face on and hugged me. “Mommy, I feel bad you're gonna be here all by yourself. Won't you be lonely?” he asked me. I assured Jesse I would be fine, actually feeling a little guilty over how excited I was becoming at having a whole weekend with nobody that I had to take care of but myself. It had been years since I'd spent a weekend by myself.

The door closed behind them and I heaved a sigh of relief. Silence. Now what to do? I decided before I felt any worse that I would make a quick trip out to grab a few library books by my favorite author and some soup from the deli so I didn't have to cook.

I drug myself out the door and was back in an hour. Popping some Tylenol, I settled onto the couch with my blanket,

pillows, pile of books and turned on the classical radio station. Bliss. I spent the entire weekend holed up in my house reading, listening to music, sleeping and praying.

Even though I was sick, it occurred to me that perhaps this weekend was a much needed gift from God—a respite from my constant responsibilities. I allowed myself to slow down, to actually do n-o-t-h-i-n-g at all. I found that it was easier to focus on God because I was not distracted and busy. I felt surrounded by His love. I felt peace. I felt my burdens fade away. I experienced the Matthew 11 verses as I hadn't in a long time.

It's been 12 years since that weekend, but I still remember it and how God used it to recharge one tired, worn-out mamma and wife. As I am now going through another busy stage in my life, I am trying to learn how to rest in God's love on a daily basis. What does that look like? For me, part of it means slowing down long enough so that I can enjoy God's presence and give Him my full attention. I try to do that in the morning before I start my day. For me it also means taking a walk in a park or the woods. The quiet and the beauty of my surroundings seems to help me focus on God. Unless I do these things, I can't hear Him or notice what He wants to teach me because my mind is too full with my own thoughts. Maybe you struggle with that too. Not much in our society encourages us to slow down, to cultivate quiet, to seek God. It's time to change that.

As we go through the month of February, let's practice resting in God's love and letting Him refresh us from the burdens we carry every day. This may look a little different for each of us. That's not important. What is important, is that we try to carve out some time to rest in Him and to listen to Him. Let's pray for each other to find this time.

Prayer: Thank you Lord, that You give us rest for our souls. May we find and take the time to seek You out and just be ... with You. Amen.

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