1) Connect Card

2) NEXT Today 12:00-12:45p

3) 8th Anniversary Celebration (Amirah) (Bring Friends…! Huge Crowd! We need a lot of food. Bring one dish. Respond to the Needs Request emailed to you on Friday or sign up at our Connections Center in the Lobby. Be praying!!

**“****Push Pause”**

**Mark 2:23-28**

*Introduction:* Pg. \_\_\_\_

How good are you at pushing pause? I’m not talking about hitting the remote for that Netflix episode or tapping the screen to stop your favorite song. I’m talking about pushing pause in your life.

The vast majority of Bostonians are not very good at pushing pause. We are a culture who does work, and busy, and activity really well, but are not so great at rest. If we were to describe our activity in two opposite extremes, you could say people experience…

Life as a Whirlwind: Blur bodies… Your life is a blur. Between work, and family, and friends, and social activities, and adulting, and more work… you barely have time to breathe! You love getting things done. You are so passionate about your work that you consistently work after work. You haven’t had a *true* day off in weeks. Work for you is the acceptable addiction. AND… when you’re not working, you’re probably volunteering and serving others. You let your activity become your identity. Blur bodies need a vacation! Blur bodies need to learn to rest.

Life as Slow Motion: Slow bodies… live on the opposite end of the spectrum. Life is great. Just ree-lax! Stop being so uptight! It will get done when it gets done. These people take all their work breaks. They are not driven to work harder or longer. They would not be guilty of workaholism, but laziness. They love to rest, BUT they may not be resting as God intends.

Are you a blur body? A slow body? Nobody is a a nobody (in the sight of God or Redemption Hill Church).

God does not want us to live on either end of the spectrum. Made in his image, he wants us to work and work hard, but he also wants us to rest and rest well.

Jesus presents a countercultural way in Mark 2:23ff.

In Mark 2, we find Jesus clashing with the religious bureaucrats of his day. They did not like that he forgave sin (2:1-12 - he’s God!), or hung out with “sinners” (2:13-17 - they forgot to look in the mirror), or fast according to their prescriptions (2:18-22).

Now they don’t like what he’s doing on Saturdays (the Sabbath, which was a day of rest and worship for Jews).

**Mark 2:23-28 (text displayed)**

Let me teach you three truths about pushing pause.

**1. Rest is a gift from God (23-24).**

The Story

* Jesus was traveling with his disciples on the Sabbath. They were passing through grainfields and his disciples were hungry, so they picked some grain to eat. This was fine, even according to the law (Deut. 23:25).
* BUT… the Pharisees felt like they were breaking the Sabbath (24). They actually viewed this as “work,” because they constructed additional restrictions for what people can and cannot do on the Sabbath. I’ll talk more about that in a minute.

Why were the Pharisees so concerned with people observing the Sabbath in such a meticulous way? What is the Sabbath?

The Sabbath —

* The Hebrew word means to “cease” or “desist.” It means to STOP or PAUSE our work to enjoy God.
* The 4th of the 10 Commandments instructed Israel to “Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy.”
* Adam Mabry, in his book *Art of Rest*, defines the… **“Sabbath is a time to rest, holy to the Lord. It is time that is given to God, to receive refreshment from God.” - Adam Mabry**

Rest is so important that you can explain the entire Bible from this one theme.

* Creation (Genesis 1-2) God created the world in six days. Then rested on 7th day. God then blessed it and made it holy. God made people to enjoy rest in his presence.
* Fall (Genesis 3): Adam & Eve rebelled against God and were removed from the Garden, the very presence of God and place of rest.
* Redemption (Genesis 4-Jesus): God refused to leave us in our internal and external chaos. That’s why he sent Jesus Christ to bring us peace and allow us to experience true physical and spiritual rest in him!
* New Creation (Revelation): When Jesus returns, he will restore our restful enjoyment in God’s presence.

Rest is a gift from God. The Pharisees concern for the Sabbath was legitimate, but how they applied it was not!

T: Jesus responds to their objection in *verse 25-26*.

**2. Rest is not God (25-27)**

The Story

* Jesus refers back to an event from the life of David, as recorded in 1 Samuel 21:1-6.
* God declared David would become the King, and take the place of King Saul. Saul was jealous of David and tried to kill him on numerous occasions.
* While on the run, David and his companions were hungry. They stopped at Nob and asked Ahimelech, the priest, for food. The only food available was the special bread reserved for the priests, known as the “bread of the Presence.”
* Ahimelech gave that bread to David and his men to eat.
* What is Jesus saying? While it was not customary or lawful, David and his men ate the bread, because God did not want them to starve.

But there is something deeper happening here. Jesus exposes their idolatry.

* First, he exposes their legalism. Legalism establishes rules God does not require.
  + The Pharisees were so legalistic that they created 39 ways (39!!) to practice the Sabbath that are not in the Bible, including plucking heads of grain on Saturday (“reaping”)! Sounds restful. :)
  + Adding to God’s words effectively takes the rightful place of God. They wanted to control what righteous living looked like, and in doing so, tried to control how people relate to God.
  + Legalism sets up a system for us to perform our way to God’s approval. That means a relationship with God is based on our achievement rather than God’s love and grace. This too is idolatry.
  + Rest is not God; God is God. Rest is a means by which we enjoy God.
* Secondly, Jesus corrected their doctrine by talking about their hero. The Pharisees were very ethnocentric, religious nationalists. As Adam says in his book, “King David was to the Pharisees what George Washington is to American patriots. . . . Saying to them, *Your own hero David broke your own Sabbath rules* was like revealing that Washington had warm feelings for the British.”

In all of this, they elevated their rules over caring for actual people. This is evident in the conversation around food. It is even more explicit in the next section of Mark.

**Mark 3:1-6 (text displayed)**

T: That’s why Jesus statement in verse 27 sums it all up: “The Sabbath was made for man, *not man for the Sabbath.*” A day of rest is not designed to be a burden. Rather…

**3. Rest is a gift from God to receive more of God (27-28).**

“*The Sabbath was made for man*…”

Do you believe this?

Do you believe God knows best? God wants us to rest. But what does this look like?

“Sabbath is a time to rest, holy to the Lord. It is time that is given to God, to receive refreshment from God.” - Adam Mabry

Our position at RHC is known as the Non-Sabbatarian position.

* Sabbath is not Saturday
* Sabbath is not Sunday.
* Sabbath is JESUS!

“Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath…” — Jesus is the FULFILLMENT of the Sabbath.

**“Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.” (Colossians 2:16-17)**

We experience rest in Christ, but we live in a fallen world (the now/not yet tensions of the kingdom). That’s why it’s wise to follow wisdom principles of work/rest rhythm.

You need to schedule rest. I’m talking actually putting it in your calendar.

1. Push pause daily. MORE THAN ONCE A DAY! (daily office)
2. \*Push pause weekly (sabbath a day) (Truly unplug. Not working on house chores, not working outside of work… Pick a day of the week and rest)
3. Push pause yearly (vacation)

Let me give you more of the why… (Jon will be proud.) If rest is a gift from God to receive more of God, what might this look like? Here are four benefits of resting with God.

**1. More of God in you**

* The primary purpose of our rest is to enjoy God. Rest cultivates worship! “The art of rest is about learning how to rest with Jesus, not from Jesus.” - Adam Mabry, *The Art of Rest*, 75.
* I like what Catholic theologian Leonard Doohan says: “To fail to see the value of simply being with God and ‘doing nothing’ is to miss the heart of Christianity.” (in Scazzero. 165)
* It is in that quiet space (Remember Jesus waking up “very early, still dark, desolate place”) that we can reflect without distraction and hear from God. But it’s not just spiritual health.
* Rest works to restore us to holistic health. This includes our emotions.
  + Rest allows us to reflect on that which is weighing us down and turn it over to God. Anxiety decreases (Thomas Merton says: “Anxiety is a mark of spiritual insecurity.”) Joy increases (Jesus gives joy. He is our joy!)!
* \*Practical: When you rest…
  + Pray.
  + Read. “Wander through a book of the Bible in deep interest.” (Mabry)
  + Journal. Reflect and work through your thoughts and emotions.
  + And sing. Push Pause to Push Play! Why is worship so crucial? Because it shifts our vision.

**2. More of God in your relationships**

* Restfrees us to Deepen Relationships:
  + Someone wisely said: “[Parents] have too many tomorrows.”
  + Times of rest give space for deep conversations. We pour out our heart to God and others. Space to practice vulnerability.
* \*Practical: When you rest…
  + Plan quality time. Create space for some life giving conversation.
  + It’s the soul at rest… the undistracted mind… that can be fully present.
  + It’s the fully present person that loves best.

**3. More of God in your experiences**

* God has given us a really good world to enjoy. Rests gives us the mental, emotional, and physical space to slow down and have fun.
* You might find that you laugh more when you rest more.
* \*Practical: When you rest…
  + Enjoy a good meal.
  + Recreate: go play!
  + Avocate: enjoy a hobby not related to your job.

**4. More of God in your work**

* Here’s the irony. When you get better at rest, you’ll get better at work.
* Sabbath helps us release control.
  + Pete Scazzero says: “The core spiritual issue in stopping revolves around trust. Will God take care of us and our concerns if we obey him by stopping to [rest].” (Scazzero, 167)
  + Resting reminds us God is God, and we are not, so we trust God more in our work!
* Rest also brings us strength.
  + I am so thankful God gave me 11 weeks off this summer (on my pastoral sabbatical) not only because I came back better than ever physically, emotionally, relationally, and spiritually, but also because of the vision for the next 30-40 years.
  + “If we want to keep going, we need to keep stopping.” (*The Art of Rest*, 105)
* \*Practical: When you rest…
  + Sleep! Take a nap. Sleep in on your day off. I wake up at 5:30a everyday I work, but not on my days off.
  + A rhythm of rest will teach us we can strive without striving, that we can not only rest from our work but also find rest as we work.

*Conclusion*:

This only happens when we know the “Lord of the Sabbath.” (v. 28).

**“Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28, NLT)**

PRAY.