

The Enemy of Blessing

Busy is the enemy of blessing (Jeremiah 2:25 MSG). Especially during the holiday season, we run from activity to activity, project to project, and event to event. Out of a fear of either missing out or boredom, we keep ourselves moving. However, moving is not the same as moving forward, and constant movement is not the same as meaning. In our busyness, we become addicted to activity. But our Heavenly Father calls us to a different rhythm where we find rest, nourishment for our souls, and blessing in Him. When we bring ourselves, our family, our friends to Jesus as often as we can – when we fear God and keep His commandments – we find true, lasting satisfaction and fulfillment (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

GETTING STARTED

Even though we know on a basic level that it robs our hearts and souls of life and joy, why do we so easily succumb to busyness? What is the attraction to busyness, and what do you think we hope to gain by keeping such a frantic pace? How hard is it for you to say no to busyness?

GO DEEPER

1. In *The Message* version of Jeremiah 2:25, the people of Israel reject the call of the prophet to return to God by saying that they can't help it because they are *addicted to alien gods*. What *alien gods* do we tend to love, and be addicted to, in our busyness? What do we subtly or subconsciously hope those *alien gods* will produce or accomplish for us?
2. In Matthew 11:28, Jesus invites all of His followers to come to Him to find rest for their souls. What does rest for our souls actually look and feel like, and why will busyness never give us that rest that we deeply long for? How do we live daily from a place of rest instead of merely having the occasional taste of soul rest (i.e. on a vacation or getaway, at a conference or retreat, etc.)?

MAKE IT PERSONAL

1. How busy are you, and how is that busyness affecting you, your marriage, your family, and/or your key relationships? What needs to change to create time and space to *fear God and keep His commandments* (Ecclesiastes 12:13), to come to Jesus (Matthew 11:28) in order to find rest for your soul?
2. What are you too busy *for*? What are you missing out on, that God has possibly stirred in you, because of your busyness?

PRACTICE IT NOW

As a group, take time to specifically pray for the strength and courage to reject busyness and the cultural pressure to pursue the *alien god* of activity. Ask God for the grace to reorient your priorities and your schedule to find true rest for your soul. Ask Him for a clear vision or picture of what your daily routine and rhythm should be that nourishes your relationship with Him, with your family, and with your significant relationships.

PODCAST

As an additional source of encouragement and insight, check out our weekly podcast, *Beyond Sundays*, at anchor.fm/beyondsundays.