

WHOLLY BUSY TO HOLY REST - JEREMY WALLOCH

There was once a time when stores closed on Sundays. “Blue laws” once deterred shopaholics and workaholics. Now those days are far-gone. Ask anyone, any day, how they are doing, and the likely response is, “Busy.” If they continue, expected phrases include “running” and “not enough hours in the day.” If they further continue, what they are really listing is reasons they are so important.

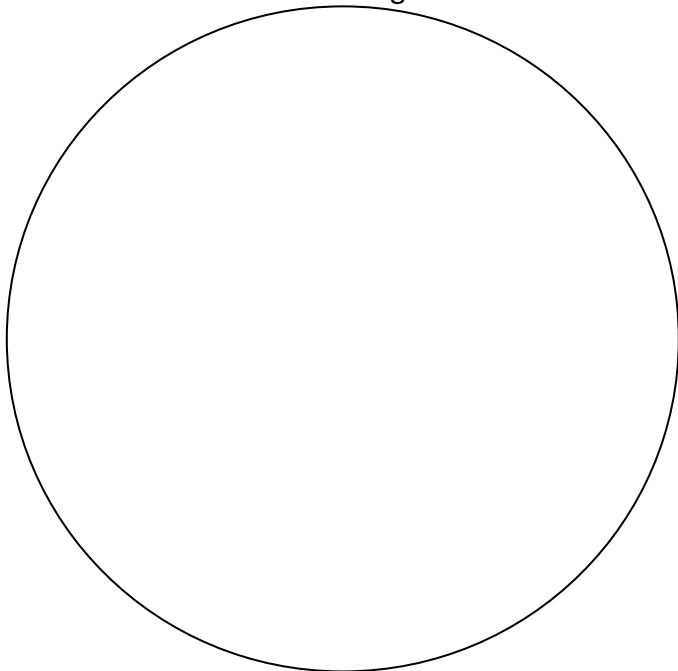
You may respond that way if you choose, but do so knowing it is an unchristian response.

Time is a gift from God. There is plenty of it. Any statement to the contrary is unchristian.

We can steward time if we choose. We can order it in ancient, sacred, structured ways if we choose. Usually, however, we adopt overwork as normal instead of sinful.

Why are we so busy? What are we hiding from? Are we afraid of God? Are we afraid of each other? Are we afraid of ourselves? Do we even know who we are when we aren't doing what we do?

Saint Benedict ruled that the life of a Christian should be divided approximately equally between work, study, prayer, and rest. Take a moment to make a pie chart below with your average actual use of 24 hours in those four categories.



Does your 24 hours include even one solitary hour for prayer? for Bible study?

Jesus says,] “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28).

Most who would probably never kill, commit adultery, or maliciously lie, have no problem blowing off God's commandment for sabbath.

The LORD says,] “Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy” (Exodus 20:8).

Sabbath is the Hebrew word for ‘cease.’ It is a holy time for rest and worship, for ceasing what you usually do. It's a day when your “To Do” list has everything checked off.

The goal of human life is not productivity, but eternity. (That is why the unborn and elderly are so often mistreated—we don't value people who are unproductive.)

God wants to receive from you 1/10 of your money and give to you 1/7 of your time.

A sabbath day should look like what you think of when you hear the word ‘holidays’ (originally “holy days”): going to church, enjoying a meal together, sitting around with family or friends.

The good news is: change happens. The way it is doesn't have to be the way it is forever. You have nothing to be afraid of. Believe it or not, but you can stop working, and the world does not fall apart. God, not you, keeps the world spinning.

I challenge you to take next Sunday as a sabbath. Prepare for worship (don't be up too late Saturday; don't rush in late at 80 mph). Go to church. Rest with God and His people. Worship what deserves to be worshiped, and remove from the center of your heart that which doesn't belong there. Then let the laundry sit, the grass grow. Sit. Wander. Stretch. Talk. Pray. Porch. Breathe deep. Sip a cup. Call a friend. Read your Bible. Then read this aloud: I'm not indispensable to anyone. Nothing I can do gives me my value. I do good things as a thankful response to the overwhelming blessings I have been given, but they are a response, not my value. My value comes from God who says, “I am His child, His beloved.”

Thus says the LORD GOD,] “If you refrain from trampling the sabbath, from pursuing your own interests on my holy day; if you call the sabbath a delight and the holy day of the LORD honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, serving your own interests, or pursuing your own affairs; then you shall take delight in the LORD, and I will make you ride upon the heights of the earth” (Isaiah 58:13-14a).