

A Sacred Pause

P.Chris Rice

How are you doing? My friend asked me. “Busy” was my short one word reply, as though it was a badge of honor! It didn’t even answer the question. How often have we uttered those words in reply to “How are you?” How often have we asked how are you without really wanting to hear a deep, personal, real answer? We are constantly rushing here, and there, to and fro. Wishing there was more time in the day, so we could do more. More for ourselves, our family, our church, or God... wait isn’t that the same thing you might ask? NO, not necessarily. Look at the story of Mary and Martha in Luke 10:38-42 **38** As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. **39** She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what he said. **40** But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, “Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!”

You see Martha was very busy, busy preparing for Jesus, everything had to be just right. Or so she thought.

41 “Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, **42** but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”

What does the Bible say about business? Well if we look at what it says about solitude, solitary and rest we will have a pretty good idea:

Matthew 11:28 NIV “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest

Selah: The New American Standard Hebrew Lexicon defines the Hebrew word (שָׁלוּחַ) as “to lift up, exalt.”

Some scholars believe that Selah was a musical notation possibly meaning "silence" or "pause;" others, "end," "a louder strain," "piano," etc. You could also follow the model laid out by translators of the Septuagint who translated it as an intermission. Use Selah to take a pause to think about

what the Scripture says - to reflect on the meaning of the verse before continuing to read the rest of the passage. Selah.(christianity.com)

References:

Solitude occurs 3x:

Matthew 14: 23 “After He had sent them away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. When evening came, He was there alone,”

Solitary occurs 20x:

Matthew 14:13

and Jesus having heard, withdrew thence in a boat to a desolate place by himself, and the multitudes having heard did follow him on land from the cities.

Matthew 17:1

Six day later, Jesus took with Him Peter and the brothers James and John, and brought them up a high mountain to a **solitary** place

Mark 1:35

And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a **solitary** place, and there prayed.

Luke 4:42

Next morning, at daybreak, He left the town and went away to a **solitary** place; but the people flocked out to find Him, and, coming to the place where He was, they endeavored to detain Him that He might not leave them

Rest:

Genesis 2:2-3 ESV

And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

Exodus 23:12 ESV

“Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; that your ox and your donkey may have rest, and the son of your servant woman, and the alien, may be refreshed.

Matthew 11:28-30 ESV

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. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Mark 6:31 ESV

And he said to them, “Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while.” For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat

Psalms 37:7 ESV

Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him

Jeremiah 6:16 ESV

Thus says the LORD: “Stand by the roads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls.

Hebrews 4:9-11 ESV

So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his. Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

Psalms 46:10 ESV

“Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!”

Isaiah 30:15 ESV

For thus said the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel, “In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.”

Psalm 34:8 ESV

Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!

Jeremiah 31:25 ESV

For I will satisfy the weary soul, and every languishing soul I will replenish.”

Proverbs 3:24 ESV

If you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.

Isaiah 26:3 ESV

You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you

Luke 2:49

NKJV **49** And He said to them, “Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?” If I am going to be busy, let it be my father’s business. In the way He laid out for us in scriptures.

How much time do we have in our day? 86,400 seconds every day! In our life? 2021, the average life expectancy for U.S. males- 73 years, in 10 years you have 315,360,000 seconds, in 73 years you have 2.3e+9 seconds, females-79 years or 2.49e+9 seconds. We have time, what do we do with it? How do we schedule it?

We need to schedule sacred pauses into our calendars, block out times in your day that are empty of anything that ‘needs’ to be done, block out times: times of study, prayer, reflection, meditation, and just listening quietly to our Father in Heaven. Times of drawing away into the wilderness to draw near to him, to rejuvenate, to center ourselves in His will for our lives.

