



Emotionally Healthy Spirituality Church-wide Initiative

Discover the Rhythms of the Daily Office and Sabbath: Part 6 — Daniel 6; Exodus 20

Intro: Rd. Text 8 weeks series EHS...Emotionally health and contemplative spirituality, when interwoven together, offer nothing short of a spiritual revolution, transforming the hidden places deep beneath the surface of our lives. For this week – Read Chapter 8.

1. The Problem of Emotionally Unhealthy Spirituality
2. Know Yourself that You May Know God
3. Going Back in Order to Go Forward
4. Journey through the Wall
5. Enlarge Your Soul Through Grief and Loss
- 6. Discover the Rhythms of the Daily Office and Sabbath**
7. Grow into an Emotionally Mature Adult
8. Go the Next Step to Develop a “Rule of Life.”

Key word – *Rhythms*

Our culture knows little of rhythms. Most people view week 24/7 non-stop world. Hurried
Everyone complains busyness/hurry of life-have no idea how to change.

No one sets out to live a chaotic existence. Just sort of happens. “I know my life is out of control, but I feel trapped!”

Descriptive words – scattered, fragmented, uncentered, distracted, overloaded.

Instead of being who we are where we are, we are always on the way to something else.

Swallowed up by power of our culture – Beast. (ignores God)

The question: how to live life oriented around God. – Calm life, Contented Life, Relaxed Life

I can’t live the life I was created to live without connection with God.

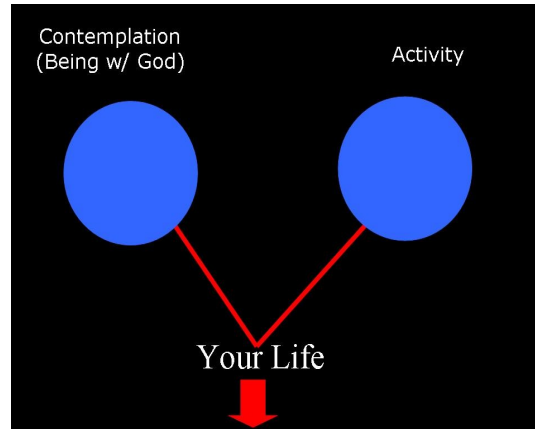
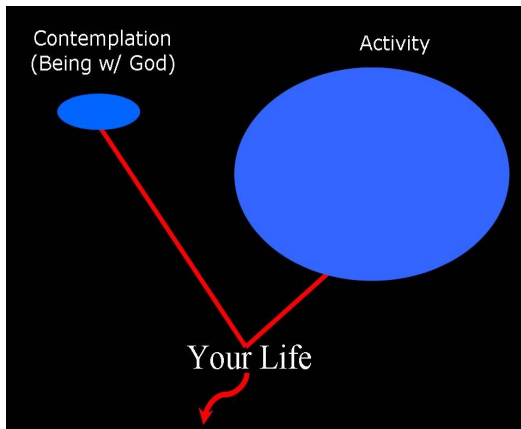
****God created you to experience his love.**

Not going to happen in culture of beast which has its hook in us.

Unless I am pausing consistently to be centered – daily and weekly.

e.g. Treadmill. Get on. Going faster and faster. You can’t just jump off when moving. Like jumping off moving train. You just can’t jump off. It must be slowed it down first.

Mary/Martha. Get these two circles in line! SLOW DOWN OUR LIVES



This pathway is about deliberately structuring our live around two ancient treasures of spirituality – the Daily Office and Sabbath. Giving us a rhythm.

CHALLENGE: Daniel – Babylon Sabbath – Egypt – we grew up in culture left imprint on us – bigger, better, faster!

1. DAILY OFFICE (Fixed Hour Prayer)

Daniel 6 Nebucahdnezzar and Babylonian armies w/ their gods conquered Jerusalem, carried off as slaves. Defeated, raped, razed by pagan hands. Temple demolished.

Daniel and some other young men, brought into Babylonian court of king. Trained for 3 years in best universities; studying history, astrology, mathematics, medicine, myth, religion. Literature, gods, magic, sorcery, charms, astrology. – all banned in Israel. Completely different thought world.

Babylon's goal – assimilation Daniel – name changed. – Belshazzar

Came to picture in rest of Bible – worldliness, We live in Babylon) as if God not alive/active

Behind Babylon – Dragon/Satan – a sewer. Revelation 17 – intoxicating/gets us drunk/can't see straight. Great Prostitute

Babylon absorbs believers. Drinks the blood of those who bear testimony to X

Chapter 6 Persian Empire now. Daniel – responsible job, lot to do ALONE like you

Summarize story – vv. 6-9 Get King Darius to publish decree all pray to only him

v.10 Daniel's response when he hears it

Vv.11-13 – They report back – “He still prays three times a day”

Point: This was his lifelong habit.



Rich biblical history. David, Daniel, Ancient Jews in Jesus' time, Early church,
Seven times a day I praise you. Psalm 119:164

It is good to praise the Lord...

*To proclaim your love in the morning,
And your faithfulness at night.* Psalm 92:2
*Evening, morning and noon
I cry out to you in distress
And he hears my voice.* Psalm 55:17

Daily Office – Why I changed name

Office – offering. “Work of God” = Most important work we do
In order to be aware of God/prayerful all through the day, necessary I stop/pause
Slowing down our lives each day – to seek Him, rest in Him, Center Him
Not to get from God, but to Be with Person. GOAL – COMMUNION W/GOD
2 Key Elements of Daily Office – Scripture and Stopping for Silence/Stillness
Silence – one of greatest missing spiritual disciplines in spiritual formation today.
A quiet period in which we don't do anything but to be still and know God.

Daily Office – so key because it recovers the contemplative dimension of prayer.

Kierkegaard said in last pages of his journal before he died, “If I could only prescribe one remedy for the ills of the modern world, I would prescribe silence. For if the Word of God were proclaimed, it would not be heard right now. There is too much noise. So I prescribe silence.”

It has rightly been said: **The only thing big enough to contain God is silence!!

Can only be learned by doing it. Personal experience alone will convince you.

So simple – but does not mean is easy. After years one is still a beginner in this.

It comes as a shock how uncontrolled and chaotic our insides are. We are distracted.

IMAGINE We Stop in Middle of Day. Want to Let Go. Be with God.

Turning off phone, radio, computer you sit before God in silence. Nothing to do. To meditate.
We take time to sit well, back straight. Alert. Relaxed. The door is closed. We have a precious
5-10-15 minutes to be. Set watch. Plan to read two Psalms and say Our Father after silence.

What happens next ? All hell breaks loose.



Jesus said “Do not be anxious about food, clothing. Learning not to worry –hard work. Sometimes my lack of concentration is a cluttered mind. I have too much going on. We get used to distractions as companions on the journey. They don’t bother us.

Purposes of offices – to get in habit of stopping to remember God at various intervals throughout the day. Idea not to hung up on doing it right, or tie you down to legalistic schedule.

Remember: your prayers precious to God whenever you pray them.

Daily office (Fixed hour prayer) orders your day and provides structure and spiritual discipline to help you remember what is important.

For me to stop midday!! I seek 3-4 times a day. Different tools used.

Sometimes 5 min./10 min/30 min.

Custom Fit to You. (if possible, read out loud)

You may find adding just one office a week/or day is enough for now (or day)

(e.g. If having quiet time, add midmorning) – 2 other Offices downstairs)

The Daily Office may not work for you. Has changed my life.

Find out what you need for RHYTHM – to live in experience of love of God.

We end living off other people’s spirituality not having time to develop our own direct experience.

Reality – We end living off other people’s spirituality not having time to develop our own direct experience.

— Many people 1 inch deep Most importantly – grow into spiritual adult!

But if it does, remember you are part of worldwide communion of Christians who are participating in continuous cascade of prayer! See Sunday Morning – we gather together for Daily Office

Weekly Rhythm also

2. Sabbath (Ex.20)

Refers to 24 hr. period each week (Jews from Fri. sundown to Saturday sundown).

Holy – set apart, distinct

TODAY – Sabbath first/foremost a day of “stopping.” To “stop” literal meaning

Sabbath – is a structure to build doing nothing into our schedules.



Radical today as it was in Ex.20. 4th Commandment - LONGEST/most detailed. Key 'rest' commandments.

1. You shall have no other gods before me.
2. You shall not make for yourself an idol.
3. You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.
4. Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord our God. On it you shall not do any work,..... For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy"
5. Honor your father and your mother.
6. You shall not murder.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not give false witness.
10. You shall not covet.

Command – not suggestion We sin against ourselves. Command a gift.

Genesis 2:1-4 Built into God's nature and ours. Hard-wired into us

We are made in God's image!! It is a gift from God and we are to imitate Him.

When the work was completed God stopped doing, making, speaking

Sabbath is a deliberate act of NOT DOING – to experience grace.

On Sabbath – we stop and let God take care of us. We let go. Do "Self-Care"

Culture says – "you are what you do" Your identity

Israel lived as slaves in Egypt for over four hundred years. No Sabbath rest.

They worked seven days a week all year long. In their DNA. SOME OF US TOO!!

Some of us feel guilty – in efficient, unproductive, not accomplishing goals Wasting time

Enormous statement of our value (we are not slaves, but free). It is grace. You were created for love relationship with Me. Heart of gospel.

Difference between DAY OFF and SABBATH stopping, rest, delight, contemplate (You have to prepare.....

Rest – Our culture knows nothing of setting aside 24 hrs. to stop, rest for God.

From your work, from hurrying, from multitasking, your "to do" list.



e.g. Imagine your job. You are the boss. 10,000 employees to care for...

You have the most incredible person in charge. Time arrives. Close lights of your office.

Shut door behind you. Go home. – Don't have to do anything be anywhere!

I can trust that God will come through, run the world okay if I stop, rest

Sabbath/work I integrated whole. With/out Sabbath-work defines our life. GOD DOES

Delight – in creation and her gifts (food, people, music, nature, playfulness)

Contemplate – God centered. Taste eternity!!!

Sabbath is as radical today as it was 3500 yrs. ago Israel came out of Egypt.

Goes vs. my family of origin, culture, my flesh, my Xian training.

Gives me limits (Provides structure)

* Nothing less than a command has the power to intervene in our frenzied busyness

Sabbath keeping – not dry duty, oppressive obligation, delight, gift to be received

2 Practical Steps:

1. Foundational – you decide you want to keep the Sabbath.

You will add, change, delete, figure it out over time, will change.

Be adamant about day – it WILL be set STOP, REST, DELIGHT, CONTEMPLATE

2. Establish a precise, deliberate beginning and ending.

You may want to follow the Jewish tradition of beginning and ending at sundown.

Sabbath — Revolution Act — Very few people do it..

Sabbath and Daily Office – have the capacity to slow you down! To be silent/still!

So radical – like stopping a locomotive.

People sweep us into their chaos – Events come in that tidal wave against your rhythm

Guidelines

Be Attentive and Open

Get comfortable. Be Relaxed and Still

Take Deep Breath (something happens in our body. Relax)

1 suggestion – write it down

centering phrase (Lord Here I am. Not my will but yours).

I say “Abba” or “Come Lord Jesus”

Eyes Closed or Lowered toward the Ground

Open and attentive, a posture of worship, gratitude, humility before God.

“I wait for the Lord. My soul waits, and in His word I put my hope.” Psalm 130:5