



3 DAILY DEVOTIONS ON REST AND REALIGNMENT



FOR MEN

Grabbing Some Solitude

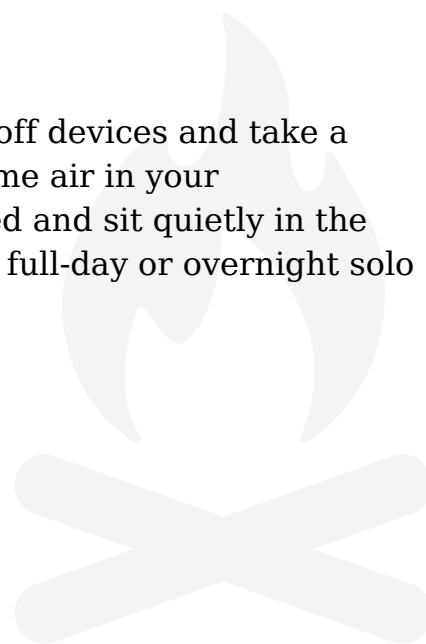
. . . he would withdraw to desolate places and pray—[Luke 5:16](#)

Why are we men so bad at solitude? Our king did it quite well. As a man, Jesus knew his limitations. He understood his need to connect with his father—to his guidance and power. He knew how good that connection was. He wants us to know too.

If it's so good, though, why do we struggle? Well, it's a little because we're busy. Solitude is hard when you're working and/or married and/or have kids and/or have friends. And, it's a little because we're not well practiced. Our culture trains us for motion and multitasking—not for slowing and simplifying. And it's a little because, deep down, we know solitude means *confrontation*. You see, solitude removes distractions and leaves us, for a few minutes, alone with God the Holy Spirit. Solitude is sometimes defined as being alone, but we aren't. The Spirit dwells within us ([1 Corinthians 3:16](#)). God's right there. And we never know what might happen when we're alone with God. He might ask us to stop something we don't want to stop or start something we don't want to start. He might. He does that ([Hebrews 12:5](#)). But if we avoid his confrontation, we'll miss his companionship, counsel, comfort, restoration, and rescue. So, we must take courage. We must not worry that we don't yet do it well. And, we must make solitude a priority, just as Jesus did.

Okay, so what do we do?

Start small. Find something that works for you. Turn off devices and take a walk at work—at lunchtime or during a break. Get some air in your neighborhood after dinner. Slip outside just before bed and sit quietly in the dark. And, if you're ready for more, take a half-day or full-day or overnight solo trip into the outdoors.



What You Love to Do? Do That!

Get away with me and you'll recover your life . . .

Learn the unforced rhythms of grace—Matthew 11:28-29 MSG

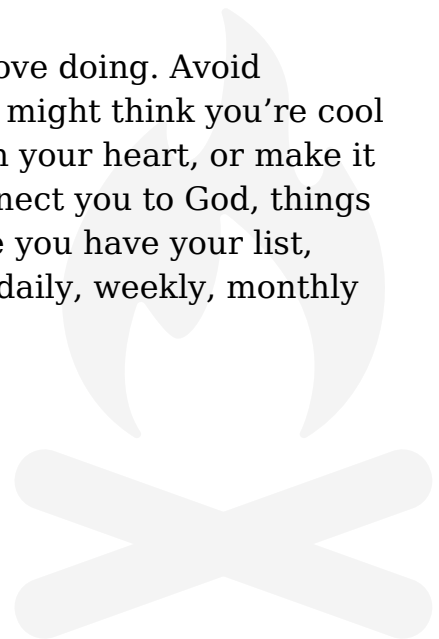
We're all built by the same creator. And we're built by him to "come home," every so often. This coming home is integral to the lives we're meant to live. God's built us to need, and to receive, his loving care. He's built us to be restored, by him. (Psalm 23:1-6; Matthew 11:28 MSG).

The thing is, many of us men don't know *how* to come home. We're each designed to do it uniquely, so it takes some discovery. Few of us do that. If we *do* discover how, though, and if we begin to come home regularly, we live in a *condition of abundance*. We get filled up—and are able to overflow onto others, onto spouses, children, friends, people in need. We are able to give, for we've first received. We're able to love and serve as we were meant to. We're able to be who we were created to be and to do the work we were created to do.

If we neglect the task of discovery, if we fail to learn how to come home, we operate instead in a *condition of depletion*. We tend to try to pull what we (think we) need from other people. We tend to try to *take from them*, rather than *overflow onto them*.

Okay, so what do we do?

Make a list of ten to twenty things—things you truly love doing. Avoid obligations or things you "love" because other people might think you're cool for doing them. List things that move your heart, calm your heart, or make it beat fast. List things that restore you, excite you, connect you to God, things that allow you to truly worship him in the doing. Once you have your list, commit to inserting your things generously into your daily, weekly, monthly calendar.



Real Men Get Sleep

. . . for I am fearfully and wonderfully made—Psalm 139:14

Our physical frames matter. People see God in and through them. We have spiritual natures, yes, but our physical frames give our spiritual selves home. They also give home to God the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:16-17). From an eternal perspective, they're temporary. But our actions here and now affect our eternities—and we act, here and now, through our physical frames. Spiritual discipline matters more, but physical discipline and physical condition still matter (1 Timothy 4:7-8).

The prevailing culture of this world tells us men our jobs should be our utmost priority—physical care is good, but must be disregarded when and if it interferes with workplace ascent. “Get it done.” “Do whatever it takes.” “Man up.” To these codes we sacrifice our physical selves, and especially our sleep. We stay late at the office; work late at home; live in hotels, on airplanes. But, this is not what our Father God intends:

*“It is in vain that you rise up early
and go late to rest,
eating the bread of anxious toil;
for he gives to his beloved sleep”* (Psalm 127:2).

God blesses his sons with (and in) sleep. It's a time to restore and heal; to relinquish worry and stress; to, quite literally, leave everything to him. We should appreciate it fully, be thankful for it, accept it wholeheartedly. We've all felt the results when we don't: racing hearts; pounding heads; clouded thoughts; a lack of productivity, creativity, patience; *a compromised resistance to sin*. We are never the husbands, fathers, friends, bosses, employees we must be, when we sacrifice sleep.

Okay, so what do we do?

Fight for sleep. The struggle is hard, but worthy. Minimizing it is neither responsible, nor manly. We're designed for sleep. You know how much—but, how much are you actually getting?

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