

Resting During Harvest

Scripture Reading — Exodus 20:8-11

Six days you shall labor, but on the seventh day you shall rest; even during the plowing season and harvest you must rest. — Exodus 34:21

When I was in college, I worked for a summer alongside an employee who prided himself in never taking a day off. Every day, he showed up at work, sometimes even for a double shift. For more than two months, he did little but sleep and work.

While not all of us hold to such an extreme schedule, we live in a culture that rarely rests. We praise “the city that never sleeps.” God’s call to a weekly pattern of work and rest can seem hopelessly out of touch with our culture today.

Harvest is a busy time for the farmer. There is a limited time to gather crops while the growing and harvesting conditions offer the best yield. We can appreciate the temptation to work a seven-day week during a busy season. We will rest, we explain to ourselves, when the harvest is over.

But God makes clear to his people that the command to rest does not adjust to our schedules. Rest is God’s necessary gift to us, one that allows us to see his work rather than being blinded by our own tasks.

The weekly call to rest from our labor reminds us that our relationship with God is a gift, not an accomplishment. Jesus has done all that is needed for our salvation. Can you rest in him this week?

Prayer

We are busy, Father. We often feel overwhelmed by our busy schedules. Help us to trust you with our time, and to look to Jesus’ finished work in our rest. In his name we pray. Amen.

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