

## **Seeking Rest in Him**

### **Jackie Mulligan**

Hello, everybody. My name is Jackie Mulligan. I am the CEO and Foundress of Reform Wellness, a faith-based functional medicine practice, where we place Christ at the center of all aspects of our wellbeing.

I am so grateful for the gift and the opportunity to talk to you today about the topic of rest. One of the pillars that we focus on at Reform is space and sleep. Another one is stress management. And this aspect of rest comes up often as we were trying to help others heal in Christ. And so I am just so grateful for the opportunity. I have been praying with the Pray More Novenas family for several years. I've probably prayed over 100 Novenas with them, and they are a great gift to my life, to my ministry. Prayer is central to my life. In order to have Christ at the center of our wellbeing, we have to cultivate a strong relationship with Him through prayer. So I'm ever so grateful for the gift of this community as well. Let's start off today with a prayer. It's actually a poem written by Jill Phillips called "I Am". And so we'll begin.

### **Opening Prayer**

In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen. Oh, gently lay your head upon my chest and I will comfort you like a mother while you rest. The tide can change so fast, but I will stay the same through past, the same in future, same today. Oh weary, tired, and worn, let out your sighs and drop that heavy load you hold cause mine is light. I know you through and through, there's no need to hide. I want to show you that love is deep and high and wide. For I am constant, I am near. I am peace that shatters all of the secrets that you fear. I am holy, I am wise. I'm the only one who knows your heart's desires. Oh, gently lay your head upon my chest and I will comfort you like a mother while you rest.

Heavenly Father, we ask for the surrender to rest in you, to lay down our worries, our fears, our desires, our hopes, and our intentions. We ask for you to please place them under the mantle of our most beautiful mother. And to give us the courage and the strength to surrender everything to you and to rest in you. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen. In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### **Not a Luxury But Essential**

All right. So when we are speaking about rest, I want to remind you and start with the truth that rest is not a luxury. Rest is essential. We have to rest in order to be well. And when we look at wellness, we are looking at the state of the whole person. So, in order to be well, you have to be well as a whole and not just a part. So, the Lord is in every ounce of our lives and every ounce of our bodies in our hearts, in our minds, in our souls. He knows every hair on our head. And we have to look at the whole person in order to be well.

So, rest is essential and beneficial for our minds, our bodies and our souls. And I think the real reason why rest is so hard to find in today's day and age is because we are told that rest is a luxury and that you have to earn it. But that is a lie. You don't have to earn it. We don't even really deserve most of the graces that we get. But this is not something that you have to earn. Rest is essential. And so just like eating is essential for your body and sleep is essential for your mind, and prayer is essential for your soul, so is rest. We're actually even called to rest in the commandments. So, the Lord asks us to pray and rest on the Sabbath. So, to observe the Sabbath is not an option, but it's a commandment. And so I want to talk a little bit about what that looks like and how to create a Sabbath in your life, but also to start with really understanding that this is essential for your wellbeing.

## **Creating a Sabbath**

When we help people in my practice, one of the things we say is to create a daily Sabbath and a weekly Sabbath. So, your daily Sabbath is going to be an hour of rest every day, where you are completely resting and digesting all that you've encountered in the day. So, whatever you would do to passively rest in the Lord, I invite you to create, to prioritize this time with the Lord every single day, to truly rest in Him. And then just like you would in a day, we asked you to take one day. The Lord asks us to take one day every week to rest in Him, where that is a complete and total day that is focused on the Lord and on rest. And we don't have a world that really supports that, that's a conducive to doing that. There's a lot of noise, there's a lot of chaos, there's a lot of invitations. But this is where the Lord invites us to live radically in Him and to live in the way that He asked us to live, which is observing the Sabbath to rest in Him and to allow Him to nourish and restore our bodies and our minds and our souls and our hearts and our families.

It really starts at home. And one way that you can do this is sit down with your family and invite them to really map out what is realistic. In what ways can we rest in the Lord as a family on Sundays? In what way can we pause out of all the obligations, out of all the opportunities, all the work and practices, the studying, the planning, the doing, and how can we just be as a family and how can we just be with the Lord? When everybody is bought into this idea and as a household, you create a set of guidelines that will allow you to rest. You can hold each other accountable, but you can really allow yourself to exhale because now all of the options that used to happen on Sundays are no longer going to happen because you are protecting and reverencing the Lord and truly resting in Him.

So, for me, rest looks like an hour every single day. And I pray, but very, very passively. So I have my morning prayer where I attend mass daily and pray in silence. But my daily Sabbath is separate from this. This is usually when I am spending some time in nature with my eyes closed, or I'm laying on the couch or taking some rest. I am completely away from technology. I am away from the world and I'm allowing the Lord to bear the fruit and receive the grace and the wisdom and the knowledge and all things that I'm looking for throughout the day. And so we often feel like we're disconnected from the Lord, or we can't hear Him, or we can't, we don't have time for Him or that we're suffering. But it's in this daily Sabbath where we pause and we get to digest all of the grace, digest all of the moments in our day where the Lord was in. And He's actually in all of them, but usually we're too busy to see it.

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So, this is an opportunity for us to first start resting in the Lord. So one day, every week and one hour every day. Now, I know that there are lifestyles that may not be conducive to this. And that's okay. So if you are a mama of lots of kiddos or a dad of lots of kiddos, if you are an executive, if you are not well, whatever the case may be, the Lord will take and bless whatever you can give Him. So wherever you're willing to rest, whatever season you're in, He is going to bless time. So I invite you to carve out intentionally time away from the world and to rest in the Lord every single day in prayer. I want you to also think about resting in silence. This is so important because when we come out of the noise of the world and we really rested in the Lord, we can hear Him more clearly.

And so resting sometimes looks like active rest where we're actively resting our body, but there can also be a passive rest where you stop thinking and you stop trying and you stop striving. This is where you truly rest in the Lord, meaning you hand over for all of your worries, all of your deepest desires, all of your fears, and you give it to Jesus. All of your to-dos. And this is where you completely rest your soul. This is probably the hardest type of rest. I think that finding time to slow down is challenging for this day and age in this world, but really surrendering our will, surrendering our to-do list, but surrendering the people we love, the things we love, the things we were attached to, our temptations, surrendering all these to the Lord and resting in Him.

### **Handling it Over**

I had a very challenging summer last year. As many people experienced, the pandemic turned my world upside down. I can say very confidently, I think the Lord actually turned it right side up. But in that season, I did not see it that way. And if it wasn't for Exodus 14:14, that says; "The Lord will fight for you, you need only to be still," I don't know that I would have gotten through it with such grace and ease. And though there was suffering, though there was uncertainty, there was certainly discomfort, I had peace, and this peace came from full confidence in knowing that I could rest all of my heart and everything in the Lord. And so this is an invitation to rest your soul. Let the Lord fight for you. We say, Jesus, I trust in you. We say, God will handle it. We say, Jesus, take the wheel, but we're so afraid to really hand it over. And that's actually what rest is. Saying no to our will and saying yes to His. Knowing He's all powerful. Knowing that is God. He's the creator of the universe and He's the divine physician.

And so if you're finding it hard to hand over your intention sometimes we say, many times in a day, I'll say, Jesus, you need to handle this. And then I'll take it right back from Him and try to figure it out and solve it within the afternoon. And then give it back to Him by midday and then I'll take it back. Then we play like a little tennis match until finally I surrender and realize that He's going to win and ultimately I win when it's His way, 'cause His way is the best way. His way is the only way that my heart wants. He knows my heart better than I know it. So, resting in the Lord, it looks like physically resting, but also resting our souls in Him. And so, let's throw in the towel. Let's just throw in the towel and stop trying.

Stop striving, stop trying to do it all and be it all and just rest. Whatever that means for you, wherever this is catching you in the season of life, I invite you to rest in the Lord, rest your soul, and really allow Him to fight for you. That is what He wants to do. He wants to help you to receive, to release what is not from Him, and to rest in the peace and the confidence, and the

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grace to receive all that He has for you, to know that he will fight for you, and to know that you need only to be still.

### **FOMO**

I want to share with you a prayer about the joy of missing out. A lot of times, we hear this phrase, the fear of missing out, FOMO. And it's really important that we remember that there's actually a joy in saying no, in missing out. The world often glares all of these invitations and opportunities and says, go, go, go. The more you do, the bigger your paycheck or your bank account, the better you are. But the Lord doesn't say these things. He says, come my way, be with me. And if you feel tired and you're afraid to rest because of all the invitations, especially as the world's opens up in some areas again, I invite you to give yourself the opportunity to truly rest. Rest your body rest, rest your soul, rest your mind in the Lord. So, let's read this poem.

### **The Joy of Missing Out**

*“Oh, the joy of missing out. When the world begins to shout and rush toward that shining thing, the latest bit of mental bling, trying to have it, see it, do it. You simply know you won't go through it. The anxious clamoring and need, this restless hungry thing to feed. Instead, you feel the loveliness, the pleasure of your emptiness. You spurn the treasure on the shelf in favor of your peaceful self. Without regret, without a doubt. Oh, the joy of missing out.”*

I love this poem so much because when we say yes to Jesus, when we say yes to our healing, and when we say yes to allowing Him to be the divine physician, we're not missing out on anything. And that's what we actually receive in this time. We receive the fruits from the Lord. We receive all the virtues that we always want. We receive patience and peace and love and obedience and clarity.

So, when we are still, and when we are silent, when we're at peace, when we're resting, we actually achieve all that we were striving for that ultimately we didn't have to do anything to earn. That we actually get from the Lord in the trust that we have in Him when we hand over everything and we rest. Thank you so much for having me. And I pray that you will rest and surrender and turn over all of your worries to the Lord. God bless you.