

Why Taking A "Break From Church" is Bogus July 19th

Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

A. TAKING A "BREAK" FROM THE RIGHT THING IS GOOD.

- job
- intensity and busyness
- thinking and obsessing

B. TAKING A "BREAK" FROM THE WRONG THING IS BAD.

- relationships--God and people
- means of grace

3 SERIOUS DANGERS WE FACE WHEN WITH REST OR "TAKING A BREAK"

1. DANGER: NOT TAKING TIME TO REST. *Mark 6:31-32.* It was both the work of the ministry and the demands of the crowd that taxed the disciples' energy.

2. DANGER: TAKING TOO MUCH TIME TO REST. *Mark 6:33*

Responsibility and the weight of your work for Jesus create pressure and tax one's energy.

3. DANGER: LOSING SIGHT OF PEOPLE WHO ARE LIKE SHEEP WITHOUT A SHEPHERD. *Mark 6:34*

Many have the problem of too much resting and relaxing instead of working too much. Some even spend too much time in what they call Bible study, prayer, and fellowship with God and neglect being out among the people enough. While on this earth fellowship with God is primarily to prepare us to go out and minister.

Monday, July 20th Read Mark 6:30-56

In Mark 6:30 the disciples returned from their mission and reported to Jesus. They reported two things: what they had done and what they had taught. How they had lived and what they had taught were both of vital interest to Christ. He had given them precise instructions in both areas. This report would reveal their obedience to Him, the degree of commitment and effectiveness of each disciple. Jesus needed to know, for the salvation of the world depended on their lives and teaching. He was soon to leave all in their hands.

Reflect: Believers are accountable both for how they live and for what they teach. They are to be obedient to Christ—living exactly as He has said and teaching exactly what He has said to teach. Every disciple is held accountable to God. As my Dad says, "Don't kid yourself."

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

Hebrews 13:17 Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

Reflect: A disciple should live and teach so that he can share anything with the Lord. S/He should have nothing to hide or of which to be ashamed.

In Mark 6:31-32 we see the danger of not taking time to rest. The disciples were extremely tired. They had gone forth for the Lord and carried out His mission, and it had exhausted them. Since returning, the demanding crowds surrounding Jesus were pressing in upon them. They barely had time to make their reports, much less rest and meditate. Therefore, Jesus suggested they go apart into a desert place and get alone with God for awhile. Note several things.

1. It was both the work of the ministry and the demands of the crowd that taxed the disciples' energy. It is not work alone that tires the body. Responsibility and the weight of it create pressure and tax one's energy. Just the presence of a demanding crowd is a reminder that one is responsible to work.
2. The disciples had bodies that naturally required some relief from pressure and rest from labor.
3. The disciples had spirits that required some extended periods alone with God in meditation, study, and prayer. They had to receive from God in order to share the presence and message of God. They had to be still and listen, giving God opportunity to share with them. They had to be recharged before they could charge.

1 Samuel 12:7 Now then, stand here, because I am going to confront you with evidence before the Lord as to all the righteous acts performed by the Lord for you and your fathers.

Job 37:14 "Listen to this, Job; stop and consider God's wonders.

Psalms 23:1-2 The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. ² He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters,

Isaiah 28:12 to whom he said, "This is the resting place, let the weary rest"; and, "This is the place of repose"-- but they would not listen.

Tuesday, July 21st Read Mark 6:30-56

4. The disciples needed a quiet, deserted place to get alone with God—not a place where others were, not a place of business, of commercialism, of fine accommodations.

5. The Lord cared about them; He cared about their exhaustion. They had poured themselves into His mission and into the lives of people. He knew they needed rest and rekindling, refuge and consoling, relaxation and worship. He had compassion upon them, so He said, "Come ye apart...and rest a while."

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

Exodus 33:14 The Lord replied, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest."

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

In verse 6:33 we see the danger is taking too much time to rest. People are desperately seeking help; therefore, the believer must take only the time needed to rest his body and spirit, no more, no less. The scene was dramatic. The people saw where Jesus and the disciples were heading. They began to run by foot around the lake. As they ran, they passed through the cities shouting excitedly the news that Jesus was nearby. Throngs of people joined in the streaming mass of humanity making its way around the lake. By the time they reached the place where Jesus' ship was to dock, the crowd had grown to five thousand men not counting women and children.

This is the crucial point: the disciples needed rest. They knew it and Jesus knew it, yet here was the demanding crowd. They were interfering and keeping the disciples from their much needed rest. The disciples became irritated and soon

wanted the people sent away. (This is seen by their request in [Mark 6:36](#) and the rude way they asked the question in [Mark 6:37](#).) However, Jesus knew something. The disciples had rested some coming across the lake. The sea, their old stomping ground, had relaxed them a great deal. That was sufficient to carry the disciples through another session of ministry. It was a matter of just how exhausted the human body really was vs. the needs of the people. In this particular case, the disciples were ready to act selfishly and take too much rest, thereby neglecting the people.

Idea: There is a time to minister just as there is a time to spend alone with God. There is a time to work just as there is a time to pray. There is a time to get up and get to it just as there is a time to rest and relax. Unfortunately, many have the problem of resting and relaxing too much instead of working too much. Some even spend too much time in what they call Bible study, prayer, and fellowship with God and neglect being out among the people enough. While on this earth fellowship with God is primarily to prepare us to go out and minister.

John 9:4 As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work.

1 Corinthians 9:16 Yet when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, for I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!

Wednesday, July 22nd Read Mark 6:34

Here the danger is losing sight of people who are as sheep without a shepherd. Again the scene is descriptive. As the boat approached the shore, Jesus stood in the boat watching the multitude clamoring for space on the seashore. He needed rest, and the disciples needed rest even more. But He was not annoyed or irritated with the people. Contrariwise, He was moved with deep, intense compassion because the people were as sheep without a shepherd. He could not turn from them. He could not send them away despite the need for rest. He could do only one thing. He had to meet their need; He had to teach them, so He began "to teach them many things."

Note: when Jesus saw the multitude, He said, "They were as sheep without a shepherd." He meant at least three things by this statement.

1. Sheep without a shepherd are bewildered and wander about, not knowing where they are or where they are going. They get lost ever so easily, and cannot find their way back to the flock. So it is with people. People without the shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, are bewildered. They do not know where they have come from, where they are going, nor why they are where they are. They wander about, getting lost in place after place, never finding the way to true life.

Matthew 9:36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

1 Peter 2:25 For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Jeremiah 50:6 "My people have been lost sheep; their shepherds have led them astray and caused them to roam on the mountains.

They wandered over mountain and hill and forgot their own resting place.

2. Sheep without a shepherd go hungry. They do not have adequate nourishment. They cannot find sufficient food to live. So it is with people. People without the Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, go hungry. They do not have the Shepherd of God to feed and inspire their souls, nor to satisfy their inner longings for peace, love, and joy ([Galatians 5:22-23](#)). They have only themselves to depend upon as they seek to meet their craving for life. They have only themselves in seeking the answer to...

- purpose
- direction
- assurance
- loneliness
- emptiness
- disturbance
- depression
- sickness
- death

John 6:35 Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.

John 6:51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

3. Sheep without a shepherd cannot find shelter or safety. The sheep are exposed to all the dangers of the wilderness. So it is with people. People without the Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, are exposed to all that is within the world, and they are doomed. They are doomed because the beasts, the temptations and trials of the world, attack at every opportunity and destroy all who wander about.

Thursday, July 23rd Read Mark 6:35-37

There are two attitudes toward human need. Christ had been teaching for many hours, and now it was late afternoon, probably after 3 p.m. The disciples were exhausted and still wanted some rest. They came to Jesus and reminded Him of

the time because there was little time left in the day for them to rest. They suggested, "Send the multitude away so they can go and buy food *for themselves*. But Jesus said, "No. You give them food to eat." In these words are seen the two attitudes toward human need.

1. There is the attitude of individual or personal responsibility. It is true that neither the disciples nor Jesus had invited the crowd. In fact, the crowd was not even wanted. The disciples and Jesus had planned something else. The crowd was interfering; therefore, the disciples sensed no responsibility for the crowd. They wanted to get rid of the people so they could be free to do as they wished. Their attitude was: "They are responsible for themselves, so send them away to fend for themselves."

2. There is the attitude of corporate responsibility. Jesus said very simply, "You give them food. They are hungry, and they are your neighbors, part of your world. You are responsible for your world and the people in it. If you know of people who have need, then you are the one who is responsible to help them. They may be irresponsible. They may not have been invited, and they may be interfering with your plans; but they have need, and you know about their need. So meet it. Feed them."

Too many try to escape their responsibility for the world. When looking at or hearing about the poor and hungry, lonely and depressed, problem centered and burdened, too many say: "Send them away. They got themselves into this mess because they were too lazy or irresponsible or sinful. If they wanted to be straight and responsible they could. I'm too busy to become involved with such shiftless and irresponsible people." Such an attitude misses the whole point of Christ. Man is responsible for his world, no matter the condition. We are responsible for our neighbors. In fact, the worse off a neighbor is, the more we are responsible to help. The cause of his condition does not matter: whether sin and shame, or clear and understandable circumstances.

⇒ If the condition is sin and shame, then we are to share the gospel and teach him how to live and work responsibly.

⇒ If the condition is due to clear and understandable circumstances, then we are to help restore and replace him to a position of responsibility and self-worth.

Friday, July 24th Read Mark 6:37-44

There are many attitudes toward resources. It takes resources to meet human need. In consideration of this, there is a fact that needs to be acknowledged. Every person has something he can give. Every person can help and do something to meet a need when a need confronts him. The problem is not lack of resources nor a lack of ability or money or time. The problem is attitude—attitude toward the resources which one has.

1. There is the attitude of questioning one's ability to give (Mark 6:37). Jesus had just said, "Give them food." The disciples were shocked and even disturbed with the instructions, for the crowd was enormous and the task *impossible*. They were already upset over the presence and burden of the crowd. Irritated, the disciples fired back at Jesus, "Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?" This amounted to about six months' labor for the disciples. They did not have the money, so the request by Jesus was ridiculous to them. There was no way they could give food to meet the need of the crowd. But note something: the disciples forgot two things.

a. They forgot that they did have something. The need of the crowd in this instance was for food, and the disciples had food for themselves (or at least enough money to buy food for themselves). Yet, they did not think to mention this fact. They were thinking only of what excess, what above their own needs they had to give.

b. They forgot the power of God. They forgot that God loved and cared for these people as well as for them. They forgot that God would meet the needs of any and all, if only they would put what they had at His disposal. They forgot that God's power could take little and multiply it.

2. There is the attitude of checking to see what one can give (Mark 6:38). In response to the disciples' impatience, Jesus remained cool, asking rather forcefully, "How many loaves have you? Go and see." The disciples checked and reported that they had five loaves of bread and two fish. Note two facts.

a. They had resources that were overlooked. Why were they overlooked? Because the resources were so little. There was no possibility the resources could ever meet the need. In fact, two fish and five loaves of bread could not even make a dent in the hunger of five thousand men. In the eyes of the disciples it was impossible for the resources to do any good whatsoever.

b. Jesus did not ask the disciples to check on how to feed all five thousand. He asked them to check on *what resources they had* to give. They were to look at what they themselves could give, not at how the whole task could be done. Their eyes and perspective were to be on using what they had, not on the mammoth impossibility of the task. This is a critical point and it should be carefully noted when looking at the vast needs of the world.

3. There is the attitude of organizing what resources one has so that they might be used ([Mark 6:39-40](#)). This is an important step Christ takes and it should be well noted. The hour was late. Darkness was rapidly approaching. Distribution could have easily become a problem. The people had to be organized into small circles or rows which left room for the disciples to walk between them and distribute the food.