

Read: Matthew 11:25-30

God's True Rest

Matthew 11:28

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Have you ever seen a baby in a deep sleep, the kind where they have their mouth open and they are just snuggled perfectly? Isn't putting your tired head on the pillow and falling asleep the best after a long day?

Rest is so important if your mind and body are to function properly. But have you ever not gotten enough sleep? Maybe your baby brother or sister cried all night. Maybe you crammed for a test, or the grind of school just got to you. You know how hard it is to function the next day. Without proper rest on a regular basis your brain and body will not function properly. You may not remember what you learned, you may become moody, and your body may even become at risk of getting sick.

Even Jesus needed rest. He would often go off to pray to his Father. He needed spiritual rest. One time, Jesus even slept on a boat in the middle of a storm! Jesus understands our need for rest, especially the kind that has nothing to do with our tired bodies. Sometimes you may feel burdened by all the sins that you have committed. "Ah! I've done that again! I can't believe I sinned again! When am I ever going to do things right?"

We all get tired physically and spiritually. But we have the perfect place to rest—in Jesus! No, Jesus will not offer you a soft pillow or a fuzzy blanket. Jesus invites us to come to him, and he will provide rest. Just imagine him putting his arm around you, and you resting your head on his shoulder. Then Jesus says he is gentle and humble. This is the opposite of harsh, mean, and arrogant. He offers us a way out. He promises his yoke, or bags, are light and easy to carry. He not only gives us physical rest, but he says he will give us rest for our souls. And best of all, the comfort and rest of life in heaven is waiting for you as well. No matter how tired you may be, Jesus will *always* provide the rest that we need so much.

So sleep like a baby tonight—Jesus gives the best rest! It's good to take the time daily to come to Jesus in his Word and in prayer, and there we will find rest for our souls.

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- When was the last time you felt sooo tired?
- What helps you fall asleep? How does Jesus help you sleep better?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- Describe what you are like when you did not get enough sleep.
- What does Jesus mean when he says we can find rest in him?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Identify some of the other things that people look to for rest in this world. Explain why they will never offer us rest as good as the rest that Jesus offers.
- Jesus says today, "Come to me." Identify all the ways that we can go to Jesus (or that he comes to us). Then discuss how we can work on having this kind of rest more often.

Closing Prayer:

Jesus what a gift you offer us! You know we become stressed and tired, but you refresh us with your love and ultimate rest. Thank you! Amen.