

# Jesus Teaching on Rest

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Hey guys, today we're going to be continuing the series, What Would Jesus Do? And today I'm going to be talking about rest. We're doing this series so we can look at how Jesus and those around him lived his life, so we can follow his example in the way we live ours.

For me, one thing that comes to mind when I think of the character of Jesus is that he's counter-cultural. When I say this, I mean that his teaching and actions went against what people expected from him.

For instance, many Jews thought that he was going to come and just free Israel from the Roman Empire and just captivity in general and the seasons they're going through, not great.

But he comes and ends up being killed by that very same empire on the cross, one of the most painful ways to die. However, he used this to defeat death itself when he rose from the dead three days later.

I think now most people see rest as my personal time where I'm not really doing anything and only then can I be fully relaxed, allowing me to rest.

[ 1 : 1 8 ] But I think that rest we see in scripture instead says that it is possible to be at rest whilst going through the many hurdles life throws at us. While the world around you seems dark and miserable, it's still possible to be at rest in the chaos.

This passage we're looking at today starts off with Jesus telling his disciples that they're going to go somewhere alone. People see him doing this, recognize him, and run ahead.

Imagine you've gone through all this length to be alone, even taking a boat. And when you arrive at your destination, and it turns out the very people you are trying to get away from and be alone with are waiting for you on the other side.

This part of the account reminds me of when I had just come back from a massive walk over Cheddar Gorge with a group of people from a camp I go in in the summer.

I was so tired. I was just ready to get in my bed, have a nice nap. And I come in my dorm, climb up my bunk, ready to lie down. And bam, just this small toddler burst through the door, deciding he's going to play a very loud game in the room I was in.

[ 2 : 3 7 ] I feel the disciples would have felt similar to me, ready to set her down after a long task of whatever they would have been doing at the time, probably just going around with Jesus, teaching, you know.

And boom, they're met with something loud. 5,000 loud things. Luckily, I had the amazing Daniel in the dorm with me, who helped the toddler play with their game and helped allow me to relax.

When we asked the question, what would Jesus do, my friend Daniel's response to the toddler was more similar to what Jesus would do than my response. I was just there, so ready to relax, and he was there just being compassionate to this child.

Instead of asking the toddler to leave, he entertained him, similar to how even though Jesus crossed the lake to rest, he did an amazing miracle before these people, which would have ended up with them following Christ.

I feel like this part of the account shows how the Lord uses unexpected situations for the greater good. Where we could be resistant or stubborn, he shows that we should show compassion and love.

[ 3 : 46 ] I believe here, Jesus shows that the rest may not be comfortable all the time. He says that they're going for rest, but they end up giving out food for 5,000 people.

I feel like to do this, their hearts must have been at rest. Because if I was one of the 12 disciples, and Jesus told me to give out food to even a portion of the 5,000, after having to go around everyone, going, got any bread?

It's like, you end up with 5, and you end up with one person, like, got any bread? And they're like, nah, I've got two fish. Like, great. But you've done this, and he's like, okay, give it out. I would have given up before it even started, thinking, there's so many, that's going to take so long.

But the disciples pushed through. This must have led to skeptics deciding that Jesus must be the Son of God, and to follow his teachings. All throughout the New Testament, it shows different people resting with the Lord in extremely difficulty.

One such account of this is in Acts 16. Paul and Silas, and for those of you who don't know, because when I first read this, I was like, who's Silas? I've never heard of him before. He was Paul's accompany, quite often traveled around with him.

[ 5 : 03 ] Paul and Silas were both in prison for doing the Lord's work. Whilst in prison, they started singing hymns and worshiping the Lord. Guys, I think if I was locked up for whatever reason, I don't think I would have been as calm as these guys.

Even when there is an earthquake whilst they're worshiping, they just... Sorry, I've just lost where I am. Where they could have just walked out, they just remained there.

The account ends up with a group of people deciding to follow the teachings of Jesus, where the Lord has used these two people's rest in hard times to reach people who have not yet come to know the truth, and that truth is that Jesus Christ is Lord of all.

All of the accounts show the same thing. It takes time. One thing you can't do as a Christian is being a Christian in a hurry.

Just think, does Jesus say pray, but do it in a hurry? Or intercede, but in a hurry? Or even read the Bible, but do it in a hurry? Or love the Lord with all your heart, but do it in a hurry?

[ 6 : 14 ] No, it's ridiculous. We need time to do these things. Patience. One thing Christianity isn't is a hobby. It's hands-on.

To do whatever the Lord wants us to do can take so long with no fruit showing for even a longer time, or we may be promised something that may not come for a long time.

Or perhaps you need to have faith in a hard situation, such as having an illness, and the doctor doesn't know when it's going to go away. So how do we rest in the waiting, in that wilderness space of just suffering, and it's just not really looking great?

The book of Habakkuk in the Old Testament is one of the minor prophets, which doesn't mean that it is unimportant, but rather it's just a small book about a big God. Habakkuk is a back and forth between God and the prophet Habakkuk, about the sin that Israel is in.

It starts in chapter 1 by Habakkuk coming before the Lord and asking what he's going to do about Israel. Israel was just in a really time of sin, and they were just really going against God, doing all that he basically told them not to do.

[ 7 : 25 ] The Lord then replies to Habakkuk by saying that he's going to rise up the nation of Babylon to attack them and completely, not completely, but almost destroy them. Babylon is Israel's archenemy.

which appears to be in constant conflict between these two nations. If you will, Babylon is like the joker to Israel's batman. So as you can imagine, Habakkuk's response to this is going, what? They're even worse than us.

Everything that we do, they're just doing it, but just ten times worse. Why them? God just responds. He doesn't really get a response in this same chapter. He says, how bad is it, Lord, and how long is it going to last?

One of the things that makes the struggle so hard is the duration. But he says that he will wait until he receives an answer. In chapter 2, he gets a reply from God, saying that he will use this ungodly people for godly things.

And guys, I know that the world can seem messed up sometimes, and the conflict that many Christians face is that God's revelation doesn't match the world. It's where God says to love another, but there's war.

[ 8 : 41 ] It's where God says the sick will be healed, but there are good people dying in hospitals. But guys, healing always comes, whether it's in this life or the next. We need to remember to rest and work through these struggles with him.

By chapter 3, Habakkuk has faced unanswered prayer and unasked for prayer, unasked for answers.

This is when we ask a question, and God says something that we didn't want, but often that is the way that questions can go with the Lord.

However, Habakkuk shows brilliantly how to deal with this. He decides that he is going to praise the Lord in the wilderness, meaning that even though the world is messed up, he is going to rest with the Lord.

But how does he do this? Even though the world is just spiraling around him, God's revelation isn't matching up to the world, what does he do? The third chapter shows him reminding himself of the works the Lord has done in the past, to have faith for the future.

[ 9 : 50 ] He called the Exodus story to mind, where God forces the Egyptians to release the enslaved Israelites. And I think here we see how we should rest when the world seems so loud.

We just need to look back into the past, see past events such as the cross of Christ, when death was defeated, or perhaps personal experiences that have shined through the darkness, shine through those dark times, revealing God's brilliance.

To just really be able to rest with the Lord, just reminding on those past experiences. If you're going to take one thing away from today, take this. God sees you in the hard times, and he says to rest.

Rest in the busy days, and rest in the struggle. When everything is changing around you, focus on that one, on the one that never changes, and that is his unending grace. Thank you.

Thank you.