

# Redeeming Time Recovering Rest



**Kristen Hatton**

I'm an Enneagram 3 and Enneagram 3's thrive on productivity and accomplishments. While getting things done can be great, it can also become an idol. The temptation, at least for me, is to prioritize projects over people. Easily my agenda easily can rule the day, and my worth become quickly dependent on what I do. So for me, rest is the real struggle.

For others of you, procrastination, insecurity, motivation, or disorganization may be what keeps you from getting things checked off your list. Or, even getting started. You need help with time management as much as I need to recover rest.

This little ebook is for both types of people.

All of us are called to steward well what we've been given. This includes our time, resources, families, and bodies. Doing so doesn't just happen though. It requires forethought and planning, both for the getting things done and the setting things aside. A nice side perk to this is less stress, but the reason for stewarding well extends beyond personal benefit to adopting a kingdom mindset.

Living beyond our own mini-kingdoms for the good of others and the glory of God should impact our stewardship by influencing what our days, calendar, commitment and time look like. It is from this angle I want to come at discipline, time-management and also rest.

My hope is to spur a deeper motivation for making the most of the time God's gives us, as well as a mindset for putting "work" aside. To that end, I invite you to think theologically with me about [Redeeming Time](#) and [Recovering Rest](#). But first, use the first two pages to take inventory of your time, and then we will pick the exercise back up [at the end](#). Plus, find my own [helpful hints for making the most of your moments](#).

Growing together in grace,

*Kristen*

Start with this day planner by writing in your typical day's chores, activities, sleep, etc. The goal is to discover where you have pockets of time to better use or free up. After filling it out use it to answer the questions on the next page, and then again to complete the last page after reading through the booklet.

*Redeeming Time/Recovering Rest  
Day Planner*

12am	1am	2am	3am
4am	5am	6am	7am
8am	9am	10am	11am
12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm
4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm
8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm

# Day Planner Assessment: Part 1

What are your favorite parts of your day/week? Why?	What are the things you dread doing each day/week? Why?
Is there anything not on your day planner that you wish you had time for (or more time for)?	Where could you make better use of time/ eliminate something to free up time?
What makes a day productive for you? Why?	What makes a day unproductive? Why?
What might someone conclude about your work and rest habits from looking at your day?	What would it feel like to end a day believing you've done enough?
How would you define rest? Rest is....	

**Before picking back up with Part II of the Assessment we will take a look at God's ordering and ordaining of time and**

# Redeeming Time

Right off the bat in Genesis 1, we have a God who brings order to chaos.

*“The earth was without form and void of anything but darkness...” Genesis 1:2*

But, as God majestically filled nothingness with beauty, it became *very good*.

VERY GOOD in large part because of God’s creation and placement of man in the garden. We are the crown of his creation, made in His image, and given the task of tending to his creation mandate — “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth,” and also to “subdue it and have dominion over every living thing.”

*“He put them in the garden to work it and keep it.” Genesis 2:15*

The Hebrew word here for “keep” is *shamar*, which means “to guard” and carries with it the implication of priestly duties. In other words, God crowned Adam with great purpose, entrusting him to defend his garden sanctuary against the intrusion of the enemy. Or, put this way: God put Adam in charge of guarding the first temple dwelling of God’s holiness.

But how was Adam to do this?

Daily tending to. Tilling, picking, and plowing. Tedious, unglamorous work that required paying attention to details.



If you garden, you know that to grow produce you must prepare for months in advance. You have to pay attention to the weather. You may have to treat the soil to rid it of insects. You may have to set up some sort of barrier to keep out creatures who might get in and destroy the garden. Without tending to these mundane tasks your plants will not bear fruit. Fruit that speaks forth the glory of the Creator in the way they were meant to.

If you are tracking with me, this means man's great purpose that God called *very good* came in the form of routine work. Tedious, not glamorous but essential. This wasn't a problem for Adam and Eve -- initially.

Our problem with routine work began just one chapter later in Genesis 3 when God's created order was reversed after Adam and Eve took fruit from the forbidden tree. No longer did the world work in the way God created it to. Everything was tainted by sin.

Though his glory is still present in creation, it is a broken image in need of restoration. Now instead of man finding contentment and purpose in the mundane, ordinary day-to-day tending we want to skip out on those boring, tedious parts.

It's not just our relationship with work that is fractured, our discipline in regard to working to protect or guard the following also went out the window:

- ➔ Our bodies as a temples from the enemy
- ➔ Our marriages from the enemy
- ➔ Our children from the enemy
- ➔ Our schedules from the enemy

As for our actual work, the reason we get lazy and put things off, feel stuck, or unmotivated goes beyond personality or wiring. It's may be part of it, but ultimately it is because we are broken image-bearers. And because we are broken image-bearers, instead of being satisfied with our work and doing our best, we are easily frustrated by everything except the big, spectacular end-result, or anything that's not fun.

We lose sight of the fact that Adam tending to the daily grind was fulfilling his God-ordained purpose that God called *very good*.

We too are fulfilling God-ordained purpose in wearing the various “hats” we do. And get this-- that means paying bills, fixing dinner for our families, and running errands to take care of our household are actually seen as **holy**.

He gave us these things to be over, just like he put Adam over creation.

But when I get to the end of my day and don't have much to show for it I feel frustrated. Or, I might start my day out with dread if what's before me isn't particularly fun. I grow weary doing the little things and the grunt work.

Because this is true we might procrastinate with a little online shopping or scrolling through social media. And before we know it the day is gone and we did not do our work to the glory of God.

“Daily life, dishes in the sink, children that ask the same questions and want the same stories again and again... these things are filled with repetition. And much of the Christian life is returning over and over to the same work and the habits of worship. We must contend with the same spiritual struggles again and again. The work of repentance and faith is daily and repetitive. Again and again we repent and believe.”

- Tish Harrison Warren, *Liturgy of the Ordinary*

In the above referenced book, Warren goes on to say, “*The kind of spiritual life and disciplines needed to sustain the Christian life are quiet, repetitive and ordinary.*”

Isn't it fascinating to think God designed our routines and regular daily living to be pointers to the normal Christian life? For the Christian life is not primarily spectacular mountaintop experiences, it's made up of regular, slow and steady, persistent days.

Therefore, when I'm faced with boredom, fatigue or bouts of procrastination what I need is a reorientation to what God calls good and holy.

Taking care of my tasks, making the most of my minutes and the mundane is the God-glorifying **redeeming of time**. For we bring honor to him in all our work, not just what we deem important work, completed work, or "ministry" work.

So a good question to ask is: ***Why do we not find satisfaction in the mundane?***

"Our addiction to stimulation, input and entertainment empties us out and makes us boring – unable to embrace the ordinary wonders of life in Christ... (we) want to skip the boring, daily stuff to get to the thrill ..."

- Tish Harrison Warren, *[Liturgy of the Ordinary](#)*

***Are we more about our glory, comfort, and desires, or God's? To see it all as holy gives us great purpose!***





# Recovering Rest

Going back to the Creation Story for a deeper look at rest, we are reminded that God did his works of creation in six days and on the seventh rested. Of course, this was not because he was tired and needed a break. The seventh day was a celebration of his enthronement as King over all he had made.

Everything was rightly related to God and to each other. And now with his work complete, he rested, delighting in it all and completely satisfied. But as already discussed, the Fall turned everything on its head, altering all of creation's right relationship to God.

Now instead of man having dominion over creation, creation rules over us. We can note this reality even in our typical response to someone asking how we are doing. *"I'm so busy,"* or, *"I'm so tired."*

We are ruled by time, our schedules, to-do lists and so many other things. Therefore though we struggle to delight in our work, we also struggle to set work aside.

There is always more work to do. And because we so often base our identity on what we do, we struggle to know when enough is enough, or that we are enough!

The thing is we won't ever feel like we are enough, or have done enough until we come to rest in the work of another.



Only the Lord of the Sabbath, the One who labored in life and death so that we could rest from our labors, can give us the true rest we long for. Only his work and worth is enough!

For those who are in Christ, his work and worth is ours! It is the *IT IS FINISHED* that secures rest and delivers us into his pleasure-- his smile!

But instead of living under his smile, we live as if we have his frown and need to gain his acceptance with our works - whether that be good deeds, perfect mothering, housekeeping, or what not! At the same time, living as if we need everyone else's smile (approval) too!

But knowing his completed work for us, and delight in us should free us to be:

- ➔ People who aren't worried about whether we've done enough in a day
- ➔ People who can say "No" without fear about pleasing everybody
- ➔ People who can rest even when things are undone

*Resting even when things are undone?* That's hard, even knowing I have God's smile!

But Tish Warren Harrison in her book calls **rest – holy and unproductivity - blessed!**

I don't know about you but this hits at my idols. Not just productivity and achievement as false sources of worth, but going even deeper to the root of self-sufficiency and control.

I see this when I think about *why* I like checking things off my list and staying ahead on things. Yes, it creates margin to keep me from getting too stressed out, and it allows me space to fit people and the unexpected into my schedule. But, if I'm honest my motives are more about *me* than serving others.

It's about me controlling my time, not trusting God with it. And my lack of trust shows in the fact I have such a hard time resting from my work.

God know this about us, and even built-in to our biological makeup a way of reminding us daily that we, the creature, are not only not god, but we need rest. Our bodies can't function without sleep-- a natural, daily pointer to our dependency and true rest we need, don't you think?

He also built into our every week a Sabbath day. A day to lay our daily concerns and work aside, and recenter our self-centered lives around him. We so often miss this blessed break though because we are too busy to see how much we need the rest he offers.

Hebrews 4:11 says, *"Let us therefore strive to enter that rest..."*

Striving for rest sounds contradictory, but envision yourself on a raft.

You are relaxed. But, if you don't hang on to the side of the pool or tie your raft to those you are with, you will float off.

By doing nothing we will move away from our spot. We will drift. Therefore, we must work for rest.



Do you get it? We must fight our natural bent, our calendars, our culture, to make room for both physical and spiritual REST.

“Come to me, all who labor & are heavy laden, & I WILL give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle & lowly in heart, and you WILL find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, & my burden is light.”

Matthew 11:28

# Kingdom Purpose vs Agenda Driven

Now imagine if Christians lived in accordance to a Redeeming Time/Recovering Rest theology. What would it look like “*if Christians were known as a countercultural community of the well-rested?*” as proposed by Harrison.

With the number of churches and proclaimed Christians we should be! But we are just as restless as everyone else because we too struggle to live under the smile of God. And just like everyone else, driven by our agendas, with a scarcity of time mentality, we miss the needs around us. We live reactive not proactive, me-centered, not others-focused, and just as tired as the rest of the world.

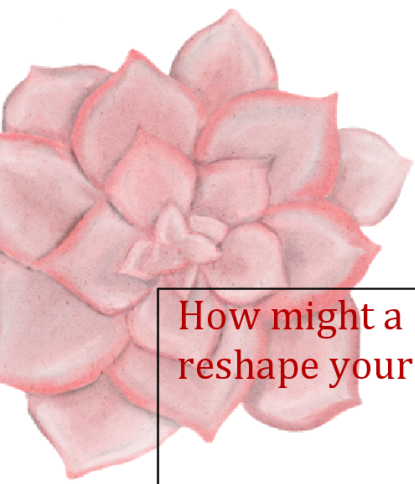
But living under his smile frees of ourselves, and in turn leads us to better love our neighbors. It gives us a greater kingdom focus and helps us be less-agenda driven. To be the HOPE-BEARERS we are called to be.

What I propose then is we work hard and stay disciplined -- not so we achieve more and feel worthy. But to free time to focus on others.

I pray that we would be able to shut down our work and say we did enough, not because there isn't more to do, but out of an obedience so our time and routines form for us a life liturgy directing us to **REST IN HIS WORK SO WE WORK IN HIS REST.**

In thinking theologically about our time and rest my hope is it will influence:

- **How we spend our time**
- **How we might better use our time**
- **Our attitude about our work**
- **Our view of rest**
- **To see where we are failing to rest – both physically and spiritually**
- **Our abiding in his work and worth**



## Day Planner Assessment: Part 2

<p>How might a “Redeeming Time” mindset reshape your days, or thoughts about work?</p>	<p>When do you tend to live more agenda-driven than kingdom-focused? And vice-versa?</p>
<p>In what ways do you struggle to rest – Physically? Spiritually?</p>	<p>What would practicing rest look like – Physically? Spiritually?</p>
<p>How would you explain: “Rest in His Work and Work in His Rest”?</p>	<p>How would it feel to “Rest in His Work and Work in His Rest”?</p>

Look back at your original definition of rest. Would you re-write it? If so, do so below.

Rest is...

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# Hatton's Helpful Hints:

## Making the Most of Your Fringe Moments

- 1) Do food prep when you're in the kitchen anyway for breakfast or lunch. ie: chop an onion, mix sauce, cut fruit, boil eggs, bake chicken
- 2) Maximize your most efficient hours by not using them for things you can do later. i.e.: I return phone calls when I'm in my car (if no kids with me) or later afternoon when my brain is not as fresh. Hold off on online shopping/surfing/searching until late afternoon/evening.
- 3) Stick to a laundry schedule. I do laundry only on Mondays & Thursdays. My kids know these days and bring their baskets to me the night before so I can preset the washer. This way when I get up first load is ready for the dryer.
- 4) Meal planning. Keep a running grocery list in the drawer and write down items you run out of right away. I always go to the grocery on Monday mornings/plan the night before for the whole week. I write all meals on my calendar so I know in advance if meat has to thaw, what prep I need to do on a particular day. And I schedule crockpot or easy meals for my busiest days.
- 5) Keep a running errand list with you, and any returns/post office items in your car. This way if I'm driving by with extra time, or not many cars in the parking lot I'm ready. I also group errands by location and save them for when I'll be in that area of town anyway to save on gas and time.
- 6) Routine. For me each day of the week looks almost the same every week. Time in the word, laundry, grocery, workout - it rarely alters. When I schedule an appointments I try do to it one of two days. By keeping my routine predictable it makes it easier to know where I have pockets of time for friends, or to maximize work time.
- 7) Set deadlines for things even without deadlines. Deadlines create urgency to help you reach your goals. They also help break up a large project into more manageable chunks. By setting early deadlines for say a speaking engagement, it creates margin and non-stressed prep-time.
- 8) I know some people say start your day with your biggest project(s). But I like to knock out as many little things as I can before I really get going in my day. ie: pay bills, write thank you note, respond to email, clear clutter. This way I've already crossed things off my physical list and off my mind.



## Let's Connect.

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