



Lesson 3 – We Rest In Our Adoption Deuteronomy 5:12-15, Hebrews 4:3, Galatians 4:5 September 18, 2019

It can be very unsettling

when we don't know where we stand. When we are unsure of where we fit in, it creates anxiety, stress and worry. Perhaps the reason we are unable to experience Sabbath rest is because we are not quite certain where we stand with God. You will never experience rest if you are always trying to earn your relationship with God. We must trust our adoption. Not understanding our position as being firmly sealed in the family of God will always lead to unrest.

Peace comes from knowing my standing in God, I'm forgiven, and my identity in God – I'm His. This is my wholeness.

Isaiah 26:3(NAS): The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect **peace**, because he trusts in You.

The Hebrew word translated “**peace**” in this verse means *completeness, tranquility, wholeness, to be without lack, completely finished*. This is the perfect peace He keeps us in when our minds are stayed on Him. You will be unable to experience Sabbath rest because if you don't trust God. If you are uncertain about where you stand

with Him, you forfeit the peace he has for you for a life of stress and anxiety. You may know how to make a life of stress and anxiety look good, it doesn't mean that it is good. For some of us, our badge of honor is busyness or mastering multitasking. Just because it looks good when you are doing it doesn't mean it is good for you.

Isaiah 26:12 (NAS): Lord, You will **establish** peace for us, since You have also performed for us all our works.

Established means *assigned, ordained*. This world will try to get you to cut off anything in your life that is unpleasant. If, according to the world, it doesn't feel good, it is not for you. The real issue isn't whether to cut these things off, but to find stability right where *you* are, because those things don't change who you are. The peace that God has given us is established and ordained. When we take God fully at His word, He will keep us not in partial peace, not in conditional peace, but in *perfect* peace. God has designated your peace, but you must walk in trust. If you don't trust, you will not have Sabbath rest.

You must understand the heartbeat of Sabbath if you are to experience the soul refreshment that you need. Sabbath isn't about things to do; it's about what is going on in your heart and your relationship with God.

John 14:27a (NAS): Peace I leave with you; **My peace** I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you.

Peace is a gift given by the Father. Peace is one of the benefits of being a believer we receive once we choose Jesus. For some of us, we've had to work hard for all we have, and it's difficult to accept a gift. For others, we are so independent we don't think we need gifts. Some of us are so falsely content with the life we have created for ourselves that we take God's peace and put it in the gift closet, only to use it when we are in crisis. If you really want to have Sabbath rest, you have to embrace this gift right now. We don't know what to do with the free, lavish gifts God gives us.

The world deals in conditional peace, and will give you peace in things like your parenting ability (as long as your kids act right) or your career (as long as there are promotions and raises), but these things only offer momentary peace. Every time we buy into the world's conditional peace, we call our identity in Christ into question. What you are saying is that your identity is not unconditionally established by God, but it is conditional based on how well you perform at the very things that will eventually fail you.

God, where did I fail you today? Was there a gospel conversation I didn't have? Was there a faith move that I held back on today?



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Anything that you associate your identity with outside of your identity in Christ are temporary forms of peace. When the things of the world are operating perfectly, you can have temporary, conditional peace, but Jesus says I will give you perfect peace, not as the world gives. Jesus' peace gets better and richer. When the world gives your peace, every success brings more stress, but we rarely lose sleep from the weight of what God has called us to.

We can't find Sabbath rest because we don't know where our peace comes from. We often struggle from hurt from the past, and we wrestle with the pain in a slow journey. When something doesn't feel good to us, we begin to question our standing. The enemy would like you to think that the situations in your life affect your standing, but God says that the peace He gives is perfect – your life may not be perfect - but peace, tranquility and completeness can be ever present. Completeness is important because when things go wrong, we feel fractured - like someone has taken a piece of us. Life pulls from us, but God says that regardless of what is pulled from you, you are still whole and complete and perfectly so - if you trust Him. If you trust Him, even when life is falling apart, you will not. You are whole.

Your identity did not start with your birth and is not associated with your heritage. Your identity started before heaven and earth was formed. You were predestined and foreknown - before you were conceived, God knew who you were. Therefore, the identity that we need to draw from must start with God the Creator. He is the only one who can tell you who you are. Your life can tell you what has happened to you, but that is not who you are. If you let what happened to you define you, you will never have rest in your soul; you will always feel lacking and fragmented. We can't find real rest until we are convinced that we are who God made us to be.

Deuteronomy 5:12-15 teaches us to keep the Sabbath holy and specifically called the Israelites to remember that they were once slaves in the land of Egypt before God brought them out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Sabbath gives us the opportunity to reflect on how God has saved us. We keep the Sabbath not only to see God's provision, but also so that we can see our new position. Take rest in God's agenda – in all that He has done, in all that He has brought you out from.

Egypt is a metaphor for salvation. Sabbath is a time to sit and remember how God has delivered you when you could not have delivered yourself. Contemplate and recount the ways he continues to deliver you and set you free. Think about how God brought you out of Egypt, because emancipation is the key to your adoption. In setting you free He was able to make you His own.

What does it mean to have been adopted as a Christian?

Galatians 4:4-5 (NAS): But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, (5) so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the **adoption as sons.**

This concept of adoption is weighty when considered in its original context. In the Jewish world, your birth was everything, Your lineage and heritage determined you standing. However, in

Our adoption is so significant,
Jesus calls it REBIRTH.

ancient Roman culture, adoption was a significant and common practice. It was not infant adoption, like we see today. Adoption involved older boys and adult men that were adopted for purposes of inheritance and family order. In some cases, the adopted person might even be older than the man who was adopting him. Adoption was intended to find heads of households to manage the inheritance of the family by expanding the family through legal means for legitimacy. When the adoption was legally approved, the adoptee would have all debts cancelled and he would receive a new name. He would then be the legal son of his adopted father, and entitled to all the rights and benefits of a son. Under Roman law, a father



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could disown his natural born son, but adoption was irreversible. God uses this metaphor for our adoption as Christians - our debts are cancelled, we have a new name, and our new standing is irreversible. If you don't believe that your standing with God is irreversible, you will not have rest. If you are constantly working to stay in God's good graces, or if you think there is anything that jeopardizes your standing or might put you out of favor with God, you have missed the understanding of adoption and you will not have rest. Your adoption does not depend on a formula or behaviors that need to be followed. When you equate the bad circumstances in your life with some omitted behavior and calculate how holier behavior could have avoided them, YOU HAVE MISSED ADOPTION. Your standing in the family of God never changes.

Benefits of Being Adopted Sons and Daughters

WE ARE 1 Peter 2:9-10 (NAS)

- A chosen race
- A royal priesthood
- A people for his own possession
- A people of God
- A people who have received mercy

WE HAVE Ephesians 1:7, 11, 13 (NAS)

- Redemption through his blood – bought, purchased
- Forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace
- Obtained an inheritance, benefits of sonship and daughtership
- Sealed in the Holy Spirit of promise – what Holy Spirit seals cannot be undone.

God, in what areas do I doubt my standing with you?

Your soul cannot find peace, unless it's the perfect peace that Jesus gives. You will not find peace in your church attendance, volunteering, giving or discipleship – these are wonderful things that are likely tied to your purpose - but they are not your peace. Even good things can make us think incorrectly about adoption.

Your identity is different after adoption. It drastically changes your ownership and it will show. God has brought you into a permanent place in His family, nothing can change it – rest in that. In your downtime, remember how God brought you out of Egypt. When you embrace your place in the family of God, even in the midst of really difficult situations, you can rest.

Sabbath is about resting and abiding in God, and in the confidence you get when you embrace the fact that you are in an irreversible position in the family of God, **you are sealed**. No attack of the enemy can break the seal that the Holy Spirit has on you.

This confidence frees us to (1) have real rest and to (2) pursue life change based in legitimate love for God and not because we are trying to earn our position. We live righteously because we love God, not because of guilt.