

Since Jesus calls us to be selfless, is it selfish to seek time to rest from serving others?

Time alone and rest are just as vital to the Christian life as is selfless service. We are absolutely commanded to serve the Lord with all of our heart, soul, mind, and *strength* (Luke 10:27) and we are called to die to our desires and our own wants daily in our efforts to follow Christ. However, we are also commanded to rest. Yes, commanded. In the Old Testament God commanded that time be set aside to rest. It was so important that it was included as one of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:8). Now it is important to remember that even on the Sabbath day of rest individuals were called to meet needs if they saw them; we are never removed from our calling to serve others. However, setting some time aside to rest and rejuvenate is within the realm of Biblical principles, when done for the right reasons. In fact, Jesus himself took time to rest during his earthly ministry. In Mark chapter 6, verse 31 Jesus tells his “Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while”. The disciples were exhausted; the next verse says they had not even had time to eat. Other verses such as John 6:15 and Matthew 14:13, 23 also speak of instances where Jesus felt the need to draw away to a desolate place to pray. If Jesus, the most selfless individual in history, took time to rest then there must not be selfish to set some time aside for you.

Jesus knows we are human and he understands that we will indeed grow tired and weary (Isaiah 40:30-31) and he knows the importance of rest. However, as was said earlier, it’s important for us to examine the reasons we desire to be alone. If we want to be alone because we just don’t want to serve others that is a sinful attitude. If we want to be alone because we are not willing to do what God has called us to do that is a sinful attitude. However, if we are being faithful to serve others and being faithfully obedient to God’s call on our lives then we are also more than able to rest when those opportunities present themselves and we are also able to set aside time for rest from our ministry work when we need it. As far as determining when it is appropriate to rest and how long we should rest, that is something each individual must prayerfully determine for himself. Resting is permitted but, like other blessings from God, it should not be abused and overdone so



GRACE
OVERFLOWS

HEBREWS 4:16

that we become characterized by laziness and sluggishness. But there is certainly biblical ground for setting aside time to rest.