

Q3 L01 - **Living in a 24x7 Society** - 2021-07-03

Luccas Rodor: Hi, friends, welcome to the Sabbath School Study Hour here in Granite Bay Hilltop Seventh-day Adventist Church, in the Greater Sacramento area here in California. I'm so glad that you've decided to invest this hour of study here with us. I'm sure that you will be blessed by it.

Today we will be setting the first lesson of our new quarterly. The title of the entire quarterly is "Rest in Christ." And so, this quarter I'm sure that it will be a blessing. We'll be setting how we can truly rest in God and a society that is so full of the rat race and running everywhere and doing so many things. We can truly learn how to rest in Jesus Christ. Today will be the first lesson of this new quarter, and the title of the first lesson is "Living in a 24/7 Society."

You know, we live in a society that it seems as though it's always awake. It's always awake. There's always people running somewhere, going somewhere, busy doing things, busy, busy, busy. And we truly need to learn how to rest in Jesus. And so today, Pastor Shawn will be leading out.

I'd also like to welcome our local community that is here with us. If you still don't have the new quarterly, it's outside in the foyer. I'm sure that one of our hosts will be able to provide one for you. So please don't leave today without getting one of our new quarterlies.

Now before we do begin and actually get into the lesson and before I invite our choristers to come out and sing praise for us, I would like to invite you to take advantage of our free offer. The title of today's free offer is "The Rest of Your Life." It really walks hand in hand with our quarterly today. And if you'd like a copy, a physical copy, you can call the number 866-788-3966 or 866-Study-More and you can ask for Offer 813. Again, it's offer number 813. And so if you're on the continental North America, if you're on the continental North America, you can send a text to SH086 and that goes to number 40544. Or if you're outside of North America, you can go to study.aftv.org/SH086. And I'm sure that you will be very blessed by this free offer.

I'd like to invite our choristers to come out and sing a song of praise for us before we start our study.



♪ How sweet are the tidings that greet the pilgrim's ear, ♪

♪ as he wanders in exile from home. ♪

♪ Soon, soon will the Savior in glory appear, ♪

♪ and soon will the kingdom come. ♪

♪ He's coming, coming, coming soon I know, ♪

♪ coming back to this earth again; ♪

♪ and the weary pilgrims will to glory go, ♪

♪ when the Savior comes to reign. ♪

♪ The mossy old graves where the pilgrims sleep ♪

♪ shall be open as wide as before, ♪

♪ and the millions that sleep in the mighty deep ♪

♪ shall live on this earth once more. ♪

♪ He's coming, coming, coming soon I know, ♪

♪ coming back to this earth again; ♪

♪ and the weary pilgrims will to glory go, ♪

♪ when the Savior comes to reign. ♪

♪ Hallelujah, Amen. ♪

♪ Hallelujah again. ♪

♪ Soon, if faithful, we all shall be there; ♪

♪ Oh, be watchful, be hopeful, be joyful 'til then, ♪

♪ and a crown of bright glory we'll wear. ♪

♪ He's coming, coming, coming soon I know, ♪

♪ coming back to this earth again; ♪

♪ and the weary pilgrims will to glory go, ♪

♪ when the Savior comes to reign. ♪♪

Luccas: Dear Father, I praise Your name because You are worthy of praise. This morning, as we open Your Word, Father, and try to learn about rest in You, I ask You to bless our hearts and our minds, Father, open our understanding. Please bless Pastor Shawn's lips and his mind and his heart as he leads out for us, Lord. Pour over him Your Holy Spirit so that he might teach powerfully and that we might truly learn that rest is Christ, and when we have Christ we have rest. I ask You for these things in the name of Jesus, amen and amen.

Shawn Brummund: Today we are looking at the first quarter--the first lesson study of a new quarterly entitled "Rest in Christ." And I'd like to begin by sharing a bit of a story, and this story--as the story goes, there was a passenger plane that was making its way across the skies from one major city here in America to another. And fortunately, as it rarely happens, the pilot found himself in a very challenging situation in the fact that there was not any alternative route that he could take and he was required to make his way and his passenger plane through a very serious lightning storm.

Now, the pilot knew that the rate of survival was almost 100% and so he wasn't all that concerned but he knew it was going to be very concerning for the passengers. And so, sure enough, he's on the speaker and the communication with the passengers and, as he goes, he says as in a calming, most calming voice he can, he says, "Listen, folks. We are going to be approaching and needing to make our way through a fairly serious lightning storm that's ahead and they're going to ask that you please fastened and tighten your seatbelts. We do have quite a ride ahead of us."

And so everybody, of course, obeyed very quickly and, sure enough, all of a sudden as they made their way into this ominous dark raincloud in front, with different flashes of sheet lightning lighting up the sky in different directions, the plane started to do its thing as it was being thrown around, literally, by the different currents that were in that as well as the drama of having these sheets of lightning flash outside. And at one point it got so violent and it lifted up and went down again so quickly that one of the stewardesses that was still trying to make her way towards the back was thrown into the laps of one of the passengers. Some of the overhead bins started to open up. It was enough to be able to get at least one of the women in the back of the plane to be able to kind of let out a short scream. And everybody got very tense and white knuckled.

There was a number of people that started to envision the lightning bolts at some point coming down and hitting one of the engines on the plane and--or one of the wings falling off, and all of them very quickly careening to the ground and to their death. And so it was a very, very difficult time for everybody in that plane except for the pilot. He was fairly calm and he knew what he was doing, where he was going.

Every other passenger was scared out of their wits except for one little girl. And this little girl was coloring away in her coloring book on her lap in the very front seat of the plane. And she was right beside the window and she was just calmly and very quietly coloring in her coloring book. And every once in a while, she would look up through the small window of her plane and of her seat and be able to look at one of the more outstanding flashes of lightning that was making its show outside of the plane. And then she would just calmly and quietly return back to her coloring.

Well, of course, when the plane finally made its way through the storm and kind of touched down onto the landing strip of the airport at which they were aiming for, there was a great sigh of relief, there was clapping, there was cheering, there was this kind of great kind of very clear emotional relief that came upon the rest of the passengers.

As those passengers started to exit the plane, as we always do, one of the men couldn't help but stop and talk to the little girl and said, "You know, we couldn't help but notice that the entire time all of us

were scared of our wits but when we kept looking at you, you were so calm and you were not showing any sign of fear whatsoever and--what's your secret?" And she looked up and she goes, "Oh, that's easy. I wasn't scared at all. As it turns out, my daddy is the pilot and I knew that he was taking me home."

You know, it's interesting, as we come into this year, 2021, we are--as we continue to make our way through this year, 2021, mankind has entered into one of the most unstable years and experiences that we've had in a very long, long time. The USA, Canada, and I'm sure many other nations have taken an economic hit along with a massive spending spree in stimulus checks that has everyone holding our breath for the future. Many thinking people know that there is a good chance that all the efforts to protect ourselves from the harm of one single virus may lead us--may lead us into another storm that may be--that may be worse than the first.

Now, I'm the first to admit that I'm just like you. I am not God. I am not a prophet. I do not know exactly what tomorrow will bring or next week or next month. I know that there are some unstable and concerning factors that we have such as I have just mentioned here that many thinking people are asking and concerned about. But one thing that I have done is that I have studied the teachings of the Bible and Christ very carefully over the years. And they both are telling me that we are on the very precipice of very unprecedented times.

As Jesus told His first followers, that when we see the leafless tree starting to form those buds on the end of its branches, that even so we know that summer is near. Jesus says, "So it is with the return of Christ to this earth." You can know when you start to see these signs that the return of Christ is very close, that it is very near. Jesus tells us in the Gospel of Luke that indeed will we--we will experience the distress of all nations, and we got a preview of that over the last year. The distress of all nations. And the events and circumstances that lie ahead of us are going to prove themselves deep and challenging.

Friends, we have arrived at a time when two of the freest nations on the planet, that of the United States of America and Canada, have experienced our governments challenging our freedoms on levels that this generation has never seen before. We have arrived at a time when more than one of America's greatest cities are giving notoriously violent and historically dangerous cities and countries like El Salvador and Honduras and Guatemala, a run for their money. An increase in violent crimes is rampant and growing across this nation and the nations of the world. We have arrived at a time right here in America when there are more mass shootings than there are days in the year. And the Lord Jesus Christ Himself has told us that men's hearts would be failing them from fear and the expectation of those things that are coming upon the earth.

We have arrived at a time when we are far more fearful of the oncoming climate change than we are in the very soon Coming of Jesus Christ and the great Judgment Day. But in the middle of this brewing storm, the Lord and the Savior, Jesus Christ Himself, continues to offer the same invitation that He offered when He was on earth the first time: "Come unto Me, all you who labor and are heavy-laden and I will give you rest," as many of you know that great invitation. As many of you have experienced the great invitation that Jesus gave some 2000 years ago, "And I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon Me--upon you," Jesus says, "and learn from Me for I am gentle and lowly in heart and you shall find rest for your souls." "For My yoke is easy," Jesus says, "and My burden is light." Thank God for Jesus, amen?

Now when Jesus says His yoke is easy and take His yoke upon you, now today in today's English and in today's thinking because we are so far removed from the previous days and methods of farming that the only yoke that we know of in our generation is that yellow part at the center of an egg. But that's not the yoke that Jesus is offering to us. That's the yoke that Jesus invites us to be able to take upon ourselves, but rather we have to go previous to the tractors, previous to the combustible engine and the combines and all the other modern equipment and machinery that our farmers are using today and we

have to go back to where we were still using the oxen. And when the farmer took the two most powerful oxen together to be able to plow his fields, why, he would take the yoke. And this was a kind of a--it looked like a round "M," you know, and it's made of wood with some metal reinforcements and attachments and so on, and that yoke would be placed upon the--upon the neck of those two oxen that they might be able to use double the strength, to combine the strength of the oxen together that they might have twice the horsepower, twice the ox power. And Jesus tells us that He wants us to take His yoke upon Him that we might be able to walk together even as the two yoke walk together.

Now, I can tell you, unlike the two oxen which are equal in strength, the yoke that Jesus offers to--for us to take upon ourselves, that we might walk with Him with that yoke on our neck and as His as we walk through life together, as you can guess, His side of the partnership is tremendously more stronger than our side. And unless the two ox that are equal in strength, Jesus takes the vast majority of the burden upon Himself. And that's why He could use that illustration in this great invitation. "Take My yoke upon Me," "Upon you," I should say. "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." Why? Because Jesus is the powerful ox that moves us through life, that moves us through the storms that come with this life.

Now, all of us, from Adam and Eve to you and I here today, have all experienced and will experience storms in this life. That is what comes with a package of living life out in a fallen sinful world. But friends, this world has also experienced collective storms. We've experienced a globally collective storm over the last year. And the Bible tells us that we have greater collective storms that are just around the corner ahead of us. But the good news is that Jesus stands up in the midst of all those storms and He offers us rest in Him. And thus we have the title for our new quarterly which is "Rest."

Everybody take a deep breath. Do you find yourselves doing that quite often when the sun goes down on Friday night? And if you don't do it consciously, you do it subconsciously, do you not? You just kind of take that collective rest. Thank You, Jesus. Thank You for helping me through the different challenges that inevitably rose up in different ways to the last week. Thank You for giving me this day that helps me to reflect upon the great goodness and creative ability that You have and offer to me, the great mercies and grace that You give to me. Thank You for the rest that is found in the person of who You are, Lord Jesus.

Now, this particular title and theme that we're studying over the next three months may be the important theme, the most important theme, of truth that we can study in all of the Bible. It brings us to the heart of the gospel, the rest that is found in the gospel of Jesus Christ. It bring us to the heart of the question of gaining eternal life. It helps us to make our way through the day. It helps us to find emotional, physical, spiritual, and mental health. It is the rest in Christ that brings us to the Sabbath and to our origins. It is rest in Christ that brings us to the truth on the state of the dead, that when we die we truly rest in peace.

It brings us to the question and the ability to make good ethical--good ethical choices. It helps us to succeed in our marriage relationships and families. Rest in Christ. "Come unto Me all ye who labor and are heavy-laden and I will give you rest." As it says in the introductory pages of our quarterly, in pages 2 and 3, in this case on page 3, quote, "Resting in Christ is the key to the type of life that Jesus promises to His followers." And then they quote from my favorite--one of my favorite texts now.

Now it's one of my favorite but it was my signature and still is my signature text because as I gave my heart to the Lord when I was 20 years old and I began to experience this massive transformation in my life, and I became born again, I began to experience the rest that Jesus had offered to me at that point in my life. Not that He hadn't offered it before but that I'd accepted it for the first time in my life. And as I was experiencing that rest in Jesus, and as I began to open the Bible for the first time, and I began to read the Gospels of the life and teachings of Jesus, I came to John chapter 10 and verse 10, where Jesus

stands before the crowds of His day and He says, "The thief does not come except to steal and to kill and to destroy," as He's speaking symbolically of Satan being the thief. He says, "That's the only motivation Satan has in your life and concerning your life is to kill and to steal and destroy but I, in contrast to that," Jesus says, "have come that you may have life, and that you may have that life more abundantly."

And that verse just jumped right out at me as I read it for the first time, and it described the experience that I had already been experiencing for the last year or two in Christ before I had come to that text for the first time. It was the first one that I'd ever memorized and wrote upon my heart. Jesus wants us to have the type of life that rests in Him.

Now, of course, we're going to spend three months looking at the different aspects and applications of rest. In fact, we're going to look at a future week in this quarterly where we just unpack that invitation in Matthew chapter 28 in verses--Matthew chapter 11, verses 28 to 30, "Come unto Me all ye who labor." But today we look more closely at getting some very much needed and regular physical and emotional rest. This is one of the rests that Jesus offers us right from the beginning. In fact, as we look at the first two pages of this week's lesson, it talks about how we are to proactively integrate physical rest into our daily lives and it points out for you and I that God is the one, Christ is the one, that took that initiative. He is the one that took that initiative to be able to explain and set before us a cycle of life that includes regular rest, physical and mental rest.

Now, I have to say that I very much appreciated that as I pointed out in different verses, how God took that first initiative in our life, that I'd never really thought of it before in concern to the first answer to that in the very first chapter of the first book of the Bible, Genesis chapter 1 and verse 5. In Genesis chapter 1 and verse 5, the Bible says: "God called the light day and the darkness He called night. So the evening and the morning were the first day." And ever since then, every 24 hours the sun finds itself setting over the horizon and disappearing for about 12 hours. And so halfway through every original 24-hour cycle it was regular. Since the Flood and different things have monkeyed up the planet in different ways, it's a little bit more scattered.

But, friends, the bottom line is that God had initiated a cycle of being awake and being asleep, of being active and finding ourselves in rest. Rest in Christ. And so that is the regular cue that we have for sleep.

Now, I have to confess that when I looked at this and I was contemplating this in preparation for our lesson study here today, that I began to ask the question to myself for the first time: I wonder what time Adam and Eve went to bed. Was it just like it was here 200 years ago before we had electricity, before we had kerosene lamps? You know, when everybody for the most part, right across the entire nation and across the globe, you know, when the sun set it was within half an hour everybody was in bed and going to sleep because we just didn't have a lot of good sources of light back then.

Now it does say in the same Genesis, in the same Genesis record, in chapter 1, that indeed God put the moon in the sky to be able to give a dimmer light throughout the night, that it's not pitch darkness but you could see to a limited degree but yet the cue was there: it's time for rest. Maybe Adam and Eve still took some quiet romantic night walks through the moonlight before they found themselves calling it a day. I don't know. The Bible doesn't give us record of such things. But one thing we do know is that God had set that cycle in place right from the get-go. The day, the light He called night and the darkness He called night. Later on, King David, a man after God's own heart, one that came to experience God in a very real way, he wrote under inspiration in Psalm 4 in verse 8, "I will lie down--I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety," he says. And so here, indeed even centuries and long after Adam and Eve had come to live on this planet, we find that another man that was after God's own heart was also one that found himself in peaceful sleep.

You know, insomnia is a growing problem in modern--in not only in modern America but in many countries around the world today. It's one thing I've never really struggled with. You know, my family and my friends always giggle when I say something like that. My mother always laughs. You know, sleeping has never been a problem for me. You know, I have other struggles that I deal with. But sleep has never been a problem. Insomnia is--I think I've had maybe less than a handful of restless, sleepless nights. So sleeping's never--my mom still--my daughters giggle because, you know, my mom will tell them stories about when I was just a little boy, you know, I was about five or six or seven, you know, I still had nap time. And she says--my mom says I'm the only child that she's ever known that comes up to her when it's nap time and says, "Mommy, is it my nap time now?"

So sleep has never been a problem for me and now that I've found the Lord and my conscience is clear, I find myself sleeping even better after I met Christ from 20 years age of onward. Why? Because now I sleep with a clear conscience as well. My heart is right with God and with the world. "I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety," as the quarterly study points us to that text and both are important for us to be able to have a healthy successful life in this world, to experience the abundant life.

Now, the second cycle that God put in place, right from the get-go, right from the moment that He created life on earth and created mankind and set us in the Garden of Eden, is found in the 2nd chapter of Genesis, Genesis chapter 2 and verses 2 to 3. At Seventh-day Adventist we're more acquainted to this than perhaps some of our other Christian friends that may be watching or visiting with us here in the church here this morning. But indeed, it is something that opened my eyes to the cycle of rest that God had intended from the very beginning for all of mankind, not just for the Jews, but as we come to Genesis chapter 2 we find only two men--one man I should say, and one woman and that is Adam and Eve. There wasn't such thing as a Jew. In fact, Jews never came to exist or live on the planet for hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of years after this. But God had established a cycle of rest and holiness and loyalty to God from the very beginning on a universal front.

And so, as we read in Genesis chapter 2, verses 2 through 3, it says: "And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. And then God blessed the seventh day and He sanctified it," that means He made it holy, "because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made." And so as God came to the end of the sixth day, His work was done. Every life form and species that He had intended to put on this planet originally was already completed. The atmosphere was perfect for His life-giving peace and abundance and prosperity for all of those different life forms or species. He had come to the pinnacle of His work when He created mankind in His own image, and now all was done and it was declared very good.

Now God could have said, "Okay, now from now on I want you to keep the weekly cycle: every six days, your calendar week starts over again. Every six days, you start a new week." But He didn't, did He? No, we find that as He come to the--as He came to the end of the sixth day, He said, "No, I'm going to cap off the week with a seventh day, not to do any work but to rest." Now, did God do that because He was worn out? Did God say, "Listen, I think it's time for us to get some R&R because I don't know about you, Adam and Eve, but I'm wiped out." No, not at all. In fact, later on, Isaiah made it very clear for us in Isaiah 40 and verse 28, he says, "Have you not known?" Isaiah cries out, the great prophet, "Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, neither faints nor is weary."

God never gets weary. He never sleeps, he never slumbers. God is totally alert and aware and understands the intents and purposes of all our thoughts in our minds continually, 24/7, throughout the entire planet. And not only on this planet but throughout the entire universe. God is a big God, amen? And so God didn't rest because He was worn out. God rested as an example for you and I, for Adam and

Eve, for all of mankind, that we might understand that God not only wants us to stop every day and find ourselves with our eyes closed for a time, before we start the day part or the light part of the next 24-hour cycle and day, but rather He also tells us that every seven days we are to take an entire 24-hour period, from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday.

On the seventh day of the first week that has been repeated uninterrupted ever since, we are to find ourselves in the holiness of the day that God declared holy and made blessed. Where we can take that collective... as a body of believers and say, as His children, "Thank You, Lord, for another week." And as the quarterly points out for us, it says it's a time when we stop doing and we just stop and we contemplate and we be. Be in the moment. Have you come to church today to be in the moment? To stop and put all the stresses and pressures, the bills, the work deadlines, the school papers and exams that we're studying for, the--all of these different things that stress us and challenge our emotion and our mental health and wellbeing and just stop and pause and say, "Thank You, Lord." And so God intended for the seventh day to be different from the other six. He made it holy, He blessed on it, He rested as our example.

Now, there's three activities that God has revealed in the Bible that He has designed for us to be able to experience and be involved in in different measures. And so those are, the first one which He gave by example when He stopped and He paused and He rested. He stopped working, he ceased from His work and He asked Adam and Eve to cease from any work or if they had done any work at the end of that first sixth day in which they were created, we do not know. But God said, "Okay, listen, we're going to spend a special day together, your first entire day together."

Now, this is the first complete day that Adam and Eve had ever experienced, and God says, "Now I want you to stop with Me and we're just going to stop and take it all in." Now, very clearly in Genesis chapter 2, later on, God did tell Adam and Eve that outside of that seventh day that they were to tend the garden, that labor and work was a very real part of God's intended plan for them, to find fulfillment in tending the garden and growing different vineyards in the future and all these other things that God had in store for their future and for their work. But He said, "Listen, the first day we're just going to hang out together, and I want you just to really take in everything that's around you. And not only do I want you to do it today, but I want you to do it every seven days." Take it all in. And so rest. Sometimes we need extra physical rest.

You know, sometimes we kid around and sometimes we look down our noses at some other believers in Seventh-day Adventist when we say, you know, after lunch we're going to go home and we're going to have a nap. We don't nap during the week but there is a special nap that we have on Sabbath afternoon. That's in harmony with the Bible. You know, but we're so work-driven in our culture and society in this part of the world that we almost look down our noses at people that might have a nap. But it's a time for physical rest, not to be lazy, to be sure. God doesn't want us to be lazy. And so if you're not tired, you shouldn't be taking a nap. But a lot of times we get to the end of the week and we're worn out.

We're not like God, we do have limits. And so reviving yourself, refreshing yourself, so that when you get up on Sunday morning and you get up on Monday morning, Tuesday morning, you have more energy because you've refilled your reserves. That's important for us to be able to do. And so physical rest on the Sabbath is important and it's a blessing that God intended for us to be able to experience in an extra measure on top of the nightly sleeps that we have every 24 hours. So physical rest.

The second activity is what Jesus says, Luke chapter 3 and verse 16, it says that as His custom was, Jesus went into the synagogue to read and unto worship. And so indeed, Jesus is on record in the Bible of going to church on a regular weekly basis. Every Sabbath morning He was found worshiping His Father in church. And that's why later, Paul inspired--God inspired Paul to write in Hebrews chapter 11, I think it's

verse 25, where he says, "Do not forsake the assembling of yourselves as some are in the habit of doing, but gather together and even more so, encouraging each other in love and in good works, as we see the day approaching."

And so as Jesus's Coming comes closer, we should actually be gathering together even more faithfully, unlike those who are in the habit of doing otherwise. And so God has called us to follow after the example of Jesus: worship God actively in church. That's very important for us to be able to experience. The third activity that God reveals and Jesus set that example is to do good works. And so again, this is active work but it's work that is essential to be able to relieve suffering, including people's hunger, their medical needs, and so we have a number of people that are doing holy work. Jesus says, "Do you not know that the priests profane the Sabbath and yet they were without guilt?"

Why? Because they're doing holy work. I'm working for you here today. I'm on the job. But it's holy work, is it not? God has called us. You know, our Sabbath School teachers that are teaching the children and in the different adult lessons and so on, pastors, laymen, they're all working. They're on the job. Some of them are volunteering, some of them are salaried, but we're all on the job. We're doing holy work. And same with the doctors. We have some doctors that are meeting people's needs as they just had a heart attack or they find themselves with their--with not being able to breathe properly or they just broke their leg, and thank God we have doctors that are available in our hospitals when that takes place on the Sabbath hours. And so we have doctors and nurses and policemen and they're still protecting us, so if somebody breaks into our house during the Sabbath hours, we can call the local police station. We can call 911 and there's still people on duty.

Why? Because they're doing holy work. God forbid that we have a burglar that's breaking into our house one evening on Friday night after we went to bed and we call 911, they say, "Happy Sabbath." You get a recording. It's just a recording that says, "Happy Sabbath. We're sorry we can't serve you right now but in about 12½ hours, when the sun goes down, please call back and we'll be happy to come over and help you out." No, there's different things that we need to be able to do on the Sabbath that God and Jesus says are holy works. These are good works that God has given to us. And Jesus got in hot water for doing that sometimes but He wants us to understand that.

Now, sometimes, we can err on the other side and we start to take that definition and we start to say, "Well, we can--we can go out and start washing people's windows on the Sabbath." Well, I don't know. I've, you know, I don't like a dirty window, I have to confess. I don't like looking out my window when it's dirty but I have to confess, I've never suffered from it. I've never looked at it and thought, "Boy, I'm just so tired, I just--I can't wash that window but, boy, I wish somebody would come and wash that window for me today because it's killing me."

So we have to be careful that we don't err and go, you know, take that good works definition to the point we're actually starting to sin against the Lord all in the name of the Lord. So we have to be careful on that end as well. And so there's three activities that God has called us to be experiencing. One of them is physical and mental rest. God intends for us to be able to experience rest.

Now, the quarterly continues to go on and tell us, you know, as many of us talk in our conversations and I've heard it with more than one of us, you know, it's amazing with all these time-saving devices, all these work-saving devices, that continue to be invented that we continue to be able to afford more and more and bring into our arsenal and to make it through the day, you would think that we have more spare time and we're more relaxed than ever before and any other generation. And yet, really, it almost seems to be the opposite, doesn't it? It seems to get us on a treadmill that gets us even running faster than ever before. And so, really, I think what's really happening, there's a couple of different reasons for

this and I don't claim to have all the answers by any means on this conversation, but I do think that one of the reasons is because of endless user menus.

Now, just think--stop and think about that. Endless user menus. Friends, everything that we buy has a user menu now. Have you noticed that? We get our phone, we get our watch, we get our car. You know, we just bought a car. The car has all kinds of user menus. You know, we got a manual that's that thick and it say, "Just go through this nice brief manual and it'll tell you all the different functions that this car can do for you." We have smart cars, we have smart phones, we have smart laptops. We have smart watches. Everything smart except me. That's the only problem, how three-quarters of it I'll never know could do it for me, you know? There's three-quarters of the things that all these things can do that I'll never use because I'll never learn it. I'm not smart enough to keep up with our smart stuff. And so we have endless user menus that are consuming hours and hours of our time on a weekly basis.

Information overload. It's a blessing and a curse at the same time. We can ask Alexa, you know, on a moment's notice, you know, "Tell us." We can ask Siri, we can ask Google. We can go on the Internet and do a Google search. We can find information all over the place but, friends, the information is coming at us so fast that I think that sometimes we find ourselves overwhelmed and it can be actually detrimental for our health. And so we don't use these devices to help create more spare time but we use them to get more done in the same 24 hours every day. And I'm guilty of that as well. So we're not using it to be able to create more spare time, we're just thinking, "Wow, we can even be more efficient and get things more done." And that's good to a real degree but it can also be to our detriment if we're not careful.

Now, of course, this is not the case for many others and I had to stop and pause for a moment as I thought, you know, I'm thinking of myself and I'm thinking of others, you know, that I know here in the church and otherwise that, you know, are regular productive good Americans, Canadians, and other citizens of different countries that are very productive and they see the value and the importance of being productive.

But, friends, we have a growing number of Americans around the world that are--that have too much spare time. We have millions of people on Welfare, Unemployment Insurance, living off their parents until they're in their 30s, 40s, 50s, and that's the other side of the coin. So we don't want to be found on that side of the coin as well. On Wednesday's lesson we look at Mark chapter 6 and verses 30 through 32. We find there that Jesus attempts to pull the apostles aside. He says, "We need to go and find a secluded place."

The crowds are pressing in on them again. The apostles are pumped, they're excited. They just got back from their first mission trip that Jesus had sent them out independently, aside and separate from Himself. They've had this Spirit-filled experience where they began to teach and cast out demons and preach in the Spirit and power of the Lord. As they are experiencing all these things, they come back and they're just thrilled to be able to share with Jesus. But it says they were so busy they didn't even have time to eat, and the people were demanding more and more and more until Jesus says, "Listen, we need some R&R. You need some R&R. We need to be able to pull away and find a secluded place."

And so sometimes, even outside of the Sabbath hours and outside of the night hours, God also has set the example through Jesus by telling us that there are times, even when we're involved in the Lord's work, that we need to be able to spend time aside in a secluded place and just get some real R&R, and refill those reserves, recharge the batteries.

You know, I've known some colleagues in the ministry that thought it was cool over the years, they thought it was cool to brag about how they hadn't taken a vacation or even a day off in several months.

One of them came up to me once and said, "You know, I haven't taken a day off in over a year and a half." And he thought that I should admire him from that. He was bragging. He was boasting. Yet when I read my Bible, the Bible doesn't tell me that's a good thing at all, no.

You know, for pastors and those who are busiest on Sabbath, that are doing holy work, they still need to be able to unplug, they still need to be able to unwind. They still need to be able to take that pastor switch or evangelist switch or administrator's switch and just kind of turn it off, and just take a whole day with their husband, with their wife, or with their family, and just go and unplug and keep that switch on the off switch for a day. That's important. You know, some of those same colleagues that were bragging about that years ago, years later they had different breakdowns. Their health started to break down and pretty soon they were totally incapacitated for a time.

You cannot live outside of the laws of nature that God has created us in. You cannot deny and live outside of those laws and expect to prosper and expect to be able to live a long, healthy, prosperous, productive life. James White, one of our great founders, now this is not a slight to him in any way. This is public knowledge. We find it in our history books. Ellen White wrote about it extensively in her own writings. Her great faithful husband, one of our first GC presidents, one of the ones we are indebted to James White for a tremendous amount of labor and work and sacrifice that he put in to be able to get this great Advent movement off its feet and off the ground. But James White found himself denying and trying to live outside of these laws of nature in concern to mental and physical rest. He was a workaholic as we call them. They didn't have that term back then but now we know what it--we have a technical term: workaholic. And as a workaholic, it caught up with him periodically, on a regular basis. He would go a few years and then he would have a complete mental and physical breakdown until he was completely incapacitated. Now, there's no record that he used to brag about it or boast about it, but he just thought that that was the way to do it. That was being faithful to the Lord. But God in the Bible and the spirit of prophecy tells us otherwise. So we need to learn from these things.

I want to read a quote here, as we're wrapping things up here. I see that our time is fastly running to a close, so I'm glad I'm able to be able to read. Let's go to Friday. We're going to skip to Friday. There's no way we'll be able to look at all the information in here and never are each week, but I want to ask you to come to Friday's lesson study. If--page 12 if you have your quarterly study with you, and on page 12 it says: "In the estimation," this is a quote from "The Desire of Ages," one of the greatest, well, the greatest book, I believe, on the life of Christ, outside of the Bible.

It says: "In the estimation of the rabbis, it was the sum of religion to always be in a bustle of activity. They depended upon some outward performance to show their superior piety. Thus, they separated their souls from God and built themselves up in self-sufficiency. The same danger still exists. As activity increases and men become successful in doing any work for God, there is a danger of trusting to human plans and methods. There is a tendency to pray less and to have less faith. Like the disciples, we are in danger of losing sight of our dependence on God and seeking to make a savior of our activity. We need to look constantly to Jesus, realizing that it is His power which does the work. And while we are to labor earnestly for the salvation of the lost," in other words, don't get her wrong. It's not that she's saying that we are to not labor earnestly for the salvation of the lost. We must do so. "But we must also take time for meditation, for prayer, and for the study of the Word of God. Only the work accomplished with much prayer, and sanctified by the merit of Christ, will the end prove to be of efficient for good."

Now, I think I should probably clarify meditation because that's become a kind of a hot button in recent years as different forms of meditation have kind of crept into different circles, even within the Seventh-day Adventist Church on a kind of more near-Eastern yoga kind of type facet or kind. But the meditation here that Ellen White is talking about when we talk and meditate is more synonymous to ponder. We need to stop and just spend some time pondering. When you read the book of the Bible and you find

yourself stopping once in a while and you just ponder on what you just read. So it's not just about seeking the information, it's about pondering, meditating, on that information. Meditating on the person behind the meditation, upon God, upon Jesus.

Ellen White counsels us and says that we should stop and pause and meditate, she says up to an hour a day just on the last events of Christ's life in the last week of His life and death and Resurrection. And so that's the kind of meditation that is being spoken about there. Well, there's also the emotional drain and rest that we need from as well.

We don't have time to be able to look at Jeremiah chapter 45 but if you haven't looked there already, there's a classic example there where the poor secretary of Jeremiah, Jeremiah didn't really write his own words. God gave him the words and then Jeremiah told his secretary or scribe, Baruch, to be able to write it down for him. And poor Baruch, he kind of got the short end of the staff when he was kind of in Egypt as the rebellious Israelites had forced him and Jeremiah to go down that way and so not only did Baruch experience all of this tragedy and destruction by the Babylonians in Jerusalem and in Israel, forced to go into exile into Egypt, but now the rebellious leaders that forced them into Egypt, are blaming Baruch and saying that Jeremiah's prophets are false and Baruch is the one that put him up to it, so that they would all be killed by the Babylonians. And so now Baruch has got woe upon woe as he says: "I have now got grief upon my sorrow," and so sometimes we go through valleys where our emotional tank is being drained extra, in an extra measure. And so we have to be able to measure that out and counter that with extra rest, as well. And, of course, Elijah is another classic example of that.

Well, friends, this is another week and I pray that you'll faithfully go through the next quarterly as we continue to study. Don't forget to take advantage of our free gift offer which is "A Rest in Christ." It's all about the Sabbath and you'll be able to find that information on the screen. It's offer number 813. You can dial 1-866-788-3966, which is 1-866-Study-More, and we'll be happy to be able to send you a free copy of that if you are in North America or in one of the American territories. And you can also get a digital download for that, and that'll be available on the screen as well. So God bless you and we look forward to seeing you next week.

Announcer: Don't forget to request today's life-changing free resource. Not only can you receive this free gift in the mail, you can download a digital copy straight to your computer or mobile device. To get your digital copy of today's free gift, simply text the keyword on your screen to 40544 or visit the web address shown on your screen and be sure to select the digital download option on the request page. It's now easier than ever for you to study God's Word with Amazing Facts wherever and whenever you want. And most important, to share it with others.

Laren: I'm from Armenia, I'm Armenian, and I was born there but I was raised in L.A. I was a sophomore in high school so, give or take, 15, 16 years old. And I had some idea about God because I was raised in a Christian home, but to know Him as the Bible taught, no clue. I was really poor in math so my mom took me to a math tutor every Sunday morning to sharpen my skills, if you will.

And one particular Sunday morning, we were watching those Sunday morning TV shows where the preachers are preaching and Doug Batchelor happened to be on. I paid attention. I'm like, "Mom, makes pretty good sense though," because he was back up with Scripture. So once Doug Batchelor finished his sermon, the announcer said, "If you're interested in Bible studies, you can go to the Amazing Facts web site and there is a link there for free Bible studies." So I said, "I've got spring break next week. Might as well just do it because I have nothing else to do."

Well, I did it for about two, three days non-stop. I was up until two, three in the morning doing the Bible Study Guides. And when I was done, I was, like, "Wow, I have no idea about God. I thought I did, but I

don't." So as I was beginning to learn all these things, my mom was open because she's the one who was actually watching the shows, and so she began to study alongside with me after my first lessons were done. And she embraced the truth because she was open to the truth.

But what the real problem was, was my grandmother. Growing up in an Armenian home, if you ever go away from your own religion, from your own Christianity, it's like you're an heretic. So there was a war between myself and my grandma. So I had to study with her in her own language, in Armenian, to show from her Bible the things that I was learning was actually from the truth. So as my mom and I began to attend the church, we made a decision to get baptized as members. And so we got baptized some months later after doing some Bible studies with the pastor and then I went to school and I said to my friends, "I'm officially a Seventh-day Adventist," with a big grin on my face. And they said to me, "What is that?"

It dawned on me, I'm a teenager, going to high school, I'm not ordained, I'm not a professor, I don't know much. I just know that I did some Bible studies, I learned about Christ, and now I'm sharing with those friends of mine. So I began to study with some of my friends in the school bus and in class about the things I was learning, and I began to share the Bible Study Guides from Amazing Facts with them. And I gave them some DVDs from Amazing Facts as well.

And I began to read and read, because as I was sharing things with people, they asked me questions about God, to which I said, "Let me get back to you." So I had to go back and purchase some more books and study out those topics so I can give them an answer. I probably ordered over \$1000 worth of books from Amazing Facts, books on revelation and Daniel and prophecy and the law and grace and all sorts of things.

And so, Amazing Facts was really crucial at that stage where it provided the resources I needed to know the Bible better and to share my faith with others. But it's funny how God works because years later, they themselves got baptized in church and when they came to me, they said, "I am officially a Seventh-day Adventist myself."

To this very day, every Sabbath morning my mom isn't able to go to church but she watches Amazing Facts online every Sabbath as her divine worship. If it wasn't for Amazing Facts, I would have not known Christ. I would have not had that peace that He offers. And all these people who came to know Christ would have not had the opportunity. My name is Laren-- I want to thank you for changing my life.

Announcer: "Amazing Facts" Changed Lives.

Peggy Tuan: My name is Peggy Tuan. I'm originally from Houston, Texas. We lived in Midland for about 14, 15 years. When my husband had a job offer to move to Detroit, we went, you know, expecting things to be easier as far as financial situations go, and, you know, once we got there we realized the cost of living there was actually worse than it was here. And so, he was working more, he was out of town a lot because he was a truck driver.

There was a time when I felt like I was taking care of my girls on my own and any situation that would come up, he wasn't there, you know, it was just me trying to take care of everything. And I felt kind of angry towards God for that. Felt kind of angry toward my husband for that, you know? And at that point, I was already kind of angry with God because He hadn't been answering my prayers. 'Course, my prayers back then were really selfish-type prayers. They were more, you know, "God, we need more money. We've got, you know, we need financial help," and I just thought, "What's the point? God's not listening to me. I don't even want--I don't even want to have anything to do with Him anymore."

There was one night I had been reading Revelation and I'd read through the whole thing and it made no sense whatsoever to me. And I, after I finished it, I said--I prayed, "Lord, help me to understand what this means. You must want me to understand. It's in your Word. I must--I need to know what it means." And so I went on to bed and couple of days later, we got a flyer in the mail that said, "Amazing Facts presents Revelations Prophecy Seminar." And I was, like, "Wow, that's answered a prayer." You know, I was so excited. My husband was too.

And so we decided we were going to go to that seminar. And I just knew when I got through the whole seminar, I just knew that's where I was going to be. With Amazing Facts, I have learned so much about the Bible and about how to study the Bible, which was what I needed before because without knowing how to study the Bible, you can't get to know Jesus. And that's the most amazing thing to me is that I-- God has led me to the place where I am now, to where I can learn every day more and more about His character and how much He really does love us.

Looking back, I'm just happy that He led me the way He did, even though I wasn't really listening. God has a way to just lead you where you need to be and take you down the right path but I look at my life now and I think, "Wow, if it could have been that way before, and I would have had Him in my life this way all along," because, you know, I don't know. I'm just--I'm just happy now, you know? It doesn't matter what's going on in my life, I am--I'm happy with God.

♪ God's Word is life to me. ♪♪