



The Cost of Rushing, Rewards of Rest

The Wired Word for the Week of May 3, 2026

In the News

A few years ago, John Mark Comer was the pastor of a mega-church, preaching six services on Sundays. He rarely saw his wife and children, and barely saw himself in the mirror. Always in a hurry, he had what he called "a gnawing sense that there is always more to do; [with] a schedule that makes little room for God." It dawned on him, he said, that "you can be a success as a pastor and a failure as an apprentice of Jesus." Exhausted, increasingly cranky and unloving, he knew something had to give.

So he took a sabbatical and began reordering his life, trying to model his actions upon the simple way Jesus lived. Over time, Comer adopted nine habits Jesus practiced: Scripture reading, service, keeping the Sabbath, solitude, prayer, fasting, community, witness and generosity. He drew on the monastic tradition of [St. Benedict](#) and writings of the late [Dallas Willard](#) as he built spiritual disciplines to guide his life. He began to observe "rhythms of rest," as he "worked" to "[ruthlessly eliminate hurry](#)" from his life.

To break the hold technology had over his life, Comer initiated a regular digital detoxification, deleting social media and web browsers, turning off

notifications, and setting his screen to gray scale, so he wouldn't be as tempted by colorful, noisy apps.

According to Michael Zigarelli, who conducted a 5-year global study of "obstacles to [spiritual] growth," hurried busyness can lead to "God becoming more marginalized in Christians' lives, [a] deteriorating relationship with God [and] more conformity to a culture of busyness, hurry and overload. And then the cycle begins again."

When journalist Nancy Walecki tried Comer's spiritual disciplines, she said she began to "revel in the fact that I could do nothing for a day and God would keep the universe going." As she focused her attention more intentionally, her values, priorities and behavior shifted: She became a volunteer at a soup kitchen and began carrying food with her when on walks, so she had something to give people who looked hungry. Walecki also experienced greater happiness, though she noted that "according to Comer the purpose of a spiritual discipline is 'not personal fulfillment' but it is 'to have your character transformed by your attunement to God. Then it will be easier to follow Jesus's two greatest commandments: love God and love others.'"

Walecki says Comer isn't legalistic "about the practices; he doesn't expect everyone to do all of them, all of the time: Jesus himself rebelled against the rigidity of the Pharisees by healing people and harvesting grain on the Sabbath. [Comer] stressed that the question shouldn't be Did I fast this week? or Did I observe the Sabbath? [but] Am I becoming more gentle? and Am I becoming more humble?" Or, as Ann VosKamp framed it, "Who am I becoming?"

The highest value in God's kingdom economy, according to Jesus, is love, which is labor- intensive and time-consuming. VosKamp suggested that may

be why Paul names patience first in his manifesto on love in [1 Corinthians 13](#). You can't hurry love.

"'The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry' is a manifesto to slow down, savor each day, and love deeper rather than live faster," VosKamp said, adding that "an unhurried life can draw you closer to God, to others, and to your own soul."

More on this story can be found at these links:

[Is Hurry the Great Enemy of Spiritual Life? *The Atlantic*](#)

[How Hurry Is Incompatible With Love. *annvoskamp*](#)

[The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry. *NorthStar Church*](#)

[The Great Enemy of Spirituality in Our Day ... *Zoe-life Explorations*](#)

Applying the News Story

Use the news to consider what our faith teaches us about the human need for rest, not rush; Sabbath, not speed; holiness, not hurry.

The Big Questions

1. What impact does hurrying have on our relationship with God and others, and on our physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health?
2. What factors or limitations might make it difficult to slow down?
3. What might you need to drop or release to live more simply, more like Jesus did? What could you eliminate from your daily calendar? Maybe start with one a day?
4. How does the Holy Spirit grow the fruit of patience in the life of believers?
5. How can we practice spiritual disciplines in healthy ways, so as to avoid adding legalistic burdens to our lives?

Confronting the News With Scripture and Hope

Here are some Bible verses to guide your discussion:

Ecclesiastes 3:1, 11 (ESV)

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven. ... [God] has made everything beautiful in its time. ... (For context, read [Ecclesiastes 3:9-13](#).)

The Bible is full of stories of people waiting: the childless waiting for the end of barrenness, and the birth of a child (Abraham and Sarah, Rachel, Hannah, Elizabeth and Zechariah); God's people waiting for deliverance from slavery in Egypt and captivity in Babylon and Persia; humanity waiting for the coming of God's promised Messiah.

The Teacher in this passage says God has given everyone work to keep them busy, provide sustenance, and give them pleasure. But in the span of one lifetime, we go through many seasons, just as a plant grows from a seed to maturity through various stages that cannot be rushed. Times of healing, construction, grief, celebration, searching, loving, accumulation and divesting, tearing apart and stitching together, fighting injustice and making peace, all take time.

Josef Korbel related the story about how his little daughter was fascinated by the rose bush in their garden. He pointed to a bud and told her it wouldn't be long before she would see it in full bloom. The next day, he was shocked to find the bruised flower petals scattered on the ground. "Darling, what happened?" he asked Alenka. Bursting into tears, the child replied, "I watched the bud, but it wasn't blooming, so I tried to help. But I broke it!" Taking his little girl in his arms, Josef kissed her wet cheeks tenderly, and explained, "It's God's job to help the rose grow. Our job is to watch and wait. But don't worry. Even when we make a mistake, God knows how to grow more roses." And he did.

Paul assures the Philippians "that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Jesus Christ" ([Philippians 1:6](#)). We can be confident that the same God who worked in the lives of the Philippians will also complete the work he began in us ... in God's time.

Questions: What biblical figures can you recall who tried to hurry God along when they felt God wasn't moving fast enough? What happened as a result? When, if ever, have you been impatient with God? What does impatience reveal about a person's relationship with God?

Isaiah 40:27, 31

Why do you say, O Jacob, and assert, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the LORD, and my right is disregarded by my God"? ... but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint. (For context, read [Isaiah 40:27-31](#).)

Sometimes the people of Israel complained that God wasn't there for them when they needed him most. This reminds us of the popular poem, [Footprints in the Sand](#). In this text, God responds that the fault is not with God, who doesn't faint or grow weary, and who gives power to the fainthearted and strength to the powerless (vv. 28-29). If the people are exhausted and weak, it is because they have disconnected from the Lord who loves them. Those who wait for the Lord, he says, shall renew their strength!

In [Genesis 3:8](#), we read that after the first humans disobeyed God's command, "They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden." Humans have been trying to hide from God from time immemorial, to no

avail. God knows exactly where we are, and longs for our companionship, just to walk and talk with us as friends.

In his book *Three Mile an Hour God*, the late Japanese theologian Kosuke Koyama wrote: "God walks 'slowly' because he is love. If he is not love he would have gone much faster. Love ... is a different kind of speed from the technological speed to which we are accustomed. It is ... the speed of love."

Questions: Why do people try to hide from God? Why do the biblical writers use the language of *walking* with God rather than *running* with God? How can we walk with God at God's pace?

Mark 1:35

In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. (For context, read [Mark 1:21-39](#).)

From the beginning of his ministry, Jesus was surrounded by people clamoring for his time and attention. Everyone wanted a piece of him. Yet he never seemed to be in a hurry. He took time with an unnamed woman who had been hemorrhaging for 12 years, even though others urged him to give his time to the dying daughter of a member of the ruling class instead. Even when he was told that his friend Lazarus was at death's door, he didn't panic, but waited until the time was right to travel to Bethany.

In this text, Mark tells us that the morning after a taxing day of ministry, Jesus got up, sought a quiet place where he could talk to his heavenly Father. His disciples had to hunt for him, and when they found him, they told him everyone was searching for him. But by spending time in prayer, Jesus had been able to focus on his mission, rather than react to "the tyranny of the urgent." So he moved on to other towns to proclaim the message of the kingdom of God.

Question: If even Jesus, the Son of God, felt the need to spend time alone with God, what does that suggest about the value of such times of solitude for the rest of us mortals?

Matthew 11:28-30

[Jesus said,] "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (No context needed.)

When Jesus saw the crowds, Matthew says "he had compassion for them because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd" ([Matthew 9:36](#)). Here Jesus uses a term from animal husbandry as a metaphor for the kind of relationship he offers to us: He speaks here of the practice of placing a young beast of burden with a strong, experienced mentor who will bear the greater share of the load while showing the young one the ropes.

Questions: When do you feel most weary, burdened, harassed and helpless? Who else around you seems to feel the same way? What is it about Jesus' nature that makes him capable of giving us rest for our souls? What do you hope to learn from him by taking his yoke upon you? How is his yoke different from that of other masters? How does Jesus bear the weight of our burdens when we agree to be yoked together with him as we walk together through life's journey?

For Further Discussion

1. Comment on this, from [Practice of the Presence of God: The Best Rule of Holy Life](#), by Brother Lawrence: "Do not be discouraged by the resistance you will encounter from your human nature; you must go against your human inclinations. Often, in the beginning, you will think that you are

wasting time, but you must go on, be determined and persevere in it until death, despite all the difficulties."

2. The longstanding two-hour marathon milestone was broken in London over the weekend by two men, Kenyan Sabastian Sawe, who won with a time of 1:59:30, and Ethiopian Yomif Kejelcha, who came in second 11 seconds later. The winning time amounts to running a 4 minute 33 second mile 26 times in a row. Why are humans apparently so fascinated with speed?

3. In an online commentary on John 10:1-10, Rev. Joseph Yoo, a pastor in Texas, said that when we hear Jesus state that he came to give people abundant life, we think he means "more, more money, more success, more stability, more things finally working out," which is what the prosperity gospel teaches. But Yoo says that idea "sets you up for disappointment, because when life doesn't get better, when life doesn't get bigger, when following Jesus actually makes things a little bit more complicated and difficult, you start wondering, did I do something wrong? Did I not have enough faith? Is God disappointed in me?"

"More never knows its limits," Yoo continues. "More says, once you get there, then you'll be okay." The problem, Yoo says, is "You hit the goal, you got what you were chasing, and for a moment, it felt good, but then that feeling started fading ... and suddenly, what you have just doesn't feel like enough anymore. In life, you can have more and still feel very empty.

"So maybe abundant life isn't about having more. Maybe it looks like being grounded even when life isn't going your way. Maybe it looks like being at peace without needing everything to be fixed. Maybe it's like knowing you're not alone even when things feel uncertain," Yoo adds.

How would you define "abundant life"?

4. React to this: TWW team member Frank Ramirez commented that the way J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy is presented in the movies is radically differently from the way the story is told in the books. Because of the demands of an action film, there's almost continuously some battle or other action going on in the cinematic version. However, though there is danger, and there are battles in the print version, there are also long stretches where there is rest, recovery and sanctuary. The pace of action in the written text varies, sometimes moving quickly, and other times slowing down.

"Now that I'm retired," Ramirez pondered, "I've discovered that the complaints of so many retirees that I heard during my decades of ministry, that they were busier than when they had a job, is true -- of course I'm doing things I enjoy -- writing, reading, preaching when I'm asked, exercise, beekeeping, cooking, etc. But as one who is not naturally a contemplative, I work hard (that phrase) to give myself permission to do nothing. Even bees are not always busy. At various times they are observed doing nothing."

5. Ponder these lines from Michael Vernon's poem, "When Sorrow Is Shared":

Do not ask grief

to hurry.

Do not dress it

in easy answers.

Do not tell the brokenhearted

to be strong

when what they need most

is permission

to be human.

Sit beside them.

Say less.

Listen more.

Let the silence breathe. ...

Grief does not need

to be fixed.

It needs witness.

It needs patience.

It needs someone willing

to help carry

what cannot be cured. ...

Responding to the News

Check out the [Practicing the Way website](#) and [Dallas Willard Ministries](#) to access free tools for communities of faith that want to grow as apprentices of Jesus.

Prayer

Eternal God, you always have time for us. Forgive us for thinking we are too busy or self-important to spend time with you. We cannot hide from you, and though we may try to run away from you, we are always in your presence. So teach us to slow down and pay attention to what you want to say to us, to discover the delight of being with you, the Lover of our souls. Amen.

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