



Stopping to the Rhythm

by Ginny Victory

"I need more time!"

It's that time of year again when things gear up; school is starting, business ramps up, holiday season planning begins. It's the season when my clients really start to say: "I'm overwhelmed!" "How can I get it all done?" "I need more time."

We are getting more and more efficient and have less and less time; and in the process sacrificing meaningful contribution, relationships, and health.

So, how do we get more productivity, connection and energy?

Stop.

The word Sabbath, pronounced *Sahbaht* in Hebrew means "stop." Like the spaces and rest symbols in a piece of music and punctuation in writing, Sabbath creates a rhythm or a cadence for our lives.

God created natural stops all throughout creation: He created light and dark; day and night; sky and water; land and sea; the sun, moon and stars – the seasons. He set up a system of stopping: resting one day in seven; celebrating seven major holidays in the Jewish year – most lasting seven or more days; letting the land rest on the seventh year; and enjoying a huge party on the 49th (50th) year – the Jubilee.

In stopping we are no longer in forward or linear movement. We are still. Here we can know God; and as a result experience time as He does (Ps 90:4, Gen 1:1-5). Rob Bell on his "Everything is Spiritual" DVD gave a fascinating scientific explanation about how time is multidimensional, thus it can stand still or expand.

As I ponder this; it occurs to me that I experience this expansion of time during prayer, worship, a meal with friends, leisure activities, a good conversation and when I'm in coaching sessions. Time feels big and spacious – wide open; it feels as if it is standing still and is so peaceful – it is in this space that I am absorbed in the activity of that moment and fully present. It is the place where I'm connected to the Holy Spirit. Even though I might be tracking time in a linear way (on the clock), it feels so much longer and richer. It may be 10 minutes or an hour, but feels like it was a leisurely afternoon.

So did I gain more time? I don't know; what I do know is that whenever I challenge a client (or myself) to stop and breathe, stop and take a nap, stop and sit in the sun, stop and put on worship music, stop and be.....they come back to their next coaching session having been more connected to the Lord and their loved ones, feeling healthier and more energized and gotten a number of things completed on their "to do" list – and are enjoying some peace and fulfillment.

All of the above activities might be considered "non-productive" or "a waste of time" or we might say, "I don't have time for that." And yet, when we focus on productivity, maximizing time, being responsible and trying to get as much done as possible we are effectively shrinking time and blocking access to the Lord.

I hear Jesus saying that Sabbath is not a "to do" or a day of the week, but a lifestyle. A lifestyle of regular stops that result in connection, health and productivity.

What will it take for you to stop?

In what new ways will you integrate *Sabbaht* into your day?

What will be the rhythm or cadence of your life this year?

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