

Just Breathe: Rest Devotional



The book *Just Breathe (and Take a Sip of Coffee): Homeschool in Step with God* encourages homeschooling moms like you and like me to truly rest in the Lord. When we truly rest in the Lord, then we can finally simplify our homeschooling and enjoy this God-given mission of motherhood. In the book, *Just Breathe*, the first section describes the Sabbath Principle and how to apply it spiritually, academically, and mentally to our homeschooling.

In this mini-devotion, *Just Breathe & Rest in the Lord*, biblical passages are given that will help you focus on what it truly means to *rest* in the Lord. Each devotion focuses on a particular verse and ends with a prayer. It is a topical study based on the word “*rest*.”

The word *rest* is used in many ways throughout the Bible. Depending on the context, the word *rest* has many different meanings. All of the meanings listed below (with the exception of ** definition) can be applied to our walk with the Lord and to our homeschooling journey.

REST, n. *L. requiem*,

- Cessation of motion or action of any kind as rest from labor; rest from mental exertion; rest of body or mind.
- Quiet; repose; a state free from motion or disturbance; a state of reconciliation to God.
- Sleep; as, retire to rest.
- Peace.
- A place of quiet; permanent habitation.
- Cessation from tillage.
- That on which any thing leans or lies for support.
- Final hope
- The final sleep, death**

REST, n. L. *Resto*

- To cease from action or motion of any kind; to stop; a word applicable to any kind of motion.
- To cease from labor, work or performance.
- To be quiet or still; to be undisturbed.
- To cease from war; to be at peace.
- To be quiet or tranquil, as the mind; not to be agitated by fear, anxiety or other passion.
- To lie; to repose; as, to rest on a bed.
- To sleep; to slumber.
- To lean; to recline for support; as, to rest the arm on a table.
- To stand on; to be supported by; as, a column rests on its pedestal.
- To be satisfied; to acquiesce;
- To lean; to trust; to rely;
- To abide; to remain with.
- To be calm or composed in mind; to enjoy peace of conscience.

Rest is a noun, and it is also verb. When *rest* is used as a verb and applied biblically, it can have two main applications: cease from activity or to partake in a restful activity. This may seem like a paradox, but the Lord calls us to take a Sabbath so we can rest from our work but to also spend time in worship; we are resting from work yet engaging in the act of worship. As a homeschooling mom, sometimes we need to rest from labor (cease activity), yet sometimes we need to rest by doing something we love as a form of relaxation. We can spend an hour, an afternoon, a day, or even a week truly resting, or we can spend that time engaged in a restful activity that brings us joy and peace. When we rest in the Lord and in His plans for our family, it is truly an act of worship. In this devotion, we dig into God's Word and the principle of Sabbath and rest so that we can apply it to our mission of motherhood and ministry of homeschooling.

I pray this devotional and the book, *Just Breathe (and Take a Sip of Coffee): Homeschool in Step with God* will bless your homeschooling journey for God's glory and honor.

Day One:

It all begins with this verse: [Isaiah 58:13-14](#) ESV

“If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the Lord honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly; then you shall take delight in the Lord, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

Look at the promises given in this verse. If we honor the Sabbath by taking time to worship and to praise the Lord, we shall delight in the Lord, we will ride the heights of the earth, and God will feed us with the heritage of Jacob.

When honoring the Sabbath and truly resting in the Lord, we will have the time to taste and see the goodness of the Lord. We will witness His graciousness, we will see His fingerprints in our lives, and we will fully understand that the Lord delights in us and in our families. We will be blessed with joy in the Lord and a peace that surpasses all understanding.

When honoring the Sabbath and truly resting in the Lord, we will ride on the heights of the earth. In this verse, high places mean *strongholds*. Therefore, by honoring the Sabbath and spending time in worship, we will be able to defeat those things that hold us back, those strong holds in our lives. We will be able to ride over them and possess them. When we take the time to truly rest, we are given the strength in the power of the Holy Spirit to overcome whatever obstacles that are in our way. We will be able to defeat any spiritual strongholds the enemy uses to keep us feeling defeated. We are given the power to take our thoughts captive.

When honoring the Sabbath and truly resting in the Lord, we will feed on the heritage of Jacob. Spiritually- speaking, we will possess the land promised to us. If God has called you to homeschool, your “land” is your home and homeschool. If we delight in the Lord and make His plans our priority, He will give us possession of the “land.”

To bring this home, read The Message Version.

*“If you watch your step on the Sabbath
and don't use my holy day for personal advantage,
If you treat the Sabbath as a day of joy,
God's holy day as a celebration,*

*If you honor it by refusing 'business as usual,'
making money, running here and there—*

Then you'll be free to enjoy God!

Oh, I'll make you ride high and soar above it all.

I'll make you feast on the inheritance of your ancestor Jacob."

Yes! God says so!

If we truly dedicate our lives, our families, our homes, and our homeschooling to the Lord, then we will be free to *enjoy* the Lord! Our stress and anxiety will be replaced with joy and delight. We will ride high above it all and *soar*! We won't just get through our days, our weeks, and our year, but we will soar high above it all. God won't just give us what we need, but we will *feast* on the blessings of His promises.

Prayer:

Lord, help me to turn back my foot and take the time each day and each week to honor the Sabbath. Help me do what is pleasing in your sight on the Sabbath and keep me from doing my own pleasures on your holy day. Father God, give me the desire to call the Sabbath a delight and your holy day of the Lord honorable; I pray I will be obedient, that I will honor your Sabbath. I pray I will not go my own ways, seek my own pleasures, or talk idly.

Thank you, God, that in honoring your Sabbath and truly resting in You, that I will be joyful and that You will be my joy that I shall take delight in You. I pray my family will delight in You and in Your Word. Thank you, Father, for making me ride on the heights of the earth and for helping me to loosen the strongholds that keep me tethered to this earth and to my worldly desires. Thank you, Jesus, that You are the living water and You are all that I need. Thank you that You will feed me with the heritage of Jacob and my soul will be satisfied. Thank you, God, that Your promises and plans for this school year will be fulfilled. I know these words are true and these promises will be fulfilled because they have come forth from the mouth of the Lord.

May your will be done,

Amen

Day Two:

[1 Peter 5:7](#) ESV

“Cast all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.”

I often think I am giving all of my fears and worries to the Lord, and then the stomach pains begin or the fever blisters reappear or the migraine hits. Then I realize I gave it all to the Lord in word only. My fears, my anxiety, and my stress rear their ugly heads in the form of some kind of physical manifestation. I realize I only pushed my fears deep, deep down and didn't truly give them all to the Lord. I know this because as the migraine hits, I find myself tapping away on my computer frantically trying to search the internet for the solution to my present problem. Or I feel the fever blister begin to surface as I vent and complain to my husband about some issue I have with a child or in our homeschooling. Or when the stomach pains attack in the middle of the night it is when I'm lying in bed obsessing over a problem instead of bowing on my knees in prayer.

The Lord tells us to cast ALL of our anxieties on Him. Why? It is because He cares for us. Sometimes being a mom can be lonely. Sometimes being a homeschooling mom can be very lonely. The Lord has called us to be homeschooling moms, but He didn't call us to do this alone. He tells us to lean on him, and when we do, we will find rest. We know on the best days and in our worst hours, the Lord will always be there. He knows our concerns and our anxieties before we do. We need to be humble enough and brave enough to admit we need help and to truly give it all to God.

Prayer:

Father God, I humbly come to you on bended knee. I give to you all of my worries, all of my concerns, and all of my anxieties. I am casting them all at your feet. Lord, help me to remember that when I am feeling lonely or outnumbered, that you care for me. Help me to seek your face and to sit in your presence when I am feel alone or abandoned. I know you care for me. I know you love me. Help me to rest in the assurance that You are all I need.

May Your will be done,

Amen

Day Three:

Mark 6:31 ESV

“And he said to them, ‘Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while.’ For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat.”

When you read this passage in context, you realize this is at the end of a mission trip for the disciples. Jesus had sent them out two by two to preach the gospel and to heal the sick in His name. They had just returned, exhausted and hungry. They were also mourning the loss of John the Baptist. Word had reached them that the prophet had been beheaded. When the disciples returned, Jesus saw the crowds. They had been following him and their needs were plenty, but Jesus also knew his disciples needed time to rest. They needed time to refill.

The Lord knows what is best for us. He knows what is best for our children. He knows what the future holds and encourages us to spend time resting so we can continue the journey filled with the Holy Spirit and with His living water. Sometimes, we just need to take time to eat! I know that sounds strange but in the midst of fulfilling everyone else’s physical, emotional, and spiritual needs, we forget or neglect to meet our own needs. We are no good to our families if we are not healthy- mentally, physically or spiritually.

We also need to remove ourselves to a desolate place so we can be fed spiritually. The Lord knows we need time away from the distractions. Taste and see the goodness of the Lord. Ezekiel was instructed to eat the scroll given to him and it was sweet. God’s Word is all we spiritually need. It is satisfying. It is all sufficient. We need to make the time to rest and to feast on His Word and His promises.

Prayer:

Lord, help me to hear your tender voice to “Come away.” Help me to obey your endearing command to go to a “desolate place” so that I can rest a while. Father God, it is so hard to put things aside to make time to rest. It is even harder to remove the distractions. Many are coming and going. My children need me. They are hungry for physical substance, for emotional nourishment, and for spiritual food. Sometimes we are so busy that we do not have time or the leisure to even eat or feast on your Word. Lord, multiply my time, my strength, and my endurance so that I will not only feed on your Word but that I will spread a feast before my children. May your will be done, Amen

Day Four:

[Psalm 127:2](#) ESV

“It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for he gives to his beloved sleep.”

Are you on the perpetual hamster wheel? You work, you toil, you prepare, and yet nothing seems to get done. Do you feel like you are constantly spinning your wheels yet going no where at all? Friend, take my hand and let's get off this spinning hamster wheel and off this crazy train. The funny thing about a hamster wheel is all you have to do is stop moving your feet and the wheel stops turning. Yep, that's it. Just stop peddling. Just stop moving. Take a rest! Once the wheel stops turning (and you catch your breath), you can calmly open the door and get off the wheel. While you are at it, extend a hand to your homeschooling friend who is also stuck on her out-of-control hamster wheel. You might just be the extra encouragement she needs to stop and rest.

We need to stop eating the bread of anxious toil. Do you know who prepared and baked that loaf of bread? You did. Jesus invites us to eat of His living bread. His food is eternal. It gives us true nourishment. It satisfies, and we do not have to toil to bake it. The Lord provides it and provides it in abundance because we are his beloved. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God and the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Get some real sleep. Get some real rest.

Prayer:

Dear heavenly Father, I humbly fall at your feet and confess I have been working in my own strength. In vain, I rise up early in the morning and go to bed late at night. I am not at peace, and I don't take time to rest and to worship in your presence like I should. Instead of feasting on the Bread of Life, your living Word, I eat the bread of anxious toil. In my haste, I come to you last instead of first. Father God, You are good and gracious. You give to your beloved sleep. Give me the strength to rise early to spend time with you. Help me to remember your goodness throughout the day and to spend time in prayers of thanksgiving at the end of the day. It is when I completely give you each day and praise you for your goodness each night, that I can truly rest in your saving grace and your daily provision.

In Jesus' Might Name, Amen

Day Five:

[Exodus 33:14](#) ESV

“And he said, ‘My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.’ ”

Who promises to go with us? God! He promises to be with us. He promises to walk this journey with us. What does God promise to give us? Rest. If we walk with God and on the path He has prepared for us, not only will He be with us but He will give us rest. When I am doing something I know is of God, I feel a sense of peace. The situation might be scary or the task may feel overwhelming, but I have an unexplainable sense of peace.

When I need to drive somewhere new, I prefer to have my husband with me. There is a sense of security in knowing he is with me. I am less anxious as I’m driving. I am less fearful about what is ahead. I am more confident. I even sleep better in strange places when my husband is with me. I can truly rest because I feel safe. The same is true for our children. When they have us by their side, they are less fearful and more confident. They sleep more soundly. They are well rested.

Moses was scared to continue on with the Israelites without the Lord. The Lord knew Moses was nervous so He not only promised His presence but allowed Moses to witness His glory. Moses knew God was with him every step of the way. This confidence gave Moses a sense of peace, which allowed him to truly rest in the Lord. In our homeschooling, the Lord knows our fears. He sees our sleepless nights. But His promise is the same to you and to me. His presence will go with us, and He will give us rest. Our only task is to truly believe and stand firm on His promises. We need to make sure our children understand and trust in these promises too.

Prayer:

Thank you, God, for calling me to this mission of motherhood and this ministry of homeschooling. It is an important and wonderful calling. I am not worthy, but I am eternally grateful. Lord, I admit there are some days I feel scared, out numbered, overwhelmed, and ill-equipped, but I know like Moses, you promise to be with me. You promise to walk with me and to guide me. Father God, if I am not feeling at rest it is because I am trying to do this task in my own strength. Thank you, Father, for giving me rest.

May your will be done, Amen

Day Six:

Jeremiah 6:16 ESV

“Thus says the Lord: ‘Stand by the roads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls.’”

Where do we find rest for our souls? We find rest for our souls when we find the good way and walk in it. No wonder we feel tired and weary all of the time. No wonder we feel inadequate or unworthy each and every day. We insist on following the world’s ways. We listen when the world tells us this product will solve all our homeschooling problems. We believe the world when they say this way is more tolerable and equitable. We compromise with the world when we allow its values to seep into our curriculum and into our lessons. We believe the lies and half truths on social media. The Lord doesn’t want or need perfect moms or fabulous teachers. He wants faithful servants who will seek the right path and obediently walk in it. The world’s ways can sometimes be very tempting. They can seem like less or easier work, but the road paved by the world and by its agenda will only lead to death. Only God’s Word and His calling on our lives leads to eternal life and rest for our souls. We need to pause, look, and seek the righteous road that God has planned and laid out for our lives and for our children.

Prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father, I am having trouble discerning the direction You want me to go. I am standing by the road, I am looking, and I am seeking your guidance from Your Word, the ancient path. Lord direct me to the good way, the way you plotted out for our family. Make it clear to me. Give me the obedience to walk in that path. Father God, I thank you for the rest you will provide. I thank you for the peace you will give. Jesus, I also bring (insert child’s name) before you. He/she is having trouble finding your way. The noise and the temptations of the world are drowning out Your call. Lord, give (insert child’s name) the strength to stand on Your Word, the eyes to see and seek Your ways, and the humility to ask for help. Almighty Father, give (insert child’s name) the boldness to walk in the path you have provided for his/her life. Help him/her to be obedient to your call. I pray he/she will feel your presence and will be given your peace as he/she trusts completely in You, in your timing, and in your ways. In Jesus Mighty and Powerful Name, Amen.

Day Seven:

[Matthew 11: 28-29](#) ESV

“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

I do apologize for the misprint in the book. At the beginning of Section II, this verse is quoted but the citation is incorrect. It states Luke 11:28-30 instead of Matthew 11:28-29. I promise to fix this typo in the 2nd edition, but what a wonderful lesson for both you and me. God’s Word never comes back void. While the quote did not match the citation, when you read Luke 11:28 it states “Do this and you will live!” Perhaps the Holy Spirit wanted you and me to read Matthew 11:28-29 as encouragement and then He wanted us to understand the importance of obeying it and live it, so He sent us to Luke 11: 28.

Since this is such a well known and beloved verse, let’s spend a little time unpacking it. Jesus begins by saying, “Come to me.” There it is! That’s a Mic drop right there. Jesus is beckoning us to come to Him. We need to stop going to our friends, the internet, social media, Amazon, and YouTube for answers. We need to go to Jesus. It sounds so simple, yet it is so hard to do when we are stressed which is why Jesus clarifies who He is calling.

Just in case you didn’t hear his call to “Come,” He points a finger at you and at me and calls us out. “Come to me, ALL who labor and are heavy laden.” Well if that doesn’t describe me, I don’t know what does? It’s like when your child is in the middle of a temper tantrum or locked into a project and the only way to get his attention is to snap your fingers, whistle loudly, or shout his name. Anything to get his attention so he will listen to you. This verse is Jesus trying to get our attention. Replace the description “ALL who labor and heavy laden” with your name. “Come to me, Caroline Theresa Mayeur De Francisco, you who labor and are heavy laden.”

Once Jesus has our attention, He gives one of the most precious promises in the Bible. “I will give you rest.” Once we catch our breathe, then we can focus on Jesus and what He wants to share with us. We don’t need to do all of the extra stuff. We don’t need to be so burdened and overworked. Seek first His kingdom and all of these things will be given. If we trust and obey these commands, Jesus promises us rest.

I love the Living Bible Translation: *“Come to me and I will give you rest—all of you who work so hard beneath a heavy yoke. Wear my yoke—for it fits perfectly—and let me teach you; for I am gentle and humble, and you shall find rest for your souls; for I give you only light burdens.”*

Remember, if our yoke is chaffing, then we are not wearing Jesus’ yoke. His yoke is easy and perfectly matched for the task He has given us. It fits us perfectly. If our shoulders are bruised and irritated from the load we are carrying, there’s a good chance the load is self-inflicted and not given by God. Jesus will only give us what we can carry. If we aren’t able to truly rest after a day’s work or a day of homeschooling, we might be working in our own strength and not in the Lord’s. If we follow His ways and put on His yoke, our souls will find rest. God promises us that. God’s task (yoke) truly is easy, and our calling (burden) truly is light. Today, remove the yoke you have placed on your back or the yoke the world has placed on your shoulders, and replace it with Jesus’ yoke. Replace it with God’s plans and God’s ways for your life and for your homeschooling.

Prayer:

*Thank you, Jesus, for calling me. Thank you for choosing me. Lord, help me to follow your command to come to you. Lord, help me to follow Your call to “Come.” I am feeling burdened. I am laboring in my own strength, and my thoughts are heavy laden. My days are full of labor, and I am heavy laden. I need the peace and rest that you promise. Help me to take the time to come to you, to take a Sabbath day, and to rest in your promises and goodness. Your yoke is light. Thank you, Jesus, that when I truly trust You, I will find rest for Your yoke is easy, and Your burden is light. Your yoke is easy. I want to learn from You, for you are gentle and lowly in heart. Whatever I do, help me to work at it with my whole being for You, Lord, and not for man. I know when my focus is on doing Your will and doing everything for Your honor and glory, my work will be joyful and I will find rest for my soul. Lord, I pray for (insert child’s name). He/she is burdened and heavy laden. Lord, I pray (insert child’s name) will come to You, will trust you, and will obey your call on his/her life. Help him/her find peace in this situation (describe it). In May your will be done,
Amen*

Day Eight:

[Isaiah 26:3](#) ESV

“You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.”

Have you noticed a theme yet? The words *Sabbath*, *rest*, *peace*, and *trust* all seem to be connected. Verses that promise peace usually come with commands to rest and trust. Verses that describe God’s principles for the Sabbath are usually followed by promises of peace and rest. In Isaiah 26:3, Isaiah spells it out for us. If our minds are focused on God because we truly trust God and His Word, then the Lord will keep us in perfect peace.

The Living Bible puts the emphasis on turning our thoughts *often* [emphasis mine] to the Lord: *“He will keep in perfect peace all those who trust in him, whose thoughts turn often to the Lord!”*

The New International Version emphasizes being steadfast and trusting in the Lord: *“You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast because they trust in you.”*

And just to make sure we are clear on God’s promises in Isaiah 26:3, take a look at the Amplified Version: *“You will keep in [perfect and constant peace the one whose mind is steadfast [that is, committed and focused on You—in both inclination and character], because he trusts and takes refuge in You [with hope and confident expectation].”*

We trust in the Lord and turn our thoughts to Him because we are filled with hope and confident expectation. Where the Lord guides, He provides, so if He has called each of us to this ministry of motherhood and this mission of homeschooling, then we know with confidence we can take refuge in the Lord. We know with blessed hope that if we stay the course and keep our eyes focused on Jesus and our calling, the Lord will be our peace, and He will give us peace.

Prayer:

Father God, help me to keep my mind and thoughts focused on You. I have faith but increase my faith. Help me to trust completely and totally in You and your plans for our day and for our family. I know with confidence, You will keep me in perfect peace if I keep my focus on You. In Jesus Mighty and Powerful Name, Amen.

Day Nine:

[Psalm 62:5](#) ESV

“For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from him.”

Is it one of those days? We all have them. Moods are unbearable, tempers are flaring, and patience is no where to be found. Hearts are broken, feelings are hurt, and relationships need mending. These days happen in all families, but when you homeschool, the added stress of completing tasks, getting work done, and finishing assignments are added to the boiling pot. Sometimes those days happen because outside forces interrupt or infiltrate our home. Sometimes those days happen because the one child who struggles with academics or with relationships is in need of an extra dose of understanding and help. Sometimes those days happen because we let our worries and fears take over our hearts and minds as we push forward with our own plans and our own agenda. We drag everyone along for this bumpy and scary roller coaster ride.

But the Lord tells us to wait in silence. Why? We wait on the Lord because our hope is from Him and in Him. We will have bad days. Our tendency is to react in anger or frustrations, but the Lord commands us to wait in silence (ESV), to wait quietly before God (NLT), and to find rest in God (NIV). We can try and put our trust in curriculums or classes or methods, but ultimately, our only hope is in the Lord. We can vent and scream when things don't go as planned, but the Lord calls us to wait in silence. When angry, hold your tongue or respond with gentleness. *“A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger...the soothing tongue is a tree of life, but a perverse tongue crushes the spirit”* (Proverbs 15: 1, 4).

Prayer:

Dear Lord, I have had it! I do not know how much more I can take. Lord, I did it again! In my frustration, I unleashed fury unto my family. Father God, you alone are my soul. I wait in silence, for my hope is from you alone. Help me to wait in silence, to wait quietly, and to rest in You when tempers flare up and emotions rise past the boiling point. Give me a soothing tongue so that my words can be a tree of life. Remove my perverse tongue so that it doesn't crush the spirit of (insert child's name). Help me to give a gentle answer or response so that my words can turn away wrath not stir up anger. Heavenly Father, help (insert child's name) to use his/her words to edify not destroy. Help him/her to wait patiently on you. May Your will be done, Amen

Day Ten:

[Hebrews 4:9-10](#) ESV

“So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.”

As a mom, one of the hardest things to deal with is watching a child struggle. When your child is devastated, you are devastated. When his heart is broken or his spirit is crushed, you feel the pain with every fiber of your being. Watching a child day in and day out give everything he's got to overcome a weakness or a “disability” to then hit a wall again and again, is heart-breaking. We know as moms this struggle will be part of our child's powerful testimony one day, but it doesn't make the disappointment any less painful in the here and now. The hardest part is helping your child not lose confidence in God or in himself as he struggles each and every day.

When we rely on God, we can truly rest from our work. The same is true for our children, especially the ones who need to work harder to achieve the same results. We need to stand on God's promises that our children were created for a higher purpose and that God has a beautiful and wonderful plan for them. When we enter God's rest and help our children to also enter into God's rest, God gives us rest from all of our hard work. Two steps forward and five steps backwards doesn't mean we need to pursue seven day school weeks made up of seven hour school days. The mind needs to rest. The heart needs to rest. The soul needs to rest. Encourage your child, especially the one who struggles academically, to work and work hard each day but then allow him the time and space to rest. Help him to learn that taking a sabbath break during each day and during each week to rest in the Lord and to rest in God's promises is an important part of his daily walk with the Lord.

Prayer:

Father, God, (insert child's name) is struggling again with I pray this challenge will one day be lifted. I know in you all things are possible. I also know that if this challenge is part of (insert child's name) story, I pray you will give him/her the strength to overcome and endure. I pray he/she will cease from working in his/her own strength and will rely solely on you. Lord, I pray you will grant (insert child's name) true rest especially on the days he/she struggles the most. In Jesus' Mighty and Powerful Name, Amen.

Day Eleven:

[Psalm 4:8](#) ESV

“In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.”

[Proverbs 3:24](#) ESV

“If you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.”

It is very hard to live counterculture in today’s world. Swimming upstream against the current is tiring and exhausting. It can wear us out. Educating our children in a way that goes against society’s values and ideologies can be exhausting too. As Christians, we are called to live a life that is sometimes in direct opposition to what society calls “normal” or “right.” All around us, leaders are calling evil things good and good things evil. As a result, our neighborhoods, our cities, and even our nation can feel unsafe and a bit scary. But we know the ending. We know who wins and that we are on the winning side. God tells us in Revelation that every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord and Savior. Knowing that God is the ultimate Victor we can lie down and sleep in peace at the end of each day. We can rest our heads on our pillows each night knowing God is our refuge and our dwelling place. We are ultimately safe under His wings. We can lie down in peace each night knowing that what we are doing for our children by educating them at home is keeping them safe. It is preparing them to go against the radical agenda’s of this world. It is preparing them to live counterculture as adults. Because we know in our hearts we are doing God’s will and we are following God’s standards, we can lie down in peace each night. We know that tomorrow may be another up hill battle as we live counterculture and go against the evil agendas of this world but we also have assurance that God is our protector and provider.

Prayer:

Thank you, Father, for making me dwell in safety. Thank you for providing safety for my family. I ask for confidence, boldness, and courage to live counterculture, to go against what I know is in direct opposition to You and Your Word. Because You are a good and faithful God, I know that no matter what comes my way and no matter what lies the world tries to tell my children, that if we abide in You, remain in Your Word, and listen to Your commands, we are doing what is right in Your eyes. Father God, help me to embrace this peace so that my family and I can truly lie down, sleep, and feel your presence each day and each night. Only You, Lord, can provide that kind of peace. In Jesus’ Mighty Name, Amen

Day Twelve:

[Psalm 116:6-8](#) ESV

“Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; our God is merciful. The Lord preserves the simple; when I was brought low, he saved me; Let my soul be at rest again, for the LORD has dealt bountifully with me. For you have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling.”

Sometimes I feel like I can't do anything right. I don't have the right words, or I don't have the right attitude. It seems like everything I touch falls apart or everything I plan or teach misses the mark. I let the enemy take dominion over my thoughts, and I let him take residence in my head. I allow Satan to speak lies and half-truths to me, and then I actually begin to listen to them. I allow the enemy to beat me down and discourage me from the task set before me. But when I cry out to the Lord and ask why or ask for help, He graciously reminds me that I belong to Him. He reminds me I am fearfully and wonderfully made, and He delivers my soul from death and defeat. He wipes the tears from my eyes, and He removes the obstacles in my path. He saves me again and again and gives my soul rest.

Sometimes it isn't me who feels defeated or discouraged but one of kids. As I counsel and console one of them, I am repeatedly reminded that this is how God feels about me. As I remind my son or daughter that there is nothing that can separate us from God's love, I hear God's gentle voice in my ear whispering the same thing to me. When our children are feeling discouraged or defeated and they are listening to the lies of Satan, we need to remind them and ourselves that the Lord wants the best for each of us. The Lord has dealt bountifully with us. He has been faithful in the past to deliver us from our challenges, therefore, He is faithful to give rest to our souls again in the present and in the future.

Prayer:

Gracious and merciful Father, you are a righteous God. Lord, you help the humble; you save the simple and child-like. Father God, I ask that my soul finds peace and will rest in You. This situation is more than I can handle. I give it all to you. Lord, I lift up (insert child's name) to you. He/she is struggling and feeling discouraged and defeated. Deliver him/her and deliver me from the enemy's lies. Remove the tears and obstacles. Thank you, Father, for dealing bountifully with us. We know in Your time and in Your way, You will shower us again with Your mercy and love and You will give us rest. May Your will be done, Amen.

Day Thirteen:

Proverbs 19:23

“The fear of the Lord leads to life, and whoever has it rests satisfied; he will not be visited by harm.”

Some homeschooling days flow effortlessly as lessons are completed and everyone is happy and content. And then there are *those* homeschooling days that end with both the kids and me in a heap of tears. It is on those days that I seek extra counsel from the Lord and inspiration from the Holy Spirit. And it never fails. As I pour out my heart and frustrations to the Lord, I hear God reminding me to seek first the kingdom of God and then all of these other things will be given. It causes me to look back on our day or on our entire week. A pattern always emerges. The worst days are usually the days or the weeks that my checklist was the focus of our time. In my effort to push forward or to “catch up,” family devotions, heart-to-heart conversations, and even worship and prayer usually took a back seat. I found myself saying, “We will do that later today” or “We will have more time tomorrow.”

It is in those “Come to Jesus” convicting moments that I realize teaching my children to fear the Lord and to love His Word have not been a priority. In retrospect, I realize on those divisive days and in those crazy weeks, God’s Word has taken a back seat to math, writing, and academic pursuits. The Lord reminds me each and every time that the fear of the Lord leads to life. Delighting in His Word and spending time in His Word brings blessings. Those who seek first the kingdom of God are satisfied and find true rest.

Prayer:

Lord, I confess that my focus has not been on You, Your Word, or Your plan for our year. I have slipped back into my habit of checking off academic pursuits instead of meeting You in a new way each day. Help me to make You and Your Word a priority each and every day. Help me to remember that the fear of the Lord brings life and that the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom. Father God, You remind us that those who truly trust in You will be satisfied. Those who fear the Lord will have meaningful and lasting rest. Knowing Your Word will keep us from harm and having a personal relationship with You will save us. Help me, Father, to put You first, to seek first your kingdom and to bind your statutes on my forehead and in my heart.

In Jesus’ Mighty Name, Amen

Day Fourteen:

1 Corinthians 12:9-10

“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

A water bearer in India had two large pots, each pot hung on the end of a pole, which he carried across his neck. His son walked with him and noticed that one pot was perfect and always carried a full pot of water, while the other pot had several cracks in it and spilled water each day. Every day, the father and his son walked the path from the stream to his house with the two pots.

After several months, the son noticed that a beautiful array of flowers were only growing and blossoming on one side of the road. When he asked his father why, his father replied, “I planted flower seeds on the side of the path directly under the cracked pot, so that every day while we walk back from the stream, the water that gently flows out of the cracked pot will water the seeds I planted. For months, I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate our home. You see, son, the flaws in this cracked pot were able to create much beauty.”

Moms, we are all a bunch of “cracked pots”! We each have our own unique flaws and weaknesses. But in God’s great economy, nothing goes to waste. If we allow God, He will use our flaws and our weaknesses to create beauty in the lives of those around us. It is in our flaws that God’s grace flows through to our children. It is in our weakness that He is strong. Be thankful you are “cracked pot”! Your family, your children, and the world is a better place because of it.

Prayer:

Father God, your grace is sufficient for me! For in my weakness, I am strong. Help me to delight in my weaknesses, my flaws, my cracks, the insults, the hardships, the persecutions and the difficulties. Lord, help me to see and believe that when my flaws and my weaknesses are in Your hands, You are able to use them for Your glory. God, I ask that through you, my weaknesses can be used to create beauty and to nourish those around me.

May Your will be done,

Amen

Day Fifteen:

Psalm 23:1-6

“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

My bones ache. My body is sore. My eyes are red and puffy. Sometimes I can push my self beyond the breaking point, physically, emotionally, and mentally. It is in these times that God in His grace makes me to slow down. My computer will crash, my body succumbs to a virus, or my circumstances cause my life to come to screeching halt. I refuse to stop and get the help I need or the rest I need, so the Lord *makes* me lie down in green pastures. In His grace, He brings me to my knees so that He can restore my soul. I won't do it for myself so God brings me to the still waters.

When our cups are empty, there is nothing left for us to give to our families or to God. We need to constantly fill our cups so that they are overflowing. When our cups overflow, they spill out onto others. Yet in our stubborn nature, we push and push and push and drain ourselves until we have nothing left to give. In this state, we cannot rest. We are in panic mode. We are afraid. When we are in this state, we need to follow our Good Shepherd to the still waters. We need to lie down in the green pastures and rest our weary souls. When we truly rest in the Lord, there is no need to fear evil. Our cup will overflow with God's goodness and peace.

Prayer:

Dear Jesus, you are my Good Shepherd. There is nothing else I need and nothing else I want. Thank you for making me lie down in green pastures so I can rest in your presence. Thank you for leading me to the still waters so I can hear your gentle voice. Thank you for restoring my soul and leading me on the right paths. While some days can be scary or confusing, I fear no evil because I know you are with me every step of the way. You comfort me; you satisfy me. My cup overflows with your grace and goodness. Father God, I ask you to anoint my calling to homeschool. I ask that you anoint each of my children. I ask that you anoint our days so that everything we do and say will be for your honor and for your glory.

Amen

Extra Verses to Study and Pray:

Psalm 37:7 ESV

“Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way, over the man who carries out evil devices!”

Psalm 46:10 ESV

“Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!”

Philippians 4:6-7 ESV

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

Isaiah 40:28-31 ESV

“Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; but they 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.”

salm 62:1-2 ESV

“To the choirmaster: according to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David. For God alone my soul waits in silence; from him comes my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be greatly shaken.”

Psalm 91:1-2 ESV

“He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the Lord, “My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.”



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