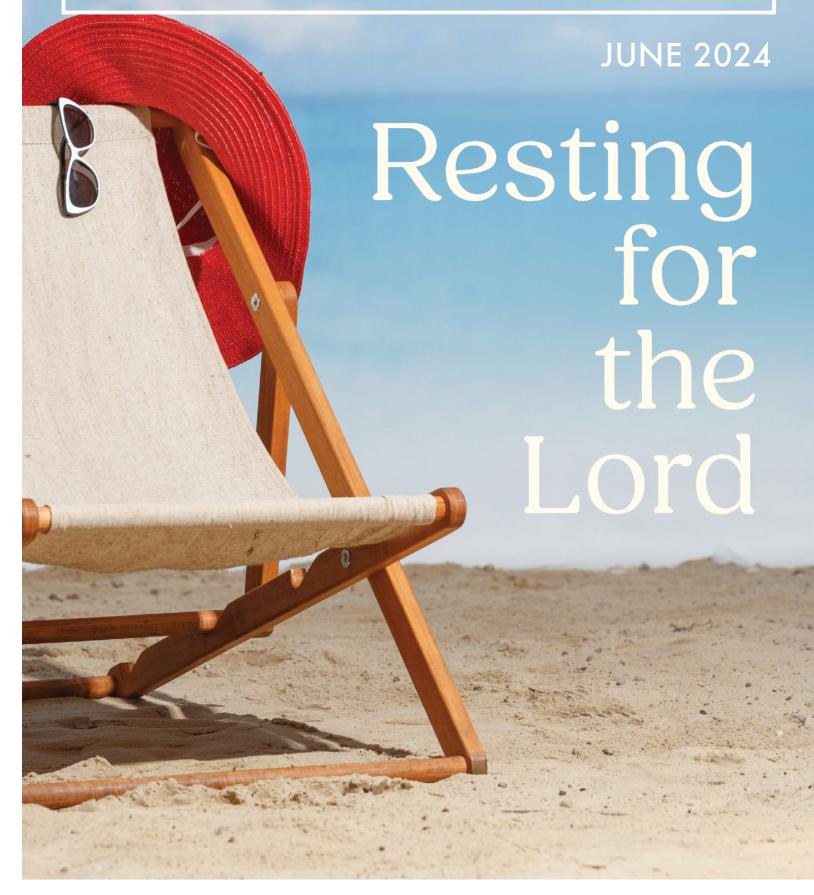
PERSPECTIVE



CONTENTS



Resting for the Lord
Chad Ireland



BOOK HIGHLIGHT 6

Business for the Glory of God: The Bible's

Teaching on the Moral Goodness of

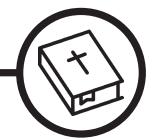
Business

Written by Wayne Grudem

Recommended by John Hall



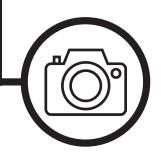
BOOK HIGHLIGHT 7
Reset: Living a Grace-Paced Life in a Burnout Culture
Written by David Murray
Recommended by Soon Hyong Kwon



BIBLE READING PLAN 8

Take Up & Read

June



Resting for the Lord

I am not a runner. In fact, as someone who grew up playing baseball and basketball, I struggled to understand how running could be a sport on its own; running was punishment.

However, I've come to appreciate the sport of cross-country running. Runners must learn the art of pacing to be successful. Start too fast, and you will fade when it counts; hit your closing speed too early, and you won't finish strong. Runners learn to pace themselves during each phase of a long race. The same is true for the Christian.

The Bible portrays our lives as running a race (1 Cor. 9:24; Heb. 12:1–3). Pacing for the race of life is essential. As image bearers, we were created to work and rest. As we consider work and leisure this year, consider how your pace in both allows you to steward the time the Lord gives you. God cares not only *that* we run but *how* we run. Most of our time every day and every week will be given to work—as a student, inside or outside the home, and even in retirement. We were created to work.

Here, we want to consider the other side of the coin: rest and leisure. If you have worked enough to break a sweat, felt your back tighten, or had that feeling of "brain drain," you've felt your body's need for rest and refreshment. Being creatures has two important implications for us. First, we are finite beings. God, in his wisdom, created us body and soul. Our bodies are limited and need rest, and our physical well-being can impact our spiritual well-being. How often have you let your guard down to temptation because you were tired? Second, we were created for the glory and enjoyment of God. Perhaps you are familiar with John Piper's alteration of the Westminster Shorter Catechism's answer to the question: "What is the chief end of man?" Answer: "The chief end of man is glorifying God by enjoying him forever."

What does it mean to rest *for* the Lord? Can we enjoy leisure for the glory of God? If so, how?

A quick Google search on Americans and leisure produced the following hits:

- American Time Use Survey: Americans have 4-6 hours of leisure time every day.
- A US Bureau of Labor survey in 2022 noted the following:

- On an average day, nearly everyone (95%) age 15 and over engaged in some sort of leisure and sports activity, such as watching TV, socializing, or exercising.
- On average, adults aged 75 and over spent 7.5 hours engaged in leisure and sports activities per day—more than any other age group, while those between 25 and 54 averaged 4.2 hours doing leisure and sports activities per day—less than other age groups.
- Watching TV occupied the most time (2.8 hours per day), accounting for over half of all leisure time, on average.

The studies and articles above are general observations. No doubt there are exceptions. But by and large, we fall into one of two groups: 1) those who need to steward leisure time better and 2) those who need to discipline themselves to create space in their lives for more leisure. Both groups need to consider how to set the pace of their lives according to God's design.

As Christians, we know our use of time matters. Paul says in Romans 14:7–8: "For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's." Or Ephesians 5:15–16: "Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time because the days are evil." Passages like these use comprehensive terms to express ultimate reality. God is sovereign, and the entirety of our lives belong to him. When we think about leisure then, there is no such thing as "me time"—our time is always to be viewed with an eye toward our Creator.

If you search a concordance for the word "leisure" in the Bible, you won't find it. However, the concept of leisure is found throughout Scripture in the form of feasts, festivals, sabbaths, and so forth. Rest is an important theme in Scripture, and while not synonymous with leisure, they are related. For the purposes of this article, I've adopted the following definitions of rest and leisure:

- Rest: unhindered fellowship with God to enjoy him and his rule
- Leisure: periods of non-work characterized by a spiritual mindset of rest, peace, joy, freedom, delight, and celebration in both God and God's creation '

We will unpack "rest" below, but notice two truths about this definition of leisure. First, leisure is quantitative. At the risk of oversimplification, we can view our lives as comprised of two major time blocks: work and non-work. Stewardship of both is a God-ordained reality of creation. We spend non-work time on rest and leisure: communion with God in our personal quiet time, gathering with the saints in the local church, time with family or friends, or any number of leisure activities. Second, leisure is qualitative. It is to be a God-centered mindset that enjoys God and what he has made. Leisure may involve activities that enhance our God-centered mindset of enjoying God. Yet, commands like Ephesians 5:15–16 indicate that leisure can also be misused by being self-centered rather than God-centered.

How can we strive to obey Ephesians 5:15–16 and make the "best use" of our non-work time? To get leisure right, we must first understand and enjoy biblical rest.

CREATED TO REST WITH GOD

(Gen. 2:1–3; Josh. 21:44; Deut. 12:8–12a; 2 Sam. 7:10–11; Ps. 132:1–9; Matt. 11:28–30; Heb. 4:9–10)

Before we consider leisure, we must first understand God's design and intention from the beginning. The creation account culminates on the 7th day—a day of perpetual rest. God finishes his work of creation and then creates man to join him in his resting rule (Gen. 2:1–3, 8, 15). This is the goal of creation. God sits on his throne, enjoying the rest of his sovereign rule with image-bearers who represent his dominion. There is perfect peace and harmony—no enemies, no false worship. Working and resting for the Lord are not yet characterized by the curse, with both spiritual and physical dimensions.

We know what happens next. Sin ruins work and rest. Pain, thorns, and sweat now characterize work. Sin and selfishness affect human relationships. As a result, humanity is exiled from God's presence, and access to God's rest is lost. The remainder of the Old Testament frames redemption as a restoration of sinful men into God's rest. God rescues and delivers his people from their enemies, bringing them into his presence, or as the biblical authors often put it, his rest.

As the biblical storyline unfolds, it becomes clear that God has a better rest in store for his people than the garden, land, or temple. Anticipation builds and culminates with Jesus Christ, who is our true rest (Matt. 11:28–30; Rev. 21:1–4, 22–27; 22:14). When Jesus says, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" it signals the beginning of the end of the curse. Through his life, death, and resurrection, access to God's presence is restored, giving our souls the rest we long for—a rest that will last forever.

That spiritual reality transforms the physical realities of our work and rest. Through Christ, God restores what was lost in the fall and gives his people something better. This is why the author of Hebrews concludes that those who share in Christ have entered God's rest (Heb. 4:9–10). We were created to rest with God—unhindered fellowship with God, enjoying him and his rule. We don't find true rest by physically relaxing and enjoying leisure—we find true rest in Christ. Christ in us transforms our experience of both work and leisure because, in him, we can once again experience the rest we were created to enjoy. If we are going to view rest and leisure rightly, we must see them through the lens of Jesus Christ. We were created to rest with God.

CREATED TO ENJOY GOD

(Gen. 2:8–17; Ex. 24:9–11; Deut. 12:7; 14:22–26; Ps. 16; 19; 73:25–28; 126:1–3; Matt. 13:44–46; Phil. 3:7–8)

From the garden to the new creation, the Bible shows us a pattern of God inviting his people to draw near to him to feast, rejoice, and be merry. Eden is described as having trees that are "pleasant to the sight" and the food as "good." The land is filled with precious metals and stones that radiate God's beauty and creativity (Gen. 2:8–17). God puts Adam in paradise to enjoy beautiful sights and an abundance of good food, all designed for the enjoyment of communion with him. Whether Adam ate or drank, he did it for the glory of God. There was no temptation to make God's good gifts an idol.

This pattern continues as redemptive history unfolds. After redeeming Israel, he commands that they draw near to him, feast, and enjoy his presence (Deut. 14:22–26). I find Psalm 16 to be one of the most beautiful expressions of this truth. Note the ways the psalmist speaks of communion and enjoyment of God: "No good apart from you" (v. 2); "the Lord is my chosen portion" (v. 5); "I have set the Lord continually before me" (v. 8); therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices" (v. 9). The passage climaxes with what results when one has access to God's presence: "fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore" (v. 11).

This breathtaking account reveals that we were created to enjoy God. Every human being is in pursuit of fullness of joy and pleasure forevermore. The Christian knows that it is found in God alone. Before we can think rightly about rest and leisure, we must be well-practiced at setting the Lord continually before us for our joy and delight. How we approach each day depends upon our understanding of God. We were created to enjoy him.

ENJOYING GOD THROUGH CREATION

(Deut. 8:10–18; Ps. 4:7; 34:8; 111:2; Rom. 1:19–23; 1 Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17; 1 Tim. 4:4; 6:17; Jas. 1:17)

Our use of non-work time for leisure is earthly in nature: activities of life under the sun that God has given us to enjoy. As sinners, the danger of idolatry lurks in our hearts.

Paul addresses our idolatrous nature toward created things in Romans 1:19–22. Sin has so corrupted our nature that instead of enjoying God through creation, we replace him with it. What exists to reveal our Creator to us more and more now—because of our indwelling sin—lures our hearts away from him. Verse 20: "For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made"—what is invisible is made visible to us through creation. There is a way in which creation is to be experienced to know and enjoy God. When that aim is disregarded, and the things of creation become what is valued most, the enjoyment and experience of those created things become futile and foolish.

Psalm 111:2 presents a contrast to living this way: "Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all who delight in them." Delighting in the Creator fosters a kind of studious attention to his great works of creation and redemption. God first taught this to Israel through the Law. If you pay attention to Israel's calendar, it's pretty great! Fattened calves, wine, first fruits, and feasts in the presence of God throughout the year at the tabernacle and temple. Their schedules were filled with celebrations that fostered joy, fellowship, thanksgiving, and worship—an enjoyment of God!

Other passages assume that we can make the connection between creation and the enjoyment of the Creator. Psalm 34:8 says, "Taste and see that the Lord is good." To have any frame of reference for what the psalmist expresses here, one must know good tastes through created things. God has given us the capacity to enjoy delicious flavors, partly so we can know how good God is.

There is a way to delight in the God who made all these wonderful experiences we enjoy in our leisure. To "study" his good gifts by ensuring we thank and adore the Giver through our enjoyment of them. These earthly things are simply means through which we can do so. A million opportunities to enjoy God. Embracing this truth makes sense of the comprehensive ways the Bible exhorts us to glorify God:

- 1 Corinthians 10:31 "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."
- Colossians 3:17 "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."
- 1 Timothy 4:4; 6:17 "For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving;" and, "As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy."
- James 1:17 "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights."

With those foundation stones in place, let's address what it means to rest for the Lord and how we can enjoy leisure for the glory of God.

LEISURE FOR THE GLORY OF GOD

I've found it helpful to categorize leisure activities into five main buckets: experiences, hobbies, entertainment, relationships, and physical rest.

- Experiences activities like vacations, sporting events, travel, and dining out
- Hobbies activities such as reading, recreation, cooking for fun, and other creative activities that are non-work related
- Entertainment TV, movies, games, concerts, plays, and so forth
- Relationships enjoying time together with others: family, friends, neighbors
- Physical Rest inactivity or sleep (This is a good gift from God, and it's important to note that the Bible has a lot to say about physical rest—Ps. 3:1–5; 4:7–8; 127:1–2; Mrk 1:35; Luk 4:42; 5:16).

Each of these leisure activities is neutral in and of itself. A tendency toward excess and idolatry arises because of our fallen nature. I used to love Reese's Peanut Butter Cups. One Easter, I indulged in the savory goodness of chocolate-peanut butter bunnies to my heart's gratification. Unfortunately, my stomach disagreed with my heart, and they soon made a return trip. Too much of a good thing quickly becomes a bad thing! In case you are wondering, I no longer eat Reese's Peanut Butter Cups.

We defined leisure as non-work periods characterized by a spiritual mindset of rest, peace, joy, freedom, delight, and celebration in God and God's creation. This definition includes both time in our schedules and a biblical mindset of rest, peace, joy, freedom, celebration, laughter, and so forth. Here are some guiding principles as we strive to enjoy leisure for the glory of God.

LEISURE ACTIVITIES ARE OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPRESS AND STRENGTHEN OUR ENJOYMENT OF GOD AND CREATION. God delights in sharing himself and his good gifts with us. Leisure should be used to enhance our practice of enjoying him. It is having a mindset that sees beyond the earthly to the One who made that experience or activity a reality in your life.

For those of you with more leisure time in your schedule than may be helpful: How do you need to cultivate an attitude of enjoying God in your non-work time? Do any of the leisure activities you regularly give time to have a hold on your heart such that giving it up would be really hard?

LIVE EACH DAY, WEEK, MONTH, AND YEAR PURPOSEFULLY. Consider the purpose of leisure for the Christian (enjoyment of God through his good gifts). Remind yourself often that time is precious and fleeting, a "mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes" (Jas. 4:14). Here are several questions you might ask as you consider the leisure activities to which you will devote time:

- How do my leisure activities remind me of God? Do they enhance or detract from my enjoyment of him? Do they make me love the world more or God more?
- Are there any activities I regularly do that generate worry or anxiety? Do they negatively affect others I care about? Leisure should not detract from our responsibility to love our neighbor as ourselves, particularly in our roles at work and home.
- Am I neglecting more important areas of my life because of my leisure activities? Fellowship with other believers? Serving in the local church? Communion with God in daily devotion?
- Are there ways I can involve others in how I spend my time? Family, friends, neighbors, church family. There is a place for solitude in our rest and leisure. When appropriate, find ways to enjoy God's gift of leisure with others.

Be on guard about the patterns you establish with your non-work time. You may be prone to letting large chunks of time be lost to purposeless leisure.

NUMBER YOUR DAYS. Moses writes, "So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom" (Ps. 90:12). The older you get the more you appreciate this exhortation. No matter your age, cultivate a heart posture that counts each day as precious. Very few people are bothered when a penny is lost. But talk to a CFO during a financial audit and every penny is accounted for. The Bible commends such a valuation of our time.

Technology and entertainment tempt us to devalue our time and can even make us prone to idleness. It may be wise to set appropriate boundaries to help us remain disciplined in this area. Consider turning off notifications or designating a place to put your phone each day that is out of sight and mind. Technology and entertainment may be helpful forms of information consumption. However, they can quickly consume precious time that we can never get back.

AIM TO PLEASE THE LORD WITH YOUR LEISURE (Eccl. 2:1–11; Lk. 12:19). When we aim at nothing, we hit the target every time. If we aim to please the Lord, we won't hit the target perfectly, but we'll probably hit it more often than not. Leisure activities have a way of becoming self-centered pleasure-seeking (Rom. 1:19–22). The Preacher of Ecclesiastes warns, "I said in my heart, 'Come now, I will test you with pleasure; enjoy yourself.' But behold, this also was vanity" (Eccl. 2:1). He goes on to describe his pursuit of self-centered pleasure seeking—acquiring riches, consuming alcohol, indulging in hobbies, entertainment, sexual activity, and even work accomplishments. His conclusion: it is vain.

Leisure motivated by pleasing oneself is empty, destructive, and will not satisfy. Our heart's propensity to deceive, even ourselves, means there is wisdom in inviting others to probe our heart's motives for how we use our leisure time. Let's love one another well by spurring each other on to love and good works (Heb. 10:24), even in our leisure activities. Let's not fear walking in the light with one another (1 Jhn. 1:7) as we strive together to please the Lord with our lives.

For those prone toward prioritizing work over leisure, what are you putting off that you would grieve not giving more time to, should you never get around to it? Maybe it's more fun outings with your spouse, children, or friends. Where do you need to be more disciplined to create time in your schedule for joy and celebration of God and his creation?

LEISURE, THIS SIDE OF GLORY, WILL ALWAYS FALL SHORT. We will never experience the full joy and pleasure of rest and leisure in this fallen world. Suffering and trials remind us of this, as well as the fleeting nature of the good things we enjoy here and now. We always look ahead to the next vacation, the next experience, the next delicious meal, the next gathering of friends, whatever it may be. The joy and pleasure we experience through fallen creation fails to last or fully satisfy this side of glory.

Every enjoyable leisurely thing in this life is but a faint expression of the true and full joy found in God alone. One day, with unveiled face, we will behold the glory of the Lord in the face of Jesus Christ. Work and leisure in the new heavens and new earth will flood our hearts with worship as we experience the rest of God's presence and rule for eternity. Come, Lord Jesus

— Chad Ireland

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

- 1. Heintzman, Paul, Leisure and Spirituality: Biblical, Historical, and Contemporary Perspectives. Baker Academic, 2015.
- 2. Lewis, C. S., Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer. Harper One, 2017.
- 3. Murray, David, Reset: Living a Grace-paced Life in a Burnout Culture. Crossway, 2017.
- 4. Murray, David and Shona, Refresh: Embracing a Grace-Paced Life in a World of Endless Demands. Crossway, 2017.
- 5. Rigney, Joe, Strangely Bright: Can You Love God and Enjoy This World? Crossway, 2020.

Definition adapted from Heintzman. https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/rethinking-our-relaxing

Business for the Glory of God

The Bible's Teaching on the Moral Goodness of Business

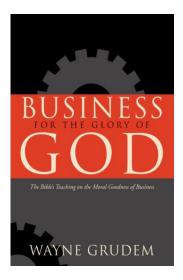
Written by Wayne Grudem

This book surveys the Bible's teaching on the moral goodness of business. Grudem spent time researching the Bible's teachings on several economic questions and addresses how these topics apply specifically to business activity. He points out that few instinctively think of business as morally good but argues that many aspects of business activity are morally good in themselves and that they bring glory to God. Grudem also recognizes that they also have great potential for misuse and wrongdoing.

Grudem goes into detail as to how certain aspects of business activity can glorify God. He discusses eleven elements of business activity: Ownership, Productivity, Employment, Commercial Transactions, Profit, Money, Inequality of Possessions, Competition, Borrowing and Lending, Attitudes of Heart, and Effect on World Poverty. In each of these areas, Grudem discusses how we can glorify God by being imitators of Him. I learned several things from each of the eleven aspects of business activity. One example regards employment. Grudem's main idea is that hiring people to do work is fundamentally good and provides many opportunities for glorifying God. The hiring of one person by another is necessary for a greater production of goods. Employer/employee relationships offer many opportunities for glorifying God. They are not morally neutral but are fundamentally good and pleasing to God because they provide many opportunities to imitate God's character and glorify Him.

Often, we can quickly think of businesses as being evil and corrupt, particularly large businesses. Yes, there are opportunities for sin in any business activity. At the same time, God gives us business activities so that we might glorify Him. By reading this book, your attitudes may be changed and enlightened. This book can help you think through activities that can sometimes be complex. Ownership, Profit, Borrowing and Lending, and the Effect on World Poverty were particularly helpful to me. They may provide you with good insights as well.

— Recommended by John Hall



Excerpts from the Book

1

On both sides of the transaction [of employer/ employee relationships], we can imitate God, and He will take pleasure in us when He sees us showing honesty, fairness, trustworthiness, kindness, wisdom, and skill, and keeping our word regarding how much we promised to pay or what work we agreed to do.

- "Employment" p. 32

2

In any society, some people are too cautious by nature to assume the risks involved in starting and running a business, but others are willing to take that risk, and it is right to give them some profit as a reward for taking those risks that benefit the rest of us.

- "Profit" p. 43

3

I believe the only long-term solution to world poverty is business. That is because businesses produce goods, and businesses produce jobs. . . If we are ever going to see long-term solutions to world poverty, I believe it will come through starting and maintaining productive, profitable businesses.

- "Effect on World Poverty" p. 80

Reset

Article

Living a Grace-Paced Life in a Burnout Culture

Written by David Murray

As reflected in the subtitle of his book, Reset: Living a Grace-Paced Life in a Burnout Culture, David Murray proposes practical and theological guidelines for how burned-out Christians can diagnose, restore, and reset their lives so that they can finish the race that God has called them to (2 Tim. 4:7–8)

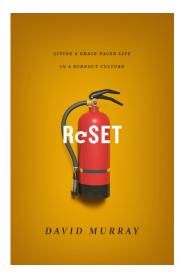
What does burnout tell us about ourselves, our culture, and even our theology? Is it merely a sign of a busy schedule or the fallenness of this world, or is it pointing to something deeper—like how we understand God and his grace? Murray, a Scottish pastor and a professor living in the U.S., approaches these questions with a pastoral heart, a theological mind, and practical recommendations.

Admittedly, I have experienced burnout and tend to push myself to the limit. Over the years, the Lord has revealed deeper heart issues underneath the burnout, and I benefitted from considering Murray's observations. For example, he rightly discerns that the root of many burnouts is a wrong view of God. In other words, pride in ourselves and distrust in God make the culture of over-working possible. In contrast, when we understand that God is God and we are only his creatures, we grow in humility and dependence on the Lord; naturally, it will help us to stop working and go to bed. Also, Murray observes that Christians often neglect the interconnectivity between the physical and spiritual. We can buy into the lie that the spirit is important while the body is not, and it can lead to neglecting and even abusing our bodies, ultimately having severe consequencesboth spiritual and physical.

This book will benefit many Christians, ranging from those who currently need pastoral, biblical, and practical help to reset their lives after burnout to those who would like to start seriously considering the relationship between right theology and the danger of burnout. May this book be a means for many Christians to live a grace-paced life characterized by joy and perseverance!

*One caution—Murray often uses secular sources as a framework or voice of authority throughout the book. He acknowledges this (p.182) and clarifies that he uses biblical knowledge to filter nonbiblical sources. While I agree that Murray filters his non-Christian sources and I do recommend the book, I'd encourage members to consider this with a critical mindset.

— Recommended by Soon Hyong Kwon



Excerpts from the Book

At the root of many of the issues we identified... is a wrong view of God. And it's not just a slightly wrong view; it's a fundamental and foundational error because it concerns the fundamental and foundational truth that God is our creator... Forgetting we are Christians has serious consequences, but so does forgetting we are human.

- "Review: We Are God's Creatures" p. 39

The interconnectivity of the physical and the spiritual means that the health of the body affects the health of the soul and vice versa, and it's not always easy to figure out the contribution of each to our problems! But we cannot neglect one realm and expect the other not to suffer the consequences.

- "Review: We Are Complex Creatures" p. 41

Show me your sleep pattern, and I'll show you your theology because we all preach a sermon in and by our sleep.

> - "Reset: The Sermon We Preach in Our Sleep" p. 54

CONTENTS Article Book Highlight Take Up & Read New Members

JUNE

These Scripture readings have been selected to help you prepare for the Sunday morning message. Take Up & Read!

June 1	Luke 11:27–54	June 17	Psalm 127
June 2	Luke 12:1-12	June 18	Psalm 128
June 3	Rom. 1:21–25	June 19	Ephesians 2:11–22
June 4	Acts 17:22-31	June 20	Ephesians 4:1–16
June 5	Dueteronomy 4:15–24	June 21	1 Corinthians 3:1–9
June 6	Exodus 32	June 22	Psalm 126
June 7	Psalm 106:6-23	June 23	Psalm 127
June 8	Romans 1:1-20	June 24	John 17:1–5
June 9	Romans 1:21-25	June 25	John 12:20-36
June 10	Luke 12:13-34	June 26	Colossians 1:1–23
June 11	Matthew 6:19-34	June 27	John 17
June 12	Philippians 4:10-19	June 28	Isaiah 52:13-53:12
June 13	Ecclesiastes 5:10-20	June 29	John 16
June 14	1 Kings 3:3-14	June 30	John 17:1-5
June 15	Psalm 37		
June 16	Luke 12:13-34		*Sermons in bo

*Sermons in bold



CONTENTS Article Book Highlight Take Up & Read New Members

NEW MEMBERS



Andrea Balsalobre



Laura Booth



Anna Lavender



Blake Pullen



Nathan Schuh



Alex Schuh



Zach Rodgers



Meredith Rodgers

