

78. REST IS A GIFT - WEDNESDAY - FEBRUARY 11, 2026

Good morning, Grace Harbor – it's Dan. I hope your Wednesday's off to a great start.

You know, this Saturday is Valentine's Day – and if you didn't know, now you do!

Some of you might be assembling candy and cards for your class on Friday. Maybe you're planning on getting some flowers to celebrate someone special. Do you like those chalky hearts that say things like "Be Mine"? Those are definitely not for me, but – hey – I don't want to "yuck" anyone's "yum."

Yesterday, I just kept thinking about our friend Brie and the conversation we had at her bakery about needing more rest. She has such a good heart. She really does get up super early each morning because she loves to bake, and she loves her customers. The thought of even one person showing up and finding the bakery closed makes her sad. But it's also wearing her out.

I called one of my friends who loves the bakery, and she said she had also noticed how tired Brie seemed. And then my friend said something that really clicked for me. She said, "I wish we could all give her the gift of some time to rest."

Believe it or not, this actually made me think about the very first story in the Bible. The Bible opens with a poem about God creating everything, and then, once the work is

done, God takes time to rest and enjoy it all.

God invites us humans to rest too. And that's where we get the practice of Sabbath. God gave us important jobs to do – like taking care of the earth and the animals and each other – but God also wants us to rest and not just work all the time.

When I think about resting, I usually think about it in two ways. First, rest is a way of recharging when I run out of energy. Or second, rest is a reward for getting my work done. Like when you might get to watch some TV after you finish a math worksheet.

But here's the really interesting thing! In the poem that opens the Bible, humans are the last thing God makes before the time of rest begins. So, even though God gives us a job to do, before we even get to start it, God invites us to just rest and enjoy everything with God! We haven't done anything yet, so we don't need to recharge, and we haven't earned it as a reward. Instead, rest is actually a gift from God!

I wonder if we might use our imaginations to help us. Take a moment to picture a big wrapped present with your name on it. And when you open it, it's a golden ticket for the best nap or night's sleep of your life. Or it's a schedule for the most fun weekend ever. And in the box is a note that says, "I thought you could really use some time to just rest and enjoy yourself. Love, God." How does imagining that make you feel?

Go ahead and share with each other, and if you need more time, feel free to pause the podcast. I'll be right here when you get back.

[PAUSE]

I don't know about you, but if I opened a gift like that, I think I might start to cry happy tears. I'm not very good at resting. Whenever I slow down, my brain likes to remind me of all the other things I could be doing. But if I had a permission slip from God to rest, maybe I could show it to my brain, and it would quiet down.

So, I've been thinking about how we might give Brie the gift of rest, and I have an idea, but I'm not quite ready to share it yet. Let me work on it today, and you be sure to come back tomorrow for the big reveal!

During your wind down time tonight, see if you can think of someone you know who's always doing good stuff for other people. Is there a way you can thank them? Could you make them a permission slip for rest or give them a small gift that they might enjoy?

Ok, let's close our time together in prayer. If you want to, you can close your eyes and fold your hands.

Dear God, how incredible is it that after you gave us the gift of life, you immediately gave us the gift of rest? Not because we needed it or because we earned it, but because you love us. Help us to recognize rest as a gift and receive it with joy. Amen.

Alright, Grace Harbor, have a great Wednesday, and I'll talk to you tomorrow!

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