

The Restorative Rest Your Hurting Child Needs

Parents of teens or adults who struggle with a wide array of problems pray for many things. We cry out to God, pleading for help and deliverance. Their brokenness crushes our hearts. We're often in deep distress. We're restless and anxious. Weary, bone-tired and exhausted we don't know what to do anymore. How can we continue in the nightmare?

We need rest. So do they.

The Bible says, "In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it. You said, 'No ... Yet the Lord longs to be gracious to you; therefore he will rise up to show you compassion'" (Isa. 30:15b-18a, emphasis mine).

The Rest They Need

The type of rest Isaiah refers to is a discontinuation of trying to earn God's favor by self-effort; to do more or try. It is to cease any attempts to work for His assistance.

Our efforts are futile. No one can ever be good enough or do enough to deserve God's grace.

What's the answer? Our children's lives are a shambles. They have no idea how much they need respite, true rest that comes from an inner quietness and trust in God.

If they only knew this quietness for their soul.

Calmness for their spirit.

Relief from their struggles.

Imagine them that way. Everything within you relaxes at the thought. Your own soul inhales a deep cleansing breath. You

need this yourself.

Our hearts hurt to think of them as they are now. What they experience on a daily basis is awful—chaos, turmoil and confusion. Tormented minds. Tortured bodies. They insist on doing life their way.

Like a Hamster

I'm reminded of a hamster that runs all night on a spinning wheel. The little critter expends tons of energy but goes nowhere. Clueless, these little guys are unaware of their hopelessness.

Like the hamster, our children are clueless. They're on a spinning wheel that leads to death and destruction. They have no idea they're in a wrestling match with the King of the universe, and we're powerless to rescue them. Guess who's on the losing side? If only they would say yes.

Yes to God, to surrender and to His help with their problems. Dear parent, have you said yes to God?

Your child said no. And He let them. They turned up their noses, walked away, and He didn't stop them. They had a better plan for their lives. He allowed them to run after it. I wonder how that's working out for them?

God's Response

Yet, what is God's response to man's stubborn refusal?

Grace.

Compassion.

You're too much, God! If it were me, I'd be furious. "Forget it! Never mind. Have things your way since you think you know better."

Yet in spite of their stubbornness, He still longs to show our

children (and us) boundless grace.

I can't fathom a God like that. What reckless love the Father has for the sons and daughters of men!

A Beautiful Expression

Not long ago, I discovered a contemporary worship song that offers a beautiful expression of God's love. ([Click here to listen and watch.](#)) If you said no to Him, I pray the words will speak to your heart. This is the chorus. It gives me hope for all of our children:

"Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God/It chases me down, fights 'til I'm found, leaves the 99.

I couldn't earn it, I don't deserve it, still, Yet You give Yourself away/Oh the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God."

Prayer: *God of true rest, I bow my head in humble gratitude that you chased me down until you found me. I don't deserve Your love and neither does my child. I'm in awe of You. I praise You for the unlimited grace and compassion You freely offer. Please move in my child's heart so that they will finally respond with a resounding yes to Your reckless love!*

Recommended Books:

Parenting Prodigals: Six Principles to Bring Your Son or Daughter Back to God by Phil Waldrep

Letting Go: Rugged Love for Wayward Souls by Dave Harvey and Paul Gilbert

The Five Love Languages of Teenagers by Gary Chapman {[eo](#)}

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