

3 Spiritual Benefits of Being Physically Tired

We live in a day and age where everyone seems to feel like there are not enough hours in the day. Many feel like a full night of sleep is a waste of time so they don't try to get one. What if the reason that we can't go without stopping is actually a good thing? What if there are actually spiritual benefits to being physically tired if we look for them? Here are just three that I have been thinking about:

1. It opens us to spiritual opportunities.

I was reading again the story where Jesus talks with a Samaritan woman in John 4. It is a conversation that changes her life and the life of her town. But I love the fact that it says that Jesus was sitting there because He was "exhausted from His journey" (v. 6). Would we have been there, or would we have been pushing on to our next agenda item? Certain ministry opportunities can only happen at a slower pace.

2. It helps us enter into "rest."

I have seen this picture of a T-shirt that says, "Jesus took naps. Be like Jesus. Mark 4:38" Often when I am helping lead a prayer and fasting retreat for pastors, I need to remind them of, "the spirituality of a nap." When we become physically tired, we are reminded of the fact that rest is part of the rhythm that God created. We want to push through that in our society but we do that to our own peril. When we forget rest, we also miss a great space to enjoy God. One of the benefits of the Israelites going into exile was that the land got to rest (2 Chron. 36:21). We can use our physical tiredness to remind ourselves that we were designed to enjoy rest.

3. It reminds us of our humanity.

Part of the challenge of our day is that the world never stops. With the 24-hour news cycle, there is always some “crisis” happening somewhere. In our ever-moving world, we can forget our own humanity. Physical tiredness reminds us of that humanity. And our humanness is something we would be wise not to forget. Nathan Foster, in his great book *The Making of An Ordinary Saint*, says “grace understands our humanness.” We would do well to understand that too. In a world where it is easy to try and live up to all our friends’ social media feeds, physical tiredness can remind us that we (and they) are simply one person trying to walk out our lives with Jesus.

So maybe today you are feeling tired and need to look at it differently. Slow down and look for the opportunities around you as you slow your pace. Maybe you can let your tiredness remind you that you need to schedule that next vacation. Or maybe you simply need to rest in the fact that you are a human being not a human doing and enjoy God today. {eoa}

Kevin Senapatiratne is head spiritual pyromaniac for Christ Connection. Kevin speaks around the United States, helping Christians find the fun of prayer. He is the author of *Enjoying Prayer*. You can learn more about his ministry at .

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