

In the very beginning God created us to do more than exist; He created us to work (Genesis 1:26-2:3). So why do we often find ourselves worn out and just working for the weekend? Could it be that we have it all backwards: what if we start working from rest? This is, after all, how God designed us to thrive. When God created humankind, our first day of existence was actually a day of rest (Genesis 1:26-2:3). Want to experience life like this? **Draw a semi-circle and consider Jesus' words in John 15:1-8...**

Can you only work?

Of course not! We all wear out, and we all need rest. But consider too—where does truly fruitful living come from?

Read Jesus' words in John 15:1-5.

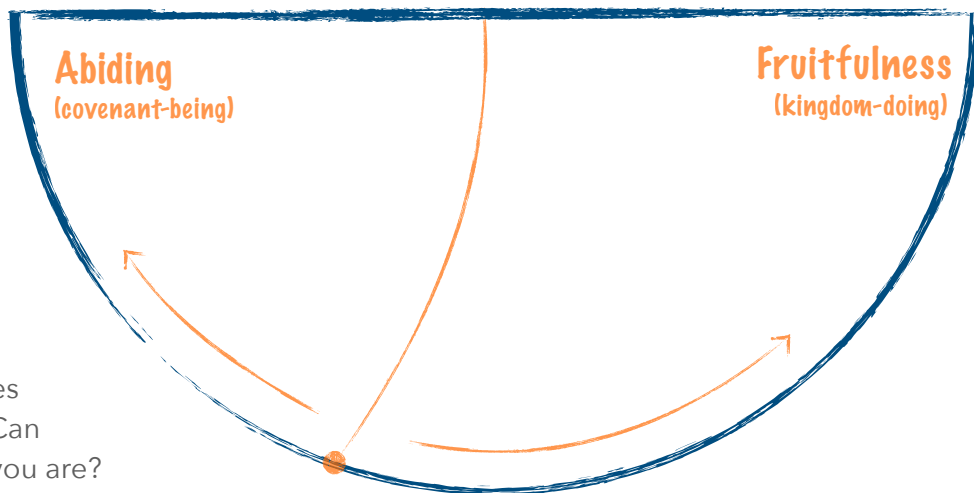
Where does Jesus say fruitfulness begins?

If He is the Source of our fruitfulness, how can we access Him and His fruitful life in us?

Zoom in on John 15:8: what does Jesus say about our access to the Father? Can see how fruitfulness is the result of *whose* you are? This is why we sometimes call "rest" or "abiding" a sort of "covenant-being." It has more to do with His promise, His constant character, and His provision for His children.

REST

WORK



Consider the movement from here, in rest, to the other side of the pendulum we've drawn.

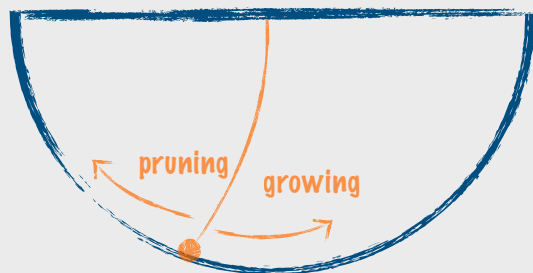
How does this change your perspective on fruitful work? After you have soaked in God's promises and commitment to providing for us, what do you find yourself wanting to do? How do you find yourself wanting to act, serve, or speak?

Even as you consider your intentional efforts to live out a Kingdom-life like Jesus, what is different when it starts from a sense of God's unending commitment and provision?

By the way, did you notice the semi-circle is a pendulum swinging from rest to work?

You could describe the swing of the pendulum from rest to work as times of "pruning" and "growing."

While we usually think of continual success as the ideal state for any of us, Jesus said He prunes *fruitful* branches. Why would Jesus cut back *successful* growth? You have to understand that fruit on a vine eventually weighs it down. Its branches may weaken or sag under the weight. Runaway growth in some areas can prevent growth in others. We can't grow forever; we have natural limits—after all we're human and a rest day is built into our DNA.



Can you see any ways that God has pruned you like this? Is He pruning you now? Perhaps you can identify a success cut short or a time you were limited and unable to "produce." effectively. How could that deepen your relationship and dependence on God your Father?

How can abiding and rest be the engine for your growth? Can you think of ways Jesus rested in His Father and received from Him? How can you align your whole self with what you know is true of Him?

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND INTENTIONAL ACTION

**WHAT'S YOUR PRESENT REST-WORK BALANCE LOOK LIKE?
IF THERE'S NO CHANGE TO THIS OVER THE NEXT 1-3 MONTHS, WHAT WILL BE THE OUTCOME?**

**LEARNING FROM THIS, WHAT IS GOD INVITING YOU TO DO?
CAN I HELP YOU CREATE A STRATEGY TO ABIDE AND REST IN GOD MORE?**

**LET'S GET SPECIFIC ABOUT WHEN YOU'LL DO THAT.
WOULD IT BE HELPFUL IF I {CALL, TEXT, GIVE IDEAS}? OFFER HELPFUL ACCOUNTABILITY.**

**THINK ABOUT WHAT LIFE WILL BE LIKE WHEN YOU DO THIS WELL.
WHAT WILL BE DIFFERENT? WHAT DO YOU HOPE WILL CHANGE ABOUT YOU?**

ADDITIONAL HELP AND RESOURCES

- NEED HELP THINKING OF ABIDING PRACTICES? -

The Key Starting Point: For anyone, it is reading God's Word & praying to activate its transformative effect. How can you do that? See "Read and Ask" below.

Read and Ask: What do I see about God? If that's true of Him, what's true for me? How do I live so that others see God accurately through me?

Other practices: intentionally removing activities or separating ourselves to be with God alone (such as purposefully engaging solitude from people, phones, and audio to engage fully with God and His presence - see Mark 1:35-37)

- NEED HELP STARTING THE CONVERSATION? -

If you've asked "How are you?" and hear anything about "tired" or "worn out," try: "It may sound strange, but do you find yourself resting from work or working from rest?" Then explain the shape!

If you've been talking and hear that they feel "off" or "disconnected from God," try: "Sometimes we feel 'off' because we've worked ourself raw. Can I show you how to reset and refresh?"