

## Beyond Burn-out

Burn-out. It's like a dirty word to me. It feels weak, exhausting, and at times, endless. I usually feel stuck, like there is no way out, no joy to be found, and no end in sight.

I don't know about you, but sometimes to escape this feeling, I choose to go numb. Maybe I'll scroll through social media, binge watch a TV show, or just sleep. I will go through the motions of the day and end it with mindless escape. I can often find myself attempting to justify it— "I've worked really hard", "I'm just so tired", "I have been so busy", "I just need a break"—anything to make myself feel that escaping the feeling of burn-out and stress is acceptable.

Or are you the person that tries to ignore how burnt-out you have become? A good friend of mine tends to be this way. When she begins to feel burnt-out, she chooses to avoid, adding even more to her to-do list in her down time in order to avoid thinking about the problem all together. This often can lead to her becoming anxious and inevitably she will explode with emotion and be left to pick up her broken pieces to go crawling back to God.

Pastor Stephen Kirk of Hope Church says, "if your pause does not lead you to connect with Jesus, it is a pause without purpose". Often, I find that I attempt to find rest outside of the restorative relationship with Christ.

Matthew 11:28-30 (CSB) states, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take up my yoke and learn from me, because I am lowly and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Who has this invitation to rest? The weary. The burdened. Does that sound like you? Because it definitely sounds like me these days. What it does not say is "to the person who has it figured out, come, rest is for you because you earned it." I often find myself making grand plans; if I just get to this point, then things will be better, or I will be okay. Can you spot the lie? When I say this, the lie I am believing is that I will be restored in my own strength, which goes against 2 Corinthians 12:9 (ESV) which states, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weakness, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

Pride often holds me hostage from the soul-restoring gift of rest. Pride keeps me from the humility required to say, "I need Jesus." Pride makes my friend believe that the busier she is, the more important and significant she is—the more she deserves the rest. Pride keeps us from being lowly and humble in heart in order to find rest in our souls. Rest is a restored relationship with Christ. It is security, knowing that no more needs to be done for my salvation to be sealed. Jesus is the soul's exhale. Jesus took the heaviest load—the sin of man. We can rest in the assurance that He will walk alongside us and take the heaviness of the load when we lean on and learn from Him.

We were designed for more than numb. We were designed for relationship with God, and therefore our souls are not at ease without the presence and moment-by-moment acknowledgement and reliance on Christ. And what a joy it is in the moments we practice this.

-Claire Magie and Brittany McClain