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Leisure and Idleness

March 10, 2024



For The King - Rocky Ramsey

Is there a difference between leisure and idleness? We hope to uncover the difference between these two and give you some thoughts on how to engage in leisure. Thanks for listening!

Key Text :

* Proverbs 19:24

Parallel Christian Economy

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Transcript

Hey, everybody. I wanted to remind you that For The King podcast is an ambassador for Every Life, a diaper company that celebrates and protects every single life. I personally purchased their products and think they make a great diaper, great wipes.

Highly recommend the company to you guys. Keegan and I just recently talked about the company in our podcast on the second vote using your dollars as a second vote in society. So please support this company.

You can use the link in the description or if you go to check out and purchase some diapers or wipes, baby products, you can use the code Rocky10, all caps, for 10% off of your first order. So I would appreciate it if you guys use that and support this company. They are doing awesome things.

Christian Company, explicitly Christian. Love what they're doing. Please support them with your dollars.

I support them as well. I'm right there with you. Thanks for listening, guys.

Enjoy the show. Don't think I will even ask you to make Jesus Lord of your life. That's the most preposterous thing I could ever tell you to do.

Jesus Christ is Lord of your life. Whether you serve him or not, whether you bless him, curse him, hate him, or love him, he is the Lord of your life because God has given him a name that is above every name, so that the name of Jesus Christ, every knee shall bow and tongue confess that he is Lord. Some of you will bow out of the grace that has been given to you and others will bow because your kneecaps will be broken by the one who rules the nations with a rod of iron.

And I'll not apologize for this God of the Bible. Hello, friends. Welcome to the 4th King podcast.

This is your host, Rocky Ramsey, and I am joined in this episode with Bryce Per usual. How you doing, Bryce? I am doing really good. How are you doing? It's the Sabbath.

It's a good day. Exactly. Wow.

Let me, let me read us a verse and maybe, maybe we'll revisit that leisure topic after this verse. Let's see. Let's see where this goes.

Proverbs 19 24 at the spirit lead, and I will follow. Um, Proverbs 19 24 at the sluggard, buries his hand in the dish, but will not even bring it back to his mouth. What is this a picture of? This is idleness.

This is uselessness. This is a man. It's not using, using his time, right? Not using his time.

Well, so as Bryce hinted at, we're going to look at this episode, the idea of leisure versus idleness, not doing what this proverb is saying, but rather doing what the Lord intended for rest. Six days, you shall labor and on the seventh, you shall rest. Yeah.

Um, any introductory thoughts? Yeah. I mean, just that's the principle you see in creation. God created in six days and on the seventh day, he didn't just stick his hand into a Dorito bag and, uh, and let it rest there.

What he did, like the man in proverbs, but what God did is he actually admired what happened the first six days, contemplated it, contemplated, considered it. Hey, this is good. Yeah.

He said, good. This is really good. Yeah.

So that kind of sets the stage for God sets the stage for mankind for leisure, not because God needs leisure, but because he delights in showing and displaying to his people how they ought to live. Yeah, exactly. That's good.

So I think it's, this is not, we, we can argue leisure is not an ancient Greek ideal. Just like you said, it's a and not empty. It's not time wasted.

It's not downtime in your week, um, for uselessness. It's a time, um, that, that word we're using is leisure. Um, we use it now in modern parlance as, um, leisure time is just kind of do whatever I want.

And it doesn't have an aim or a direction or a telos to it. It doesn't have a purpose, but leisure historically, or if we're going to import that the idea of the Sabbath rest into this conversation from the scriptures, leisure is pointed, it has a telos, it has a reason for existing. Um, we work six days a week for leisure and leisure is to be filled with contemplation, high thoughts of our Lord and savior of what he's called us to do.

And also reflecting back on our work so that we can do better next week so that we can press forward and be better, a better man than what we were before. Right. Agreed.

Yeah. And if you would juxtapose that with idleness, the idle man would, uh, probably not even work six days a week, but work a couple days a week, has maybe a more lazy job. He's not, he's just working just to get his day.

He's not going to go above and beyond. He's not trying to, uh, excel and work for the glory of his Lord. And then, you know, Sunday comes and he's like, you know what? I got a little bit of stuff.

He knows I'm just going to hang back. Yeah. I'm not going to get a church.

Um, and he's idle. He's not, he's not filling the day with something of usefulness or benefit. Yeah.

So yeah, idleness is not knowing what you're doing. Leisure is now as a time period of rest and contemplation. Exactly.

So yeah. Amen. So I want to push this conversation towards, um, connecting leisure with culture, connecting leisure, what we'll cultivation, right? Culture, cultivation growth.

Okay. When we use leisure properly, it should grow us. It has, um, it benefits us.

Yeah. Idleness detracts from our purpose from what the Lord has a portion for us to do. Leisure is actually aiding and completing what work sought for in the first place.

So, so work, you're working six days a week. I'd already made this point to get some leisure. It's acquired through work, but leisure is the end result.

Leisure is the end, the end good. God does care deeply about leisure and why he cares about that. Um, because I'm trying to connect it to culture here on the Sabbath day when we were asked and we have leisure, these are the days, um, like Bryce opened up where we're enjoying one another's company.

Bryce and I do this podcast. We're contemplating something here, right? We're thinking about how has the Lord given us leisure? How do we use time? Well, um, so I want to make that point a culture that has lots and lots of leisure time will develop a rich distinct culture and it's going to be based on something. Um, leisure is filled with things you care about and love.

And if you have disordered loves and desires, you're going to fill your leisure time with contemplation of wickedness and sinfulness and wrongness. And, and honestly, I think that's what we've seen in the West is as Christians pave the way for the scientific age, I guess, where we have air conditioning and we have automation, um, and technology that helps us work more efficiently so we can acquire more leisure, which is not necessarily bad. Leisure is good and we're trying to pause it in this episode.

Leisure is good. That's not bad, but what have we done with our leisure in the West? You had Renee Descartes sitting down, doubting himself, doubting everything to try to build up the world based on doubt, a Cartesian understanding of the world. Um, this scientific understanding that starts with doubt, not believing something rather than starting with

belief.

Faith seeks understanding. Doubt seeks destruction. Basically.

I don't know how I would want to articulate that the best, but when you start with, yeah, doubting is useless. Yeah. Yeah.

So what have we done with our leisure? What culture have we cultivated with the free time? Well, you had philosophers sitting idle, twiddling their thumbs, uh, not going to Christ instead trying to shirk off, shake off, shake off the holy scriptures, God himself. And we've come up with, we've got to Nietzsche, we've got to post modernity. So we've actually used with, with after the industrial revolution, having all this extra time, we've just like used our leisure to completely destroy man.

When leisure is actually supposed to build up man and remind us of that we're made in God's image. That's what the Sabbath rest is for a reminder. Wait a second.

You were made in God's image. You were made for work. You've done your work.

Now let's think about our Lord and savior, Jesus Christ. Let's celebrate him and worship him and praise him. Well, and even think about it too.

Think about the time that obviously all mankind has had the same time from the beginning, but think about it this way. Uh, Augustine didn't have a typewriter or a keyboard where he could print paper. Yeah.

Okay. Somehow he was able to write millions upon millions upon millions of words and have these books published. And yet like name one person, modern guy, who's even written even close to that amount.

Yeah. So yeah, we have such a, like a low view of the way we spend our time. We, we think that it's impossible to be productive, especially our generation.

Um, people are like unable to get ahead. They think, Oh, I work eight hours. I can't like, have you seen all those videos on TikTok and YouTube out these millennials who are complaining about the eight hour work schedule and they still can't afford what they need and all this and that they're not making much money.

And it's just more than anything. It's because they're not spending their time. Well, they're not building good, a good repertoire with their resume.

They're not building up a good, uh, work ethic, work ethic. I mean, they're spending their time. Like here, here's the common man, the common man gets home from work.

He sits down on his couch, turns on the TV and he spends his time and idleness doing and learning nothing. Yeah, exactly. That's not a leisure.

He worked all that time just so he could go watch a game. I know exactly. What would, what's it, what's a man who has good leisure, a man who has good leisure is he comes home from work.

Oh, he's going to go throw baseball with his kid. Yeah. He's got a family.

He's got a family. Yeah. Let's be honest.

Yeah. He has a family. Yeah.

He opens up, you know, they have dinner. They, they pray together. Um, they talk about the day out how they contemplate how have things gone today? How was your day? Did you have a good day? Oh, why'd you have a bad day? Yeah.

Oh, well, how could you have fixed that issue? Uh, tomorrow? Yeah. Um, oh, hey, let's open up the Bible. Let's, let's read and, and pray as a family in Psalms.

Um, I know that's what leisure is about. Not everybody going to their own, their own space, having dinner by themselves. Um, uh, wanting to throw a baseball with your dad, but your dad just, you know, he's too lazy and fat, his hands in the Dorito bag.

And that's where it's spending its time, not holding a baseball, but holding a Dorito that he's too lazy to even bring to his mouth. Exactly. So yeah, that's the distinction between I don't know this versus leisure.

Yeah. It's a good point. Well, at least you can even be, um, I think hobbies are a good example of a, uh, now I'm talking about a productive hobby, something that's worth doing.

Um, but yeah, having a hobby where you're enjoying creation, that's, that's a good use of leisure. Yeah. You know, um, so I think that's those are things worth considering.

Do I, do I have a hobby? When I have a free moment, how do I use it? Yeah. That's a, that's a good reflective question at the end of this episode to be asking yourself, if I have a spare moment, is it, am I doing something worthwhile or have I, I love the way you post that all he did, this man, this hypothetical guy, he worked, you know, 40 hour week to just go home and play video games or to watch some TV and, uh, be single his whole life and yeah, be addicted to porn. Yeah.

He squandered his leisure. Exactly. He squandered.

Yeah. It's the same time it's really, it's how's it oriented, how's it used? It's the same time you're going to, you're going to get that time no matter what. The question is, will that time be idleness or leisure? It's one or, it'll be one or the other.

And it's kind of up to you to introspectively think about that. Well, and think about the

preciousness of time. People feel as if they're losing their time so much that we have suicide rates climbing and depression.

Why is that? It's because people aren't engaging in leisure. They're engaging, engaging in idleness. Yeah.

They feel meaningless. Exactly. Because I don't know.

Their life is meaningless. That's why. Yeah.

They've derived no meaning from their life because they're not spending it in leisure. Because if you are just, uh, if you're working only to get the idleness, you're a slave. Yeah, exactly.

But if you're working to get leisure, you're a free man and you're a son of the most high God. Exactly. So that's why like, it's so important to capture this leisure.

Exactly. Because if you don't, if you only capture idleness with your work, you will raise idle children, you will disciple an idle life, and it only leads to people killing themselves. Yeah, it does.

It does. Yeah. Um, it's a useless life.

It's not that sort of person does not wear a smile on their face. I know that sort of person wears a frown all the days of their life. I know.

Yeah, there's so much bliss and redeemed leisure. Yeah, exactly. Right.

It's good. And that's, that's the pattern God showing us. There's a reason for work.

There's a reason for life. And if God's given us time, that means we must steward it well. Exactly.

God's given us family. He's given us, you know, property. You have a house.

You have, uh, you have food. You need to be steward of these things. Yeah.

God's also given you time. Then you need to be a good steward of it. Use it.

Is your time being used to glorify God, or is it being used as an idle nothingness and wasting? Yeah. Time, time is the most precious resource. Um, and it goes like that.

It does. Yeah. Time is always, literally time is slipping away.

That's of the essence. Yeah. This is, yeah, very sobering conversation.

Um, I'm trying to think if we guess what else we could pick out at this, it should be sobering. You should feel the heaviness of it. Um, what's beautiful about the Christian is

we do in a sense have endless time.

Yeah. Because we, we've inherited eternal life. Right.

And that's why things aren't meaningless. We know there's a reason why we, if we do work, we know there's a reason for it. We work as unto the Lord.

If we, if we engage in leisure, leisure, then it's also pointed. It's still for the king. Both, both uses of time are for the king.

Yeah. And as we redeem our time and make the best use of it, by faith. Yeah.

Um, because we love our savior and we fall on his footsteps. Then we get even more time. You inherit eternal life.

Yeah. Um, so I think God is calling us to a life like this. Uh, the, the Greeks captured this.

They understood this. You were telling a story and, um, the symposium, Plato symposium. Yeah.

Um, where the Greeks would get gathered together. Think about Mars Hill acts 17. Um, when Paul came and they were just, they liked to hear and to discuss.

And that's why they were willing to hear Paul out. It was leisure time. It was time.

Okay. Let's hear this. You know, let's see if this, what this man has to say.

Um, so I think there's some good lessons to learn that they were tapping into. And I guess that kind of shows how I guess natural law this, this conversation is, how it's, uh, the Sabbath is creational, leisure is creational. So even the pagans and ancient Greece were understanding it is good to get together and contemplate right.

The real things of life. Yeah. Um, when you see that with like natural law, God giving us, uh, like sleep, that's just built in like we sleep and that's the way that the body rejuvenating itself for the next days of work.

Yeah. So that's like a West full way to take leisure. Yeah.

Yeah. And leisure should not, I guess we've already kind of talked about this in a peripheral way, but let me reiterate it. Leisure shouldn't be shallow.

Yeah. When you get together with family on the Sabbath. Hey, what'd you guys think of the sermon? What do you think of this? Hey, here's, here, this is going on in my life.

Actually having joy with your family members, with the people you're around. Leisure should be a time full of joy, like you said earlier. Um, so let's make it pointed and useful and be similar to the, to the Greeks where they would get together and discuss like you

were saying in Plato's symposium, what is love? Yeah.

Why do we love one another? Yeah. How do we display love? What does it look like? Those are good questions. Those are great questions.

Let's always be people. Christian people should always be ones that are contemplating things like that in our leisure time. Yeah.

Um, we should have conversations like that with our brothers and sisters. And if you don't, if your leisure time, when you get together with your brothers and sisters is turning on a football game. Yeah.

That's it. That's the highest amount of brotherhood you have. Okay.

Um, rethink that. Yeah. Maybe suggest, Hey, let's sit around and here's a verse that I read in the Bible.

It's kind of weird. What do you guys think? Yeah. You know, so I don't know if you have any other thoughts there.

I want to, I have a question for you. So let's get away more from Sabbath day, but just basic leisure in general, like home from work or the mornings before work. What do, what have you found helpful for you? How do you spend your time? Uh huh.

I guess what are your goals? What are you trying to get to, to, you know, best stew of the time God's given you for leisure? Yeah. Okay. I think of routine is very important.

So this idea of plot activity, we have a bunch of different stuff that God's given you a desire for and a love for. Okay. You look at all these other things.

How am I going to get them all done? You plot away each one. So I have a few things I'm working on right now that I find joy in, but they're also productive. Yeah.

So podcasts being one of them. I love this. This is enjoyable for me.

So I make some time to get it done. You know, um, I have books I'm trying to read. So I fit in a little time.

Whenever I have a little bit extra time, Candace is breastfeeding something like that with the baby. I actually will read her a book. We're reading the silver alien right now by Tolkien.

I'll read her book or in the evening before we go to bed. I'll hold the baby for a little bit. And then Candace nurses her to sleep.

And that meantime while Candace is nursing her, I'm reading. Okay. So that's what I found helpful is plot activity, having little apportioned times that you know, leisure is

going to be had.

Um, we make sure to do family worship every night because we have that, we have that time of the evenings. Um, so I think some, some leisure can be, um, expected and I'm going to be the word, you know, it's going to happen. You know, it's going to happen in your week.

It's built into your week. So you need to have, um, I think it could be a searching thing too, where you're just like, oh man, I've never learned the piano. You can find something new.

It doesn't have to necessarily be something you have an aptitude for. It just comes natural. Maybe you want to work really hard to trying to figure out like how to do gardening or woodwork in your instance, an instrument, things like that.

Um, but I think it always ought to be recognized. This is something the Lord has given me. Um, when you're playing an instrument, you know, God has made music theory.

This is amazing. So I don't know. Those are, I guess, some, some thoughts for me, like my time in the morning, I spend time in, uh, reading God's word and responding in prayer.

Yeah. And then I'll read a little bit of Calvin's institutes and I'll do that before work. And then I'll work out and spend some time doing some calisthenics.

Yeah. So I think that's how you redeem leisure. Do you have any thoughts? Yeah.

Something I want to expand upon. It is very, yeah, it's very good to read books and fill time with trying to learn new things, but something we get away from is we never have opportunities that stimulate real thinking. So reading is thinking.

So something I'll do is, and I kind of got this from Charles Ingalls from, uh, a little house in the Prairie. Um, I'll just go outside, literally do nothing and, but smoke my pipe. Like that's a little bit of leisure time.

Because we are constantly inundated with, oh, you're watching something, uh, something you have the radio on, you're hearing something be taught to you. So we shouldn't view leisure time just purely mechanistically that you're supposed to be doing something. It's always a transaction.

Yeah. It's not transactional to where you have to be gaining more knowledge. Uh, sometimes it's literally just sitting on your front porch, smoking a pipe, smoking a cigar and literally not watching a sunset, watching a sunset, looking at the stars, not necessarily for the purpose of thinking about things, although thinking will inevitably happen.

You're right. And there have been times when I product of that. Exactly.

So there have been times when I've had riddles in my life solved from not even seeking out to solve it, just from sitting out on the porch, smoking my pipe and doing nothing. Yeah. Um, so I think that's great.

Like leisure doesn't have to necessarily be transactional. Although I'm not, I'm not openly disagreeing with you. I think you're right.

I try to feel I'm overemphasizing that. I think, I think you're right. Um, that, that is a modern day understanding of leisure and it can be leisure.

Obviously they were exchanging ideas in ancient Greece. Right. The Christians would do that too.

Uh, Paul engaged in that, but you're right. There, there are moments where Christ would how Christ uses, he'd make free time, some leisure. But what do you do? He'd go on a mountain or somewhere by himself to contemplate.

So I agree with you. I inspect a blade of grass. That probably would be bad or look, you know, there's an ant colony sitting there.

I don't know. Just sit there and watch it for a second. Just think, you know, or not necessarily actively think, like you said, it could just be a by-product that happens by just going and looking at some ants or watch the birds flit around.

Um, I think it's really cool to watch birds searching for worms in the, uh, in the grass. They use their feet to feel and they will pick out a worm and fly away with it. It's pretty wild.

And something else too, like I know this kind of happened to Juliana and I, you know, we had a free Saturday. I was like, Hey, you want to, uh, let's go to a coffee shop. Let's just go hang out for a bit.

And they're like, Oh, you want to go, let's go to half price books. And, uh, yeah. Um, Oh, what were they? We'll see what it turns out to go to Costco.

We can pick up some stuff we might need. Um, but during that day we had just phenomenal conversations, um, really good stuff. And it's, I wasn't even seeking it out.

You know, it's just like basic stuff like, Hey, let's go. Oh, we have a little bit of time. You know, uh, let's go get some ice cream.

Hey kids, kids, you want to go get some ice cream? Like that is putting your children and your wife and you in an environment of pure joy, right? To where you don't always have to have agendas. You don't always have to have, it's not the heavy hand of kids. You

must be trying to learn something every time you have a free moment, but they will learn things if you create and foster that environment of, uh, joy and bliss, um, and pure leisure, um, to have with one another.

That's really good. Like, Hey, let's go fish them. But then you're going to have some great conversations on the lake.

Yeah, but you might not even then I've been intending to have great conversations, but they just happen. So that's the difference between leisure of actually cultivating that environment of, um, spending time with one another. We can even go even further and talk about fraternity, doing stuff with your brothers, uh, you know, like, Hey, let's go like kayaking or let's go hiking or not even that.

Like, Hey, let's go to a cigar lounge. Let's go hang out for a bit. Let's go roll around on a mat and do some, do some resilience.

You did see, let's go fight a little bit. Yeah. Yeah.

Just thressel. Yeah. And not necessarily living your life to where you have to have this scheduled agenda where if you're not learning something, you're a failure.

Yeah. Um, but you're right because, um, we, that's a very modern way, um, modern kind of secular way where everything has a pragmatic end versus some things are just nice in and of themselves, like smoking a pipe on the front porch. There's no obvious pragmatic into that.

Yeah. You're just doing it because you just enjoy it. You just like it.

So there are things God has put in the world that are ends in and of themselves. Yeah. You see what I'm saying? Yeah, exactly.

You can just enjoy God's world without there necessarily being like some kind of transaction of value. Yeah. But in the sense there is, it goes deep.

It runs very deep. Right. Um, so that's good.

So in a materialist is just going to view the outward of, uh, it's all mechanistic. How is this benefiting me or a utilitarian hours is benefiting me. Therefore, if it does benefit me, it's good.

But sometimes like you're saying, some things are just good in and of themselves regardless of if they bring you any apparent benefit to you. Yeah. Like, yeah, like you said, there's no obvious benefit to smoking my pipe on the front porch.

Yeah. Um, in fact, a materialist would say it's bad because you're smoking, smoking, right? Yeah. So they would say that's idle, but you know, yeah.

Yeah. You can tell them to bust off. Hey, I'm enjoying it.

Yeah. Yeah. I think, yeah, that's good, Bryce.

Um, that's a more ancient way to view the world, which is better. Um, we need to cultivate that. Well, think about it this way.

When was Bilbo called on his adventure? Yeah. He was sitting on the front porch smoking, smoking a pipe. Yeah.

And Gandalf comes up to him. So there's just so many when you're going to get hit with an adventure or with some new truth that God impresses upon you. Right.

When you were just enjoying the morning or you were on a walk or watching the sunset. You'll never have an opportunity to love one of your neighbors. Like let's say like I was just driving my truck this week and somebody got stuck.

Like I never would have even had the opportunity to help them out if I wasn't out. Yeah. Or, um, hypothetically, if when Jules and I went out, if we had an opportunity to show the gospel, the opportunity would never have been present if I was just home right by myself being idle.

Yeah. So yeah, leisure. Yeah.

Produces a society with opportunities to love others, to love the people around you or to spend time by yourself contemplating things that are higher than you. Yeah. Um, yeah, there's, I think there's a lot of good stuff we picked out here.

Yeah. See, I read good books, spend your time well. Um, but don't always think you have to be learning something every second.

Exactly. Spend time just hanging out. And I would encourage you buy a pipe and smirk it on the front porch.

Yeah. I think watching a sunrise or a sunset or a beautiful sunset. Yeah.

That hasn't ended and of itself has no pragmatic benefit to your life. It's not going to help your stock portfolio. It's not going to make crypto pop off.

It's not going to just enjoy it. God made this beautiful sunset every night. He does something more beautiful than what most artists can hope to try to capture in one piece in their whole lifetime.

Every night as sunsets that pretty. So yeah, it's an end of itself. Just enjoy it.

Just watch it. And who knows? Maybe the Lord will bless you with, like you said, a riddle solved something about him. Maybe that hasn't dawned upon you until you look at

something like that.

Yeah. So those are, those are good moments. Let's seek them all out.

Think about when Abraham believed God. It's when he was looking at the stars. He said, look, you don't understand now, but look at the stars.

Yeah. Right. I'm not advocating astrology here.

I'm just saying. Like there's a reason why God did that. Yeah.

He wanted Abraham to see look how big and strong and mighty I am. You think I can give you, you think I can't give you a child? Yeah. Right.

You think my promises don't come true. So these stars will be, your descendants are more numerous than these stars. Yeah.

That's good. I think that that's very encouraging. Honestly, I love talking about this kind of stuff with you.

Yeah. Thanks for listening, guys. I hope that was encouraging.

Feel free to reach out with any thought you had, if it sparked anything. I'd love to hear how this encouraged you because I'm trying to search these things out too. So yeah, thanks for joining me.

Let's consider leisure as we move forward as God's saints here on earth. To the King of the ages, mortal, invisible, the only God, we honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Sully day, open the door.