

LINGERING ON THE ETERNAL USHERS IN HOPE AND REST

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Nothing draws you to linger over the eternal with quite such strength and relevance as death. This summer, we lost my Mamaw; which we both grieved and celebrated (a remarkably compatible marriage of opposites). We're currently playing the waiting game with my Papaw as his 94 year old body decides how it wants to cope after a stroke. Anticipating and managing death is hard. It's the ultimate challenge to our view of whether this life is it or not. And the view we all claim radically impacts the way we are affected by it. So, in this obvious scenario, when we cling to our hope in what comes next, death does not have the final word, it has "lost its sting," because there is more — and it is good.

But death isn't the only challenger of our hope and rest. Five seconds after I started thinking about this post, life got crazy. Ironical, huh? There is a ferocity we face that comes with living in a sin-saturated world — and no one gets off the hook. Rest is good for our hearts. Hope gives us the strength to do what we need to do. But rest does not equal leisure. And hope does not equal happy. **Rest is something we can claim even in the midst of acting out our purposes. Hope is something we can claim even when we don't have a lot of reasons to laugh.** It's also something we can

completely miss even while we're laughing. We all hope in something, and that something will be put to the test; and because hope is the conduit of rest — it must be reliable.

"No one who hopes in you will ever be put to shame..." — Psalm 25:3

When we had our second son, we launched a business almost simultaneously. Things were busy, you might have picked up on that in [previous posts](#). Stress and high demand tend to reveal weak spots, and I found that I like credit for my efforts and I functioned way more sweetly when I had sleep. The problem is that other people's praise is both unreliable and unauthoritative, and relying on a solid 8 hours is laughable; so I was often grumpy. Sorry Brandon, kids, and random drivers who happened to be on the road at the same time as me.

So when I found out I was pregnant with my 3rd, I started praying for the rest my heart needed to be a different kind of wife and mom despite the inevitable season of exhaustion knocking on my door. And I started getting a very consistent promise that came to mind during my quiet times with God — *"I will sustain you."* And you know what? He did. When I came to him. Mila's birth was one full of laughter (I'm not even kidding — we joked and laughed between contractions while I walked the halls of the hospital.) I was tired, but so much more inviting to be around. I found rest for my heart even though my circumstances didn't provide much rest for my body.

So often when our hearts are tired, we react out of weariness. And so as I prepared to write this post, I started pouring over verses on rest and hope. And you know what I found? Over and over and over again, what I read was that ultimately, **rest is something God gives us when we place our hope and fix our eyes on him.** It's a gift. It's another reason he desperately wants us to know him, *because we will not find this kind of reliable hope and rest anywhere else.*

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest... for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." — Matthew 11:28

But we abandon rest when we do three things:

- 1 - we strive to control things we can't control.
- 2 - we try to generate rest by asking for it from things that can't deliver it.
- 3 - we focus on the temporary instead of the eternal.

There is more than this blink of an eye life, and there is someone who is better equipped to handle things I frequently try to handle. *And there is more.* I think it's good to have urgency over some things — eternal things. But urgency can easily be turned into anxiety when we think we have control that we do not.

“Cease your striving and know that I am God.” — Psalm 46:10

So, if you need rest, I encourage you now, *go to him!* The best way you know how. He will honor your pursuit.