

## Theology of Recreation and Leisure

**Ecclesiastes 5:18-19** Behold that which I have seen: it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it is his portion. Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this is the gift of God.

**1 Corinthians 10:31** Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

### Introduction

#### ▪ Questions

- Is it ok for the Christian to have fun?
- Can I just take a minute and relax?
- Can I take a vacation and not feel guilty?
- Are hobbies acceptable for a Christian?
- Can I scroll my phone for a minute/hour?
- Is it ok to watch a show, musical or movie?
- Can I play my video games, candy crush, FarmVille etc.?

#### ▪ Definitions

- Recreation – activity done for pleasure and enjoyment
- Relaxing – calming our mind and anxious thoughts
- Leisure – free from work duties and responsibilities
- Free Time – time for personal pursuits
- Fun – doing things that bring happiness
- Resting – taking a break from physical activities
- Play – voluntary activity that stirs our imagination
- Hobbies – personal activity that you enjoy
- Downtime – time to unwind and do very little

#### ▪ Activities

- Traveling, going on a vacation, camping
- Reading interesting things

- Writing, blogging, doing research, journaling
- Playing sports, watching sports, golfing
- Cooking and creating recipes
- Crafting and making works of art, knitting, jewelry making
- Decorating
- Gardening, farming
- Enjoying new foods, desserts, and coffees
- Exercising, running, climbing, hiking, fitness classes
- Hunting, shooting, fishing, boating
- Making music, singing, playing an instrument
- Collecting and sorting treasures
- Building, wood working
- Coloring, painting, sketching
- Modeling
- Shopping, thrifting
- Playing video games, board games, puzzles
- Watching media
- Photography
- Podcasting

### **Bible References**

- Rest day – Sabbath day for the Israelites – no work
- Feast days – Celebrating a New Year, Religious holidays
- Celebrations – the Prodigal son came home
- Fellowship – Jesus at the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus
- Music – choirs, instruments, and singers
- Hospitality – Abraham inviting heavenly guests to his table
- Dinners – Joseph inviting his brothers to a fancy dinner

### **I. Make time for Leisure and Recreation – We need it**

**Mark 6:31** And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had **no leisure** so much as to eat.

- A.** No matter how busy you get, there must be time for rest and leisure
- B.** Take a day off, take an afternoon off, take a week off
- C.** Use this time to reflect, rest, play, and be refreshed

- D. Do not feel guilty about doing restful, fun things – it is not a sin to rest or relax as long as these things do not dominate our lives

## II. Enjoy the good things in life – this pleases the Lord

**1 Timothy 6:17** Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

- A. Enjoy those times – have fun, play
- B. Elements of play from Dr. Stuart Brown
  1. It is seemingly pointless, it has no ultimate purpose – it has little practical value, it does not make money etc.
  2. It is voluntary – nobody forces you to participate, you are not obligated to participate
  3. It is fun – it makes us feel good, it is exciting, it is not boring
  4. We lose track of time while playing
  5. We care little about what we look like or what others might think
  6. You improvise constantly – there is no right or wrong way of doing things, it is an opportunity for creativity and to be spontaneous
  7. We do not want it to end – so we improvise to make it last longer
- C. Accept fun times as a gift from God
- D. God should be a part of our leisure and recreation – we should not be doing things with the attitude of hiding our activities from God

**Colossians 3:17** And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.
- E. Rest – physical, mental, spiritual

## III. Include others in your recreation and leisure time

**Acts 2:44-46** And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

**Psalms 118:24** This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

- A. Leisure should not just be you all alone all of the time
- B. Find things that you can enjoy with someone else – be an encouragement to others by sharing an activity with them

- C.** Passive recreation – turning on the TV and be entertained
- D.** Active recreation – engage in activities that involve movement, creativity, or meaningful interaction with others
  - 1.** Creativity is our unique contribution to life – we are all creative, some are too fearful to share their creations or are concerned too much about what others may think, many have had their creativity criticized and rejected and so they feel they are not creative
  - 2.** Too often we compare our creativity with someone else
  - 3.** Creativity is not about being better than someone else, but sharing what you have created

#### **IV. Manage Your time for Recreation and Leisure Wisely**

**Ephesians 5:16** Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

- A.** Be intentional in planning recreational activities that honor God and make sure He is part of this activity
- B.** Avoid leisure activities that lead to sin, excess, or distraction from our spiritual walk
- C.** Leisure and recreation can refresh us physically, mentally, and spiritually
- D.** Recreation is important, we must manage the amount of time and money spent on these things – very quickly we can find ourselves spending too much time or money

#### **Conclusion**

- Find Balance
    - You can work too hard
    - You can play too much
    - Your play can become too costly or time consuming
    - Your work can become too exhausting
    - You can enjoy your hobbies, activities, and play – they are gifts from God
- James 1:17** Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.
- Luke 11:13** If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?