



Jesus, Single Like Me: He Rested
by Kris Swiatocho

Jesus lived his life as a single adult till his death. Because he lived his life as a single adult, he understands every aspect of what you and I are experiencing today. This series examines the "singleness" of Christ in relation to our singleness with the hope you will be encouraged to walk this journey you have been given. A journey that not only leads to the cross for our salvation but to his resurrection for our future.

Whoosh, whoosh. "There she goes again," someone commented as I walked by. "Kris, you had better slow down or you are going to burn out." "Not me," I exclaimed. "It's who I am ..." Whoosh, whoosh. When I was in college I worked at a TV station as a graphic designer. I quickly got the name "Hurricane Kris" due to the fact that I could be at one end of the building and before anyone knew it, I was at the other end. It wasn't that I was overly athletic; I was just busy. I could get projects done way before anyone else could. Before most people had thought of things, I was already in production. I could take an idea, start sketching, add color and a title, all the while studying for a math exam, working at the local pizza restaurant and dating my high school boyfriend. This fast-paced, multi-tasking, busy mindset continued on into my adult years. Even today I find myself able to get much more work done than the average person.

A few years ago one of my former Sunday school teachers commented on how she thought I would one day burn out going at the speed I was going. Based on herself and others she had seen, she felt I was over-committing myself—that the average person could not continue to do what I was doing and not burn out. Well to her surprise I didn't burn out, however in the years that followed I did have times of exhaustion—not a total burnout where there was nothing left and I needed to quit, but instead a place of needing a rest to relax and renew.

As a single, I have found a glorious advantage over married people to do whatever I need to do, whenever and however. I love the freedom to spend as much time as I need to get things done. I love not having to ask anyone's opinion of how I should spend my time or resources other than God. But this advantage can also be a disadvantage. Because I can spend as much time on things as I want and I have less distractions, I can also become overly engrossed to the point of not taking the time to stop, slow down or rest. I can also allow those distractions to steal time from God. I can easily become "busy" without allowing God to give me perspective on what I am doing—even if the "doing" is for him.

One of my favorites movies is Ice Age. At the start of the movie, we are introduced to Scrat, a prehistoric squirrel struggling to find a place to bury his acorn in a cold and frozen earth. He is at constant work protecting, holding, and loving this nut while pushing, shoving and pounding it into the earth. He never gives up even to the point of nearly dying. Scrat reminds me so much of all of us today. We are working so hard to accomplish something whether it's an education, climbing the corporate ladder, finding the "one," giving our kids everything, collecting stuff, or building our ministries, that we work ourselves to the point of death—death mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually. We stress and we strain to work faster so we can do "whatever" quicker. But what is the consequence of this lifestyle? What is the consequence for Scrat? Scrat lived a life of isolation, stress, and fear. He eventually becomes garbage attached to the bottom of a mammoth's heel. When you are so focused on things—even things that appear to be good such as storing your food for winter—to the point of obsession, it can only lead to disaster. Scrat's obsession with this acorn, like us, can take us away from the things that really matter. This drive, this passion can work us so hard that we lose sight of what God is trying to show us. For me, as a single without children I do have more flexible time to do whatever I want to do. But in this time, it's still important to stop, rest, relax and renew in Christ.

Jesus, single like me, was very focused on the mission God had given him. He had a short amount of time to find his disciples, train them, spread the word of who he was and start preparations for his death and resurrection. If anyone had too much on his plate, it would have been Jesus. Because he didn't have children or a wife, he could really go much faster to accomplish all that God had given him. However, even though Jesus was fully God he was also fully human. A human has to stop and rest. A human has to take time to allow the body to replenish and renew. If you keep cutting wood with the same ax and you never take time to sharpen the ax, the work will get harder and harder to the point you and the ax



are of no value. Jesus shares with us the value of stopping for whatever need we have, whether it be sleep, prayer, perspective or just plain fun.

First, What Is Keeping You from Stopping?

Jesus teaches us the importance of taking things out of our lives that distract us so that we can keep moving. Resting, relaxing and renewing can't be accomplished without the willingness to stop and evaluate.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart (Hebrews 12:1-3).

Questions to Ask: What needs to be priority in my life? Is there a sin distracting me? Am I fearful about something? Jesus gives us an example of how to be calm even in the midst of the storm. When you know God, you know his peace and you can trust him. When you trust, you can rest, relax and—like Jesus—sleep.

Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping (Matthew 8:24).

Maybe you are overcommitted and overburdened. Instead of going to man's solution to rest, such as a pill or drug or TV, go to him.

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

Second, Be Intentional to Stop

Rest

Resting can sometimes be short, even for a minute or two to catch your breath in between projects, work, etc.

1. God rested.

By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work (Genesis 2:2).

2. God has created a natural desire in us to want to find rest.

- In our bodies
- In him

As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God (Psalm 42:1).

3. God understands there is much work to be done.

- The Word tells us to find a quiet place to rest.
- Jesus tells us where some rest is found.



Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest" (Mark 6:31).

Resting helps us feel better, allows us time to look at where we are and what has been done, giving us the next step. Some examples of resting are cat naps, singing in the car, reading a short devotional, short walks, leaving early, stopping on the road to enjoy the view, playing a video game, eating slowly and people watching.

Relax

Relaxing is more of an intentional time to rest for the purpose of long-term renewal.

Now that the LORD your God has given your brothers rest as he promised, return to your homes in the land that Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side of the Jordan (Joshua 22:4).

1. Relaxing allows God to plan your future.

Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails (Proverbs 19:21).

2. Relaxing allows us to spend more time with God.

I remember the days of long ago; I meditate on all your works and consider what your hands have done (Psalm 143:5).

3. Relaxing allows us to enjoy God's creation.

So I commend the enjoyment of life, because nothing is better for a man under the sun than to eat and drink and be glad. Then joy will accompany him in his work all the days of the life God has given him under the sun (Ecclesiastes 8:15).

Relaxing can be something that takes more time than just resting. Some examples of relaxing are going to a bookstore/library and reading all day, listening to an entire CD, sleeping all day in a hammock/chair, long walks at the beach/mountains, fishing/golfing, etc. When you relax, you need to make sure your environment is different so that you aren't distracted with work or responsibilities. This is a great time to turn off your phone.

Renew

Renewing is an intentional time to allow God to take away pain, exhaustion, distraction, fear, sin, etc. while allowing his Spirit to refocus, redirect and renew. Sometimes we are going in the right direction, but just need the extra energy that renewing can give.

1. God renews our minds daily as we walk with him.

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will (Romans 12:2).

2. God can renew our entire lives by giving us new strength, new hope and purpose.

... but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint (Isaiah 40:31).

They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations (Isaiah 61:4).

3. Renewal helps us stay on the right path with the right attitude for his purpose.

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day (2 Corinthians 4:16).



When we renew, our goal isn't just resting or relaxing. We need to come away refreshed and revitalized. We want to hear new things from God. Some examples are spending an entire day/weekend with God, body massage, attending a retreat or conferences, changing jobs, doing a new Bible study, losing weight/changing eating habits, changing friendships, taking a sabbatical, spending a period of time not talking, fasting being on the computer or phone, going somewhere you have never gone before, etc.

When we find rest, relaxation and renewal in Christ, our focus is on him and not ourselves. And remember, no matter how fast you work, no matter how much you get done, there is always more to do. You will leave this life on earth with things on your "to-do list" undone.

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full (John 10:10).

Kris Swiatocho is the President and Director of TheSinglesNetwork.org Ministries and FromHisHands.com Ministries. Kris has served in ministry in various capacities for the last 20 years. An accomplished trainer and mentor, Kris has a heart to reach and grow leaders so they will in turn reach and grow others. She is currently working on her third Bible study, *From the Manger to the Cross: The Men in Jesus' Life*. Her second Bible study, *From the Manger to the Cross: The Women in Jesus' Life*, was published last fall and is available on her websites. Her first book, *Singles and Relationships: A 31-Day Experiment*, was co-authored with Dick Purnell of Single Life Resources.

TheSinglesNetwork.org Ministries helps churches, pastors and single adult leaders evaluate, develop and support their single adult ministries through high-energy speaking engagements, results-oriented consulting and training and leadership development conferences and seminars. Click here to request a FREE "How to Start a Single Adult Ministry" guide.

FromHisHands.com Ministries is Kris's speaking ministry. If you've ever heard her speak, you know that Kris is the kind of speaker who keeps the crowd captivated, shares great information and motivates people to make a difference in the lives of those around them! She speaks to all church audiences on everything from "first impression" ministry to women's topics to singles and young adults. She can speak on a Sunday morning, at a woman's retreat or for a single adults conference. Bring Kris to your church today!

Singles and Relationships by Kris Swiatocho and Dick Purnell

Many singles are Christians who wonder if God will ever bring a mate their way or if they should just stop focusing on a future with a marriage partner and live the single life to the fullest. Kris Swiatocho and Dick Purnell offer solid biblical answers for singles in this newest title in Dick's popular 31-Day Experiment Bible study.

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