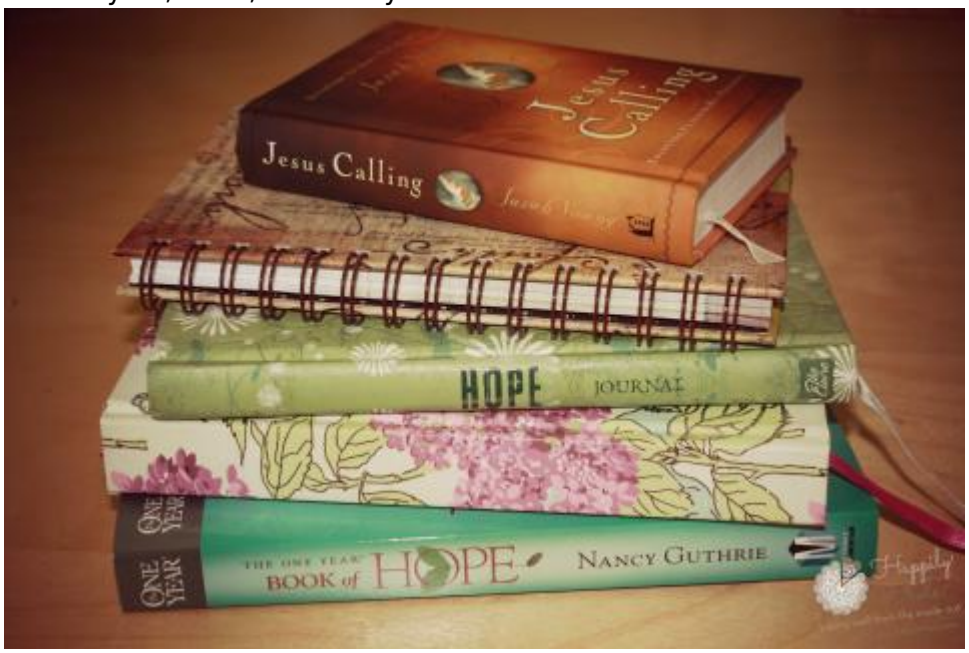
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Work for Soul Rest

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Sounds counterintuitive, doesn't it? Work more to realize real rest. Give MORE effort to experience LESS stress. But that's exactly what Hebrews 4:11 says, *'Let us, therefore, make every EFFORT to enter that rest...'*

My single-mommy heart desires it, the restfulness God promises if I make every effort. But how can I attain it when I'm out of energy to put forth any extra effort in an already overfilled day?!

My answers, my very specific instructions, come clear right from His Word: *Do not worry, worship Him, trust in the Lord with all my heart, I'm strong when I am weak because He carries me.*

But I still sometimes strive and struggle to find rest, **real soul rest**. I worry, stress and fret about where my girls will go to school, how I'll ever equip them with all they need when they're Daddy died and I'm already torn at the seams. Sometimes it's a wonder how my house stays standing in the midst of my **petty**, **stress-torn little storm**!

Ah yes, I want rest. You know how this feels, right? We all seek solace in His good, worry-free plans for our lives. But, how can we get our worn-out, human hands on the deep rest we want in this world?

God says we must make an effort to realize this lasting respite we long for. The kind this world's incapable of offering.

I want that. So, I seek to obey.

'*Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience*.' Hebrews 4:11 (NIV). We learn from our ancient ancestors, those Moses led away from Egypt, to remain close to the Lord to receive our reward. A reward of rest. Soul rest. ***Even our Father fully rested on the seventh day. He extends His blessing of rest to those of us who obey*** (reference Hebrews 4: 3-10).

So, again I say, I obey!

I work every day to live a little closer to the Lord, even in small ways. Inhale a stress, exhale a prayer. Diving into my morning devotion. My words as I multitask making meals and monitoring homework. I'm working my way through the Word each day so I can live close to Christ and find this rest promised to me. Promised to YOU!

It's strange what I find from exerting this extra effort all to realize less stress and real rest. You'd think making more effort would wear me out more. But instead I feel as if **I receive** more time, I'm granted deeper intentions and experience peace with my day's purpose. **God somehow keeps His promise and creates space in my mind, my soul and even my schedule when I work to live well with Him in my heart!**

Perhaps it will work for you too….try it! WORK to live close to Christ and He'll take care of the rest by offering real soul rest!

I believe it! I KNOW it now. Seeking God, listening often to what He has to say to me, offers calm and confidence in the course of any kind of day. Pursuing my little ole' purpose in His incredible plan provides an authenticity I can't find anywhere else.

I think that's it! **It's the authenticity of living close to the Lord that brings us peace.** We cease hearing what the world wants of us. We stop striving towards social standards and exorbitant self-expectations. We finally learn who God wants us to be simply by staying close to Him.

Once we acquaint ourselves with God's authentic plan for our lives, even in seemingly insignificant daily moments, ***we're in sync with Him and we rest***. Our souls rest when we're living in line with Him and listening to His Word.

We rest in His purpose because that's where He carries the worries away and comforts us with His ever capable care for now and into eternity.

There's SOUL REST in surrendering to His plan for our lives. After all, we're His creation!

So, yes, I'm still this single mom striving too hard, exhausted at the end of the day, wrought with worry. Seems I'm a slow learner! But I'm calling on Christ to carry me through. I'm leaning on the Lord to be the spiritual Father and Husband of my household. I'm making an authentic effort and in each inevitable failure, I find myself at the foot of the Cross forgiven and receiving the reward of rest.

It's my prayer for you, too, you know. That you work each day to live close to Christ. That you

surrender your life into the hands of the One who created you, the only One who can guide you on the path meant just for you.

Obey and make every effort to enter into His rest! It’s there in the rewarding work and the sweet surrendering where you’ll find peace, real soul rest.

Living Restfully Close to Him,

Katie

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