

Introduction: This resource guide is designed for personal use and reflection as well as a tool to be used at the home sessions of our small group ministry. Use it as it best fits your personal pursuit and small group's pursuit of Intimacy with God!

**Psalm 62:5-8 (Our memory verses for September)**

**5 Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from him. 6 He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will not be shaken. 7 My salvation and my honor depend on God; he is my mighty rock, my refuge. 8 Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.**

In Psalm 62 David writes that he finds rest in God alone (v. 1) and tells himself to "find rest, O my soul, in God alone" (vs. 5). What is rest and how do we experience it?

**What is the rest that he speaks of?**

First it has nothing to do with our comfort and ease. A literal translation of Psalm 62:1 and 5 could read something like, "Only to God is my soul silent or silenced!" Meaning only to God did the Psalmist look with complete calm. It means to wait without anxiety in the presence of God for the provision of God! Spiritual rest does have a parallel to what it means to physically rest. When we are resting and sleeping we are doing almost nothing. To rest in God is to "rest from the inside out" in similar fashion. It means we are content and secure in his presence. Pleased that he is pleased that we want to be close and intimate with him. Intimacy with God is not an experience of a means to an end. It is the end.

Psalm 62 lists all the things that God is and provides for us who come to him. In each of these identify how experiencing them is part of our experience of "rest in God alone!"

My salvation

My rock

My fortress

My hope

My honor

My mighty rock

My refuge

(My) trust (the one in whom I trust)

(My) all ears (the one to whom I pour out my heart)

(My) strength (O God you are strong)

(My) love (O Lord you are loving)

## How do we experience this rest?

Ponder this, ask God how he would have you experience rest in him. There is no quick fix or set of standard steps. It is about you coming to God as you are and experiencing him as he is on his terms. Having said that after meditating and thinking about this feel free to read the following brief message of Billy Graham's on the topic.

### **The Cure for Anxiety** - A Message by Billy Graham

Historians will probably call our era "the age of anxiety." Though we have it easier than our forefathers, we have more uneasiness. Inwardly we are more anxious. Callused hands were the badge of the pioneers, but a furrowed brow is the insignia of modern men and women.

Anxiety is the natural result when our hopes are centered on anything short of God and His will for us. When we make anything else our goal, frustration and defeat are inevitable. Turn your eyes on Christ; worship Him. He will never fall or fail. He gives life balance, security and peace.

To all who wish to be rid of anxiety, I would make three simple suggestions:

**First**, stop seeking the trivial, transient things with which modern men and women glut themselves, and seek the Kingdom of God as it is revealed in Christ. Let God's life surge through your soul as you, by faith, put the whole weight of your burdens on Jesus Christ, who died for you.

**Second**, get your eyes off yourself; focus them upon God first, and then others. Self-centeredness is a terrible breeder of anxiety. Spend much time in prayer, and let a large portion of this time be spent in praying for others.

**Third**, commit yourself fully to Christ. Don't be a half-surrendered Christian. Among the greatest words that Jesus ever uttered were: "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit" (Luke 23:46, NIV). Even while Christ endured the shame and agony of the cross, His heart, soul, mind and strength were dedicated to the purpose and will of His heavenly Father.

The truly happy Christian is the one who is fully and wholeheartedly committed to Christ. Be that kind of follower of Christ! See what a tremendous difference that kind of commitment will make in your life. You will find that your anxiety will dissolve like mist in the morning sun. Life will take on new meaning and zest, and you will be able to say with Paul, "For to me, to live is Christ" (Philippians 1:21, NIV). Or you might even paraphrase Paul's words and say: "To have Christ is to **really** live -- for Christ Himself lives through me." from the July/August 2004 issue of "Decision Magazine"

Read through Psalm 103 asking yourself, "From this Psalm how can I enter/experience God's rest?" As you do this consider the place of thankfulness and a focus on God and all he provides (See Billy Graham's second suggestion above). Write your list here:

Jumping to the New Testament take a look at Matthew 11:28-30. Read it and list how you can commit yourself fully to Christ by coming to him as he invites you (See Billy Graham's third suggestion above). Write down what you discover:

## **Taking action...**

“Knowledge apart from application falls short of God’s desire for His children. He wants us to apply what we learn so that we will change and grow.” (Gary Matlock, in his Introduction to “Intimacy with the Almighty” study guide).

The following is from your reading in “Intimacy with the Almighty” in the introductory section, especially pages 18-23; “Paul’s Passionate Pursuit”. Re-read just those pages if you need to.

Why do you exist? Do you have a single passionate pursuit? This question is not about being emotional or feelings oriented, though they have their place in our lives. This is a question of conviction, focus and action: This one thing I do! If you do nothing else in life, what is the one thing you have to do?

What is your current level of intimacy with God? How much of your unhurried time does he get? Knowing what it means to rest in Him, are you? What needs to change?

The following questions are from the study guide by the same title. If you are using the guide, it is recommended that you simply go to it and work through chapter 1 - “Enjoying Intimacy with the Almighty”.

“Do you believe that developing and maintaining intimacy with God is important? Why?”

“What would you like to change regarding your relationship with the Lord? How would you like to draw closer to him (James 4:8)?”

List any additional insights and decisions here and in your journal/Bible. (You may want to date and sign what you write and share it with a close friend or small group member).