

Speaker 0 (0s): No. I, I know I said, I, you are very observant. You say he was just doing announcements. Yes, it is. I'm also get the opportunity to preach today, to continue with our series update required. Or we've been talking about how to do life and family and faith in the digital age. I mean, if you haven't checked out those first two messages, Matt did a very good job walking us through that. We need to make the most of every opportunity that we have in life. And then also that technology often leads us to fear and that the only way that we can defeat that is through love this morning, though, before we get started, I just want to alert many of you that you might have a disease that you don't know about.

Hush fills the room. I know you might have a disease that you don't know about. In fact, 80% of Americans have this disease, whether they know it or not. How many of you are familiar with Phantom vibration syndrome, Phantom vibration syndrome, shortened it PVS. And if you have Phantom vibration syndrome, you might've experienced this before you feel a vibration in your pocket, on your leg, right. Only to discover that your phone hasn't gone off or even worse than it wasn't even in your pocket to begin with it was in your purse or on the counter even far away from you.

Yeah, over 80% of us have experienced that before. Not even once, but regularly that our body is responding to the technology that is so often near us. That actually it's a tactile hallucination that our brain tricks itself into thinking that our leg is vibrating when it's not. And it's so much so that this happened to me this week, multiple times, as I was preparing for this message. And I could only laugh to myself because I think it's just so indicative of the world that we live in a world that is filled as that video said with technology, from how we're entertained, how we get our food, to how we work to how we go to school, our life from the moment we wake up in the morning, when our alarm goes off and we pick up our phone and start responding to emails, start scrolling through Instagram.

From the moment we go to bed, or we lay in bed back to back with our spouse, right? Scrolling on our phones and the dark and the blue light of our phones. In fact, I think it's so bad. Listen to this. According to a 2019 study by the university of Wisconsin, that over 269 billion emails are sent daily, that there are approximately 455,000 tweets per minute, that studies show that Americans are increasingly checking their smart smartphones. 52 times per day, at least, which is the increase about 6% over the past year.

And I don't know if you've ever looked at this on your phone, but your phone will actually tell you how many times you pick it up and open it. And over the past week, I averaged about 80. I think 52 for most of us is low. Because if you think about every time you check the time, every time you check directions, you get a text message. You get an email, you get a slack notification. Somebody liked your photo on Facebook or Instagram. You'd get a snapshot. You're checking something on Tik, TOK it hands up. It adds up. And this morning, we're going to talk about the big claim of how we turn off in an always on world.

Because friends, our world is always on. There is always something to read a new news story, to connect with a new update from a friend or family, a new Snapchat, a new tick tock, always something new, something new, something new. And if you don't have enough newness in your life, you ask somebody and they will send you down a rabbit hole that will give

you something new. Right? From the moment we wake up throughout our Workday, our time spent with family. Our time spent with friends. All of it is through the filter of our phones of technology.

And this is the world that we live in. But honestly, I don't need to tell all of you that none of it walked. None of us walked into this room or jumped on the online stream. I don't know how that would work, but we know that technology is a part of our lives, right? We know that our world has dramatically changed, not over our lifetimes, but significantly even over the past 18 months where we become more engrossed with our devices, that some of us are never going to return to our workplaces because now our workplace is mobile on our phones and our computers.

Some of you have made the decisions to keep your kids at home and keep them in online school or pivot to an online school for the rest of their time in school, colleges are making the decisions to move more and more classes online. So we're not going to escape it. The world that we live in is engrossed with technology. So if that's the case, how then are we called to turn off? How do we do it? How do we actually live in a world where we desperately need an update of how to go about our daily lives and seek God in them?

And despite the Bible being written thousands of years before anybody even conceive of a cell phone or the internet, I actually think it contains with it. The universal truth of God. That is true. Not only then, but it is also true for our age. And so this morning, as we dive into God's word, as we look at various passages, I hope we can see that it is actually possible for us to turn off that the Bible has the solution that we're all looking for. The despite the world that we live in being filled with technology up into the brim that is actually possible for us to turn off.

And so this morning we're going to start basically the very beginning of the Bible, Genesis two, verses two through three. So if you want to follow along, you can follow along in a physical Bible or you're feel free to use your smartphone. This is a good thing. You use your smartphone for as well, where we are on the YouVersion Bible app. You can click the events page and follow along on there, or it will be on the screens behind me. So it starts off like this. But the seventh day, God had finished work. The work he had been doing. So on the seventh day, he rested from all of his work and then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy because on it, he rested from the work of creating that he had done so many of us.

This isn't the first time that we've heard this passage, we're familiar at least on a general level of the story of creation in the Bible that God dedicates these six days and through his voice brings about light and sun and moon and stars and land and water, and fills those with plants and animals. And then eventually humans, right? The first six days of creation. Now this morning, we're not going to dive into the specifics of creation and evolution and how that all works together. I encourage you to go check out our God and science spirit series from November of 2019. But this morning, I want us to focus in on that seventh day.

Why is God resting? I really don't think it's because he's tired because he needs a break, right? Because each one of us could go about six days and say one statement and not get tired. And if we can do that, God most certainly can, right? So it's not that God is like kicking up his feet

and taking a break, but God is doing something specific. God is setting an example. God is showing us that for us and for all creation. In fact that it is impossible for us, much as we may want much as our society pushes us to, to work and be on all the time that God is actually in his rest, creating something.

He is creating the way that he is calling us to live a natural, a God ordained rhythm of life. That I actually think what God is doing, especially in the world that we live in is something radical. Because as we read that, we are reminded that as much as our society pushes us, otherwise as much as our devices may ding and chirp and vibrate, we have been created to rest.

We have been created to rest. It's like one of the first things that God tells humans to do. It's to look after the garden, to be as image bearers, and then to rest this seventh day of creation. This time of God resting and setting. This example is showing us that in our world of constant work of seven days, a week of 365 of 24 7, that we are actually not only fighting against our minds and our bodies, but the way that God has created us.

And honestly, I don't really have to tell you that either because through the pandemic, we've seen the effects of what it looks like for people to work all the time, that the loss between home and family life and work life is broken down. And we're constantly checking our phones. We wake up in the morning and we're responding to emails. We're posting and reading and engaging with content throughout our entire days. In fact, even as you listen to my voice, you're engaging with content right now.

You're seeing the screens. If you're on the YouVersion Bible app, you're looking at stuff right now, even in church. And yet, despite all of that, God has created us to rest. And in fact, it's not just the Bible that tells us this there's study after study. If you look into the human workings of work, there's study after study, that tells us that there's benefits to taking a break. Just one from the Harvard business review says that taking regular breaks from work specifically away from technology increases productivity and focus by 30% and boosted creativity by almost 50%, their conclusion of this study, which I love the way they worded.

It says that creating a regular rhythm of rest and breaks from technology creates what closer relationships increased. Self-worth reduce stress and increased physical health. It's going to make your body better. It's going to make your mind better. It's going to make your days better and it's going to make your relationships better. It's almost as if we were created to have that in our lives, right? We are that we need regular rhythms of stopping and resting.

This is why God created Sabbath for us as, as mortal creatures affected by our natural bodies that get tired, that need naps, that break down, that our eyes get heavy, that our minds get overworked. We need to rest, but it's more than just taking a nap. It's more than just putting it on our cell phones. We've actually been created to Sabbath that this regular ordinary rhythm of a weekly day set apart, that God started from the very beginning that continued throughout the Jewish people on Saturdays, that we are even called to now many of us on Sundays, but this day to stop, to reflect and to trust.

I love the way that the theologian Walter Brueggemann puts it. He says that the Sabbath is the practice of letting life rest safely in God's hands that's for so many of us, we live our lives, whether we think it or not like this, holding on to our productivity, holding onto the things that we can control holding onto our devices that help us achieve and work and post and receive likes and follows. Sabbath reminds us this regular rhythm of rest reminds us that as much as we can control as much as we try to hold on to things that the truth is is that God's hands, whole everything.

And that even if we were to stop working, even if we were to stop posting, even if we were to get rid of all of our social media and just quit our jobs, that our life would still rest in God's hands. We need that reminder. When pastor Matt shared with me that this was the message in this series that I was going to be doing. I audibly laughed because even though I'm up here telling you all to RAs, showing you that the Bible calls us to rest, acknowledging the God has created to rest.

I'm awful at it. You can ask my wife, Sarah, that was sitting up here earlier than I am awful at it. So you heard her. She said terrible, because I find my words like many of us in the things that we can do in our ability to produce and grow and see people's response to it. Like many of you, I get drawn into the narrative that society preaches through our devices, through our notifications, to our TV shows and even our entertainment that we must be on all the time that despite both the Bible and science showing us that we need to rest.

So many of us, me included are in the hamster wheel of life. Always trying to get ahead and just get stuck so much so that our phones become like an appendage to us that we don't even need that Bluetooth headset, because it's always right in our hand or in our pocket or two inches from our face while we're laying in bed. And so for those of you that are in that same boat that need that rest. I want you to really engage this morning because I think the Bible has something else, even more important to reveal to us even more important that we are fighting against the way that God has designed us.

Because I actually believe that beyond our phones, just being an extension of our desire to control, they actually reveal that our devices reveal where our trust is that it's not just a life issue. It's not just an improving your life, a self-help issue, but it is actually a spiritual one, one that not only impacts our life, but impacts our relationship with God. Let's look at Psalm 20 verse seven. It says some trust in chariots and horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord.

Our God, what's happening in this Psalm is this is a Psalm of David. And they're not sure whether he wrote it or one of his army men did, but basically they're waiting on this battle and they can see the enemy army on the other side of the field. And they're dramatically overpowered. They brought basically a few swords when the other side has chariots and war horses, these weapons of war. And even in that environment, the author writes that even though the other side is bigger, stronger, tougher, they're trusting and chariots and horses were trusting in the name of the Lord.

Now I doubt many of us have taken our chariot or a host horse to church this morning. But I actually think this reveals to us, something so important because chariots and horses, these trained horses were the peak

of technology. When this was written, they were the main technology that gave aside advantage in battle. And what they're saying is they are trusting in the things that they have power of the things that they can control, the things that they have created the technologies of the day.

I think the same is true for a lot of us because though we're not trusting, excuse me. In chariots and horses, we are trusting our devices, our laptops, our phones, our smart fridges of all things. We are trusting in them because we see the impact that they can have on our jobs, the impact that they can have on our relationships, the impact that they can have on our online profiles. And when it really comes down to it, it's not an issue of just unplugging our phone and setting it aside.

It truly reveals where we are trusting where our hearts are, where our dependency is that Y w though we might declare with our hearts and our mouths that we believe in God. And we trust if somebody were to look at our lives and the ways that we spend our time, the things that we value, what we prioritize even. And for many of us, our device is on the throne of our lives. Think about it. How many of us value our online identity? The likes, the followers that we get, the influence that we have more than the identity that we have as a son or daughter of the king of the universe.

How many of us strive and work and respond to that email and slack message and over and over again, prioritize our jobs to just get that next promotion or that extra zero in our bank account, that our identity is rooted in what we can achieve through our devices, instead of acknowledging everything that we have as a blessing from God. And if you're feeling convicted this morning, know that I'm right there with you, because maybe if this were verse were written today would read something like this, that some trust in I-phones and emails and Instagram, but how many trusts in the name of the Lord?

Because the truth is that our devices are dependency. Our trust is rooted in us. It's not rooted in God. So it's not just a issue of living better or being more healthy or having better relationships, which is all going to do, but it is an issue of our faith, our most important relationship, our relationship with God. And so that's why this morning, I think God is encouraging all of us, me included to unplug so that we can recharge with God unplugged.

Yes, to get better relationships, to have better health, to have better days and less stress in your life. But most importantly, because it allows us to stop and hear the still small voice of God. For many of us, our device has become like the golden calf. Then when Moses comes down from the mountain after receiving the 10 commandments, he says, sees the Israelites worshiping this golden calf. That just even in the last chapter, they built out of all the gold.

And we look at that and we say, man, we're so more advanced than that. But for many of us to what we do through how we act through the ways that we achieve and perform and prioritize, we're doing the same thing. We're worshiping the work of our hands. So it's not just enough for us to put the phone down. Sometimes it's actually a spiritual issue that gets in the way of our relationship with God Paul, in first Corinthians, he's actually writing about sexual morality, but I think it just connects so well that I think he would, he would see that what he has written, what God has real to him speaks to this as well.

It says some may say that I'm allowed to do anything, but he responds, but not everything is helpful. I'm allowed to do everything. And he responds again, but I won't allow anything to gain control of my life. That for many of us, we have allowed her devices and allowed the narrative that the world is preaching to actually make our devices move beyond the helpful to a manner of control that we are now being owned by our phones and what we need to do.

Not only for the benefit of our life and our relationships and our family and our friends and our kids. What we need to do is unplug to recharge with God. That's. So I just want to give you a few resources and things that you can do to actually start that this morning. If you do a small Google search, you'll find article after blog telling you ways. I just want to give you a few, the first one getting alarm clock. As we started this morning, many of us woke up set our alarm.

And the first thing that we did for the first 10, 15, 20, 30, maybe even more minutes, that's okay. We all started, got to start somewhere, was to start scrolling and checking and responding. And it's all because our phones are sitting right next to us. When we wake up, it may be the first thing we do before we say good morning to our spouse or our kids, or make our morning coffee, get an alarm clock, go to the, after the service, spend five, \$10. If you can't afford one, we will buy you one.

We'll get you one, because wouldn't it be so much better to start your day talking to your spouse or diving into God's word. All of us say we never have enough time, right? To get into God's word, to read the Bible to pray. What if we take just even five, 10 minutes of the time that we regularly spend on our phones, laying in bed and dedicate that to reading God's word and prayer. Second thing. A lot of us don't have a bedtime anymore. You might have set one for yourself, but actually think it's more important to give your phone a bedtime, to give your devices the bedtime.

That for many of us, even the last thing that we do in bed is scrolling on our phones, waking up our brains with a light saying, Hey, it's morning, wake up, wake up, wake up. And that's why so many of us, me included struggled to go to sleep. And so give your phone a bedtime. When you get home from work, talk to your family, give yourself an hour and then put it to bed. They actually online. I looked on Amazon this week. They sell little phone charging beds. It's adorable. It actually is a wireless charger.

That's a little bed for your phone to help you remember this. You can look it up. They're hilarious. So give your phone a bedtime and then you want to hear something crazy. It's actually important just to monitor, how are you, how long you are on your phones that you actually just monitor. If you use your device, it'll tell you how long you're on it. It'll tell you your screen time. It'll tell you how many times you pick it up. It'll tell you the app that you first go to that. Even if you just start to engage in that, it's going to make an impact on how much you use the device. Because for many of us, we don't even realize how many times it's second nature, that when we sit down or when we're waiting in line or, or when we're bored or when we're watching TV and we're not engaged to pull out our phones, because for many of us, we sit all of our days looking at our medium size computer screen.

And then we get home and we turn on our big screen TV. While we sit in front of our little phone, right? It's medium screen to big screen, to small screen. And it repeats. So just simply knowing where you are, knowing your level of engagement and seeing how entrapped you are with technology is going to help you to make an impact. Your phone will actually set time reminders. If you set it up, it'll automatically set off, do not disturb when you get home for a certain period of time. Something that I tried that really helped is you can actually gray scale your phone.

You can make it black and white, like an old, black and white TV for everything. And just that getting remitted or the bright colors, not being so interested in watching videos or playing silly games, reduce my phone usage by like 40%. So there's so many things that we can do. So many things that we can say, Hey, I know this is a good thing, but the truth is, is that I have allowed this to rule my life, to give up that control of my life. And I love the way that John Eldridge puts it in his book, get your life back.

He says that when your phone chirps or vibrates, don't react, make it wait until you pick it up. In these small ways. I'm making my phone a tool again, instead of something that serves me, Jimmy, something that serves me instead of the other way around friends, we need to return our devices and our technology back to the helpful tools that they are instead of allowing them to become the thing that rules indirectly our lives. It's not just something that's good for our health or our relationships.

It actually comes down to our faith. The thing is, is that we don't have to do it alone, that beyond the Bible, giving us great advice and universal truth about the ways that God calls us to live the best ways of living. We have a perfect example of how to do this, that despite Jesus never having a cell phone, never having a device in his pocket, never looking at a TV screen, never touching a computer that Jesus actually shows us how to live in our world today because despite not having those devices, Jesus had a lot of distractions, good things.

Yes. His disciples asking him questions, people coming to him, trying to hear him asking for miracles. He even had that woman that grabs at his cloak while he's just walking by Jesus over and over again in the gospel is bombarded by people coming to him. Many good things. Yes. But imagine what that would do. I don't think we have to imagine it because that's the world that we live in. We are constantly bombarded by notifications and people and emergencies and stresses and difficulty, all stuff that hits us over and over and over again.

But look at what Jesus did, knowing that knowing that the impact of that would have on his human self is fully human self. He pulls away. He separates time over and over and over again. He takes a nap in the middle of a storm, right? Jesus knew the value of rest. He knew the value of having one on one time in prayer and worship with God. I think it's one of the things, one of the awesome examples that we miss about the life of Jesus, that Jesus is showing us the rest that we've been created to have showing us that regular rhythm of getting away from it all and unplugging so that we can recharge with God.

In fact, I think some of the most beautiful words that Jesus had to say come out of Matthew 11, 28 through 30. And I think it maybe even carries

more weight and more intensity and more awesomeness now than it did when it was originally written. Jesus is saying, 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 rest for your souls. That's pretty good. Right? Sounds like something we need in our world that is always on maybe more than ever before in a life that has been impacted by this pandemic where we have new rhythms of life filled with work and technology and zoom and Google meet and all this other stuff.

Many of us are heavy. We're weary, we're burdened. And so this morning I prayed that all of us would hear the words of Jesus saying, come and rest, put down your phone, turn off the TV, maybe set your phone to mute or do not disturb and find the rest and peace that is available to all of us in the one-on-one relationship with Jesus that we have access to.

So I challenge all of us this week to maybe just take one step towards that. Maybe it's acknowledging for the first time to control that technology does have in your life. Just even monitoring the screen use that you have is going to make an impact. Maybe it's limiting the time that you're on social media. According to the study, by the university of Pennsylvania, that even limiting your social media usage to 30 minutes a day is beneficial that they had students limit their face or limit their Facebook to 10 minutes, Snapchat and Instagram, 10 minutes, 30 minutes a day.

And they self-reported, they feel felt less depressed, less lonely that they were happier maybe for you. It's it's setting aside that time to have that moment, even if it's just a moment of connection with your spouse or with somebody that's important to you in your life every single day, I don't know what it is for you, but I do know that we all have a step to take, because this is much more important than us just making our lives better. It has spiritual consequences.

Yes. It has consequences in our relationship with our kids and our families. But more importantly, it has a consequences on our relationship with the God of the universe. I think Jesus is saying to us this morning that if we never answered another email, if we never responded on slack, if we got rid of our phones, if we went back to the dark ages of technology, he was still love you, that you would still be his, that your identity would still be rooted as a loved and redeemed child of the king.

And that's something to rest in. That's a rest for your soul. So friends, we need to unplug to recharge with God. Let's pray. God, we thank you for this morning. We thank you for these hard words, words that even as I say them, I think of the excuses that so easily come into our heads. The thoughts of I'm not that bad or that's not me, but for so many of us, God, we've allowed a device that we created to rule us.

God, we need an update. We need a reminder of your goodness of the ways that you created us to be God, thank you for Jesus. Not only for sending us to live the life that we couldn't and dying in our place and being raised three days later, conquering our sin and death, but also to live a life as an example of what this rest looks like that even 2000 years before a cell phone, God, he was showing us how to live right now.



God, I pray over the people gathered in this room and the people gathered online that you would help us unplug that you would help us unplug. So we could connect with the people that you've given us. God. Yes, but more importantly that we could, again, return and connect with you that we would be recharged to worship, to praise and to help more people follow you and God this morning, if there's somebody listening to my voice, then maybe for the first time has realized that the life isn't all it's cracked up to be that even though they're working, even in their striving, even when they're pushing out to the next thing that it immediate immediately, and soon after it doesn't live up to what we thought it was and God that they want that free gift of salvation and better life found in you.

And if that's you this morning, I pray that you would pray these words with me, as we all say these words together, dear God, I'm a sinner. I need a savior. Save me, forgive me. I accept your gift of eternal life in faith. I declare Jesus is Lord, fill me with your spirit and help me to follow you and love others.

And if you prayed that prayer for the first time, we would love to know about it. If you would, in addition to praying this prayer, to take that bold step, to raise your hand so we can pray with you and support you as a new daughter or son of the king that you've been given new life. You're watching online. If you go to a rise, [deborah.com/follow](https://deborah.com/follow) we'd love to connect with you and support you in this new life. This better life found in Jesus and God for all of us that this week we had put into practice. The words that you have spoken

Speaker 1 (32m 40s): Here today, that we would begin to turn off in a world. That's always on that we would unplug so that we can recharge with you. God, I pray that our identities, our tendency to overwork and to not rest would stop in this place that we would be able to look back at this day and declare that something transformational happened here. God, we thank you for Jesus. We thank you that you're working even now. And it's the name of Jesus that we pray.

Amen. If y'all would rise and take this opportunity to worship and rest in the God that loves you, the God that cares for.