

## Teeter-Totter Days

### Balance Nap Time and Eyeballs-Open Time

“In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat—  
for He grants sleep to those He loves” (Psalm 127:2).

The other day, after reading the verse printed above, I immediately thought of an old-fashioned item often found in school and park playgrounds. It was a crazy connection, but life is a bit like this rather large item waiting for children and adults of all ages to hop on. Why might that visual come to mind at the psalmist’s reference above of both toiling and sleeping?

Did you ever use one of these up-and-down pieces of playground equipment? What visual memory flashes across your human TV screen? I immediately thought of old-fashioned teeter-totters. They go up and down, up and down. Yes, a crazy connection but . . . a seven-letter word popped into my little gray cells that really helps if playing on a teeter-totter? ‘BALANCE’ — equal or near-equal weight makes it a bit more fun — otherwise what happens? Someone has to do a lot more work in order to let the heavier of the two experience the atmosphere *up high*.

According to David in the 127th Psalm, it appears that we also need a balance of rest with our work/awake time. Our days should include both activity and sleep or quiet time.. Health officials indicate we need daily rest of about seven to eight hours — a three-way balance (Work — Selftime — Rest/Sleep).

What did God do on the day after six days of creating the world? Whether six, 24-hour days or six periods of extended time, we will not enter that discussion today. The basic principle is the same. God worked and then decided He needed rest.

Why do we need a balance of activity and rest? Just like our cell phones, our bodies need recharging. Restoration of bodily functions, including our brains which hopefully we use a bit each day. This includes our brain which, hopefully, we use a bit each day. Rest helps us live longer and lowers the risk for some serious health issues like diabetes and heart disease. Dreaming restores and heals the worn-out brain, unless, I suppose, we have a horrible nightmare.

I sometimes almost get addicted to working. Thinking creatively at my computer while composing Ransom Notes and related items and/or preparing to teach my Bible class for Sundays utilizes my limited grey matter. One day a week, I dash over to the church to help chop up plastic grocery bags which others weave into mats for homeless and/or others needing some temporary protection from the ground as they rest. *A mission in Springfield sends the mats to homeless areas, mission fields, or even to areas in the U.S. when storms have devastated huge communities.* Toiling for the Lord certainly does not always require a college degree with an in-depth understanding of biblical prophecy or why the wise men wobbled in on their camels from the East to see the promised Christ Child. A willingness to work and share your talents meets the criteria for umpteen Kingdom jobs. Don’t get lazy and plead, “I’m old and helpless. Don’t ask me to usher or send a card to the sick.” Each of us can find some talent to help the Kingdom shine within our community and the world. But . . . work also needs a bit of balance.

Jesus and the disciples took time to go fishing after a long day on the hillside teaching. Family time with a hike in the park, playing a board game after dinner, or even sharing a favorite program on the monster TV screen helps relax from the challenges of work. Seniors may bang away in the garage creating the neatest birdhouse on the block or use their art skills as they fill in the crazy shapes in an adult coloring book. Keep the teeter-totter image in your internal, rear-view mirror. Balance is hard to achieve with a seven-year-old on one end and a 233 pound parent on the other. Translate the balance of work and ‘my own time’ with the image of an elephant and a squirrel on opposite ends of the flipping board. Work may weigh more than play, but leave room for each.

Now, having explored these thoughts, I believe we need someone to design a three-pronged teeter-totter to balance Work, Relaxation, and Snoozing. For those of you with room for another creative thought in your head, translate the three areas into a balanced, God-filled life by thinking *Upward* in worship, *Inward* as you review your own un-Christlike actions and thoughts, and *Outward* as you seek to serve Him by being a blessing to others.

