

REPS  
DAY THREE  
**REST AND  
RECOVER**

**READ**

**DEUTERONOMY  
5:12-15**

**MARK 2:23-28**

**REFLECT**

Training for athletic competition can be punishing on both the body and the mind. We break ourselves down day after day to build back stronger, faster, and smarter. Of course, a crucial component of the training process is rest and recovery. We can't build back if we only break down. If we don't rest, our bodies can suffer from overuse, leading to burn out and injury. Yet, this truth is often ignored in our culture, which prizes productivity, grit, and relentlessness above all else. While such things can be valuable and praiseworthy, we can get so caught up in the glorification of hard work and achievement that we mistake slowing down and resting for laziness. What a tragic misconception!

From the beginning, God established rhythms for the world that he created, including a rhythm of rest (Genesis 2:1-3). In fact, God codified that rhythm of rest in a weekly practice called the Sabbath, in which his people, the Israelites, are commanded to take a break from their normal work to enjoy the fruit of their labors, just as God did (Exodus 20:8-11). Furthermore, when this command is retold to Israel in the book of Deuteronomy, God makes a point to remind them that God had delivered them from slavery, in which they had been forced to constantly work without rest. Therefore, participating in Sabbath rest was an active way for the Israelites to proclaim their freedom from slavery and their belonging to God.

Even though a lot of what it is to be an athlete is focused on bettering ourselves in pursuit of our goals, we are NOT machines. Participating in regular rhythms of rest remind us of who we are and whose we are. Instead of getting caught in cycles of spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental burnout, rest allows us to become well-rounded people who are constant objects of God's refreshing and renewal. Rest isn't a burden that we feel ashamed or annoyed by, but rather a good gift that allows us to pause, take note of our needs and the needs of those around us, and enjoy God's fulfillment of those needs for his glory.

**RESPOND**

It's ironic that we often think of rest as a suggestion or luxury when in fact God proclaims it as an integral part of one of the Ten Commandments.

- When's the last time you enjoyed taking a break without feeling lost or guilty? What factors make it hard for you to enjoy rest?

It can be hard to rest when you have outstanding work to do or feel like you're behind your teammates or competition. Try writing out all the excuses you might give to avoid making a regular habit of Sabbath.

- Are there any patterns?
- What might you need to ask of God and your community to create a regular pattern of mental, emotional, and spiritual rest?