

Questions to Think About and Discuss:

1. What do you think was Jesus' purpose in having the apostles meet with him and share about their mission trip? What benefit is there in sharing failures with a group? What benefit in sharing successes?

2. Do you have a tendency to work too much or too little? When Jesus invited the disciples to come away to a remote place, what does that say about the balance of work and rest?

3. What would be your ideal timing for periods of rest? What kind of activity in what kind of place restores your spiritual energy and equips you to resume ministry with renewed strength?

4. How is a spiritual sabbatical different from a vacation? Can the two be combined?

5. Have there ever been times that you were so tired you seemed to have no compassion? What is the remedy for this deficiency?

6. How can we meet the physical needs of people without turning our ministry into a "social gospel"? How can we advance the gospel of salvation without neglecting the physical needs of people? How is the response of the crowd a warning for us (John 6:15, 26–27)?

7. How did Jesus keep the feeding of the five thousand from being a mere social gospel? Was the miracle for the benefit of the crowd or for the disciples (see Mark 8:16–21)?

8. What are some events that have brought you the most spiritual encouragement and prompted the most praise to God? Do these often arise out of impossible challenges?
