

# Devotional #5

ANAPAÚÓ - THE GREEK WORD FOR REST

Matthew 11:28

*[Jesus said:] "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."*

The Greek word for 'rest' is ἀναπαύω (anapaúō). It's the word that we get 'pause' from. It means to give rest, to give a break from labour, to refresh.

In the ancient world people rarely had a break from labour. There was always work to be done. There was the paid labouring, the hunting and gathering of food, the labour-intensive work of washing and cleaning, as well as child-rearing, and responsibilities that came from being part of a community.

The establishment of the 'Sabbath' in the Jewish community was a significant point of difference from those around, that made them stand out and continues to do so (you may have been struck by this in the Netflix series Unorthodox). In these words, Jesus is telling the people to come to him for rest and refreshment. Through these simple words he was suggesting a couple of things: firstly, that he was God, he was Lord of the Sabbath. Secondly, that he was the source of spiritual refreshment: not the Temple, not the Law, not rituals, but Jesus himself. Spiritual refreshment was not achieved by doing more stuff, but by being in relationship with Jesus. Thirdly, he was telling us that we can have a break from our hurried, relentless lives, and rest with someone who knows us intimately, and cares for us completely.

May we give our hungry and thirsty souls what they long for: refreshment in Jesus who invites us to draw near to him.

## Reflection Questions

- Imagine Jesus beckoning you to come to him. How does that feel?
- How comfortable are you with the idea that spiritual refreshment is not something we can earn through doing stuff; but something we encounter by being with Jesus?
- Where can you hit 'pause' in your life to encounter Jesus more fully?