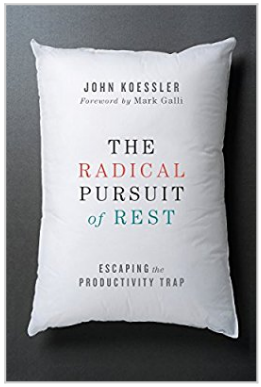

The Radical Pursuit of Rest: Escaping the Productivity Trap

By John Koessler

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The Radical Pursuit of Rest: Escaping the Productivity Trap By John Koessler

We live in a culture that values activity, achievement and accomplishment. Whether in our careers, churches, schools or families, busyness is the norm in our lives, and anything less makes us feel unproductive and anxious. We have to work all the harder, then, to pursue true rest in a 24-7 world that is constantly in motion.

John Koessler understands that rest is not automatic or easy to attain. He names the modern-day barriers to becoming people of rest and presents a unique perspective on how pursuing rest leads us to the heart of God. With honest, biblical reflections on trends in our culture and churches, he exposes our misconceptions regarding the concept of rest, as well as offering correction and practices to align our ideas with God's ideal.

The book includes reflection and discussion questions designed for both individual and group use. You will discover the true meaning behind Jesus' idea of the yoke of rest and restoration for your mind, body and soul.

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Editorial Review

Review
"Weariness plagues believers today because we have never mastered rest. Demands at work, responsibilities at church and needs at home squeeze rest from our lives leaving us panting and unfulfilled. We desperately need 'the radical pursuit of rest' as expertly explained by Koessler. Drop the chains, pick up this book and learn how to truly refresh your soul with biblical rest." (Paul Nyquist, president, Moody Bible Institute)

"Hurry, crowds and noise are enemies of the soul. Our addiction to busyness hides the path to true life. In *The Radical Pursuit of Rest*, John Koessler shows us a more excellent way. It is the way of Christ. Read this book and learn the unforced rhythms of grace." (H. B. Charles Jr., pastor-teacher, Shiloh Metropolitan Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Florida)

"We live in a restless world in desperate need of those who would invite us into the restful, unhurried kingdom of God. John Koessler provides just such an invitation. *The Radical Pursuit of Rest* is biblically rich, theologically well-rooted and thoughtful throughout. I encourage you to read it as a good guide into God's gracious and multifaceted gift of rest." (Alan Fadling, executive director, The Leadership Institute, author of An Unhurried Life)

"Here is the extravagant promise of John Koessler's wise, pastoral book: none of us needs to work harder at rest. Rather, rest is laid at the table of grace, which God himself has prepared. In this way, it is rescue for the weary and hope for the heavy-laden. When we realize that God hasn't invited us to share his busyness but enter his rest, we reclaim the holy leisure of worship. That's an invitation I can't seem to resist, and I'm thankful Koessler has made it so clearly and compellingly." (Jen Pollock Michel, author of Teach Us to Want)

"When John Koessler writes a book, I read it. His latest volume on the pursuit of rest is a prophetic word to an evangelical subculture that sometimes worships at the altar of productivity. As always, John openly shares his own sometimes-crooked journey towards finding genuine rest and offers some practical help along the way. This excellent book will make you rethink your own goals and how you measure success." (Mark Mitchell, lead pastor, Central Peninsula Church)

"Most of us yearn for some R & R, but we set our sights too low. It isn't just that we don't do Sabbaths well. We can hardly imagine what Jesus meant when he said, 'I will give you rest.' John Koessler, with his characteristically lucid and artistic writing, welcomes us into a kind of leisure that does not require us to wait for our day off. *The Radical Pursuit of Rest* helped me see sloth, ambition, technology and even death with biblical eyes." (Lee Eclov, senior pastor, Village Church of Lincolnshire, author of Pastoral Graces, contributor to Preaching Today and Leadership Journal)

"Speaking with wisdom and probing insight to a restless, production-driven culture, John Koessler has written a thoughtful, profound and eminently practical book. Like a jeweler, Koessler turns the idea of holy rest slowly in the light, allowing each facet to gleam brightly. It is rare to find a book that is, on the one hand, so deeply theological and, on the other hand, so close to the realities on the ground that it has the potential to change the ways we plan the day." (Thomas G. Long, Bandy Professor of Preaching, Candler School of Theology, Emory University)

"This worthwhile collection of thoughts about the 21st century church and its connection to rest leads to the key for this book: 'The pursuit of rest is really the pursuit of God.' Koessler assures us that God is in control and that He will take care of things even if we do make time to step away and rest. In addition to refocusing thoughts about our own misconception of God and rest, this book includes reflections and discussion questions for personal and group studies. It will help you rethink your own goals and how you measure success." (Donna Watson, CBA Retailers+Resources, February 2016)

"Koessler does a great job of explaining how they help fight against our out-of-control ambition, fear, and fatigue. He's able to see and explain the problem clearly, and present hopeful solutions in a fresh way. . . . It is, as you might expect, refreshing." (Matt Erickson, Facts &Trends, December 4, 2015)

About the Author
John Koessler (DMin, Trinity International University) is chair and professor of pastoral studies at the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, Illinois, where he has served for over twenty years. He is the author of several books, including The Surprising Grace of Disappointment, True Discipleship, God Our Father and A Stranger in the House of God. He is the general editor of The Moody Handbook of Preaching and Foundational Faith, and has written for publications like Christianity Today, Discipleship Journal, Leadership and Decision.

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