1. Living in a 24/7 Society (3Q 2021—Rest in Christ)

**Biblical Material:** Gen. 2:1–3; Jer. 45:1–5; Exod. 20:11; 2 Sam. 7:12; Mark 6:30–32; Gen. 4:1–17; Ps. 84:2.

**Quotes**
- Life is what happens to you while you’re busy making other plans. *John Lennon*
- The difficulty in life is the choice. *George Moore*
- Life is something that everyone should try at least once. *Henry J. Tillman*
- Life, too, is like that. You live it forward, but understand it backward. *Abraham Verghese*
- There is more to life than increasing its speed. *Mahatma Gandhi*
- For fast-acting relief, try slowing down. *Lily Tomlin*
- It is important from time to time to slow down, to go away by yourself, and simply be. *Eileen Caddy*
- We are always getting ready to live but never living. *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

**Questions**
What are some of the major problems of living in our modern world? In what ways have our “labor-saving devices” actually helped? What did Jesus do when he and his disciples didn’t have time to eat? What is the lesson there for us? How does life today continue to reflect the issues in the great controversy?

**Bible summary**
God rests on the Sabbath of Creation (Gen. 2:1–3). Jeremiah’s scribe Baruch complained that he didn’t get any rest, but the Lord promised his life would be spared! (Jer. 45:1-50). God’s rest at Creation is memorialized in the Sabbath (Exod. 20:11). In the Old Testament death was called “resting with your ancestors” (2 Sam. 7:12). Jesus invited his disciples: “Come with me, just yourselves. We’ll go to a quiet place, and rest for a while,” Jesus told them, because there was so much coming and going that they didn’t even have time to eat.” (Mark 6:31 FBV). Gen. 4:1–17 includes Cain murdering Abel. “I long, I ache, to be in the courts of the Lord.” (Ps. 84:2).

**Comment**
Believing life is like a melting ice-cream we try to devour as much as we can before it’s gone! The result? “Life seems but a quick succession of busy nothings,” wrote novelist Jane Austen. However important we may think our busyness is, it can get in the way of discovering true meaning and happiness. We can be so focused on doing we have no time for being. As the sign says, “If you’re too busy to go fishing, you’re too busy.” You may not enjoy fishing, but the thought is the same. If we’re too busy to take time for family and friends, for reflection and relaxation, then we are truly too busy. We do many things to time. We take time. We spend time. We waste time. We lose time. We kill time…

We’re conscious of the fact that we only have so much time so we should use it wisely and well. Yet all too often the demands of life take up our time, and we find it hard to invest time in what is really most important. Ask most people how things are going for them and they’ll say, “Busy.” It’s as if we define how successful we are by how busy we are! If we’re not busy, then something’s wrong… As Tim Kreider comments in the *New York Times*, (June 30, 2012), “Busyness serves as a kind of existential reassurance, a hedge against emptiness; obviously your
life cannot possibly be silly or trivial or meaningless if you are so busy, completely booked, in
demand every hour of the day.”

Once upon a time a king sent out invitations to his son’s marriage that would be
celebrated with a huge banquet. (See Jesus’ story recorded in Matthew 22.) You’d imagine
everybody would want to be there for a royal wedding! But amazingly when the time came,
those who’d been invited made excuses why they couldn’t come. They were all just too busy—
so they missed out on this incredible invitation. Are we too busy like that?

Sadly much of our busyness is running around without really useful purpose. “Just
getting things done,” we tell ourselves. Trouble with that attitude is that we can end up like the
man who on his deathbed admitted he had been “too busy to live life.”

For this life is full of ways to make you busy—so busy you don’t even have time despite
all those time-saving tools! Time-saving? Like hundreds of emails and instant messages and
texts that you just have to answer? In the end we’re too busy for those too and we end up sending
a reply that goes something like this: Sry didn’t read ur post. Was 2 busy. #2busy4u #2much2do

The problem is that though we may recognize the truth behind such ideas, how do we do
just that? Our lives today do not lend themselves to reflection and thoughtfulness… What to do?
Remember the line, Stop the World, I Want to Get Off!

It’s hard not to identify with such a perspective. Our lives seem to rush past at an ever-
faster rate. What we’re expected to do always seems to be increasing. We end up doing more and
more and yet there’s always more to be done. No wonder people can’t cope with all the
demands! In such a world, why wouldn’t you want to simply get off?

Living on a rollercoaster ride? Fun for a while, but there’s a feeling of relief when you
step off! You wouldn’t want to spend your whole life on one, would you? A rollercoaster ride
with a restaurant car attached, and a sleeping compartment? Would that end up being “fun”? In
the rollercoaster ride which is our ride today, we’re looking to get off more than to get on!

Forbes Magazine (October 18, 2012) ran a piece entitled “The 25 Biggest Regrets In
Life. What Are Yours?” Here are a few of the regrets that people identified that they wished they
had done or not done: “Working so much at the expense of family and friendships. Turned off
my phone more/Left my phone at home. Been happier more. Not taken life so seriously. Gone on
more trips with the family/friends. Letting my marriage break down. Taught my kids to do stuff
more. Trusting that voice in the back of my head more. Spending more time with the kids. Not
visiting a dying friend before he died. Being a better father or mother.”

In the end it does seem as Job said, “My days pass quicker than a weaver’s shuttle and
they come to an end without hope.” (Job 7:6 FBV). Like a shuttle in the hand of the weaver at
the loom that flashes from one side to another so quickly it’s almost invisible, our lives race past
and we feel that everything’s out of control…

So the real question is how we deal with all of that! This quarter we are looking at “Rest
in Christ,” which will look at ways in which we can refocus and reprioritize our lives, so that we
can be harmony with the Lord who gives us his fulfilling rest.

Ellen White comments
I feel the more anxious because I see so many indifferent upon the subjects of infinite
importance. They are always busy here and there about matters of minor importance, and the one
great subject is put out of their thoughts. They have no time to pray, no time to watch, no time to
search the Scriptures. They are altogether too busy to make the necessary preparation for the
future life. {OHC 44.4}