
I Have A Problem

**An article from the *Cathedral Times*
by Canon Wallace Marsh**

I have a problem. I don't like vacation. I spend the first two or three days trying to unplug. Then, I spend that last two or three days scheduling everything that needs to get done when I return. That leaves me about one or two days of actual rest and relaxation. Of course, I want to spend those days making the family go on a memorable excursion or exciting day trip. On the other hand, they would rather enjoy their vacation—chill on the beach, have a nice lunch, then watch a movie.

I have spent many years trying to figure out why I fail at vacation. I have learned that people who fail at vacation are often those who can't seem to let go of their work, or think they are the only ones who are capable of doing their job. That rationale makes sense to me. However, it doesn't apply to me, as I have left multiple jobs and fully believe that I am replaceable, and often by very talented individuals.

Lately, I have started blaming my failure at vacation on my Puritan DNA. Yes, my many great-grandfather was Governor William Bradford of Plymouth Colony. The Puritans had a crazy work ethic, one that has permeated our culture and theology here in America. Consequently, we don't do vacation like our European brothers and sisters. Like many of you, I was formed by (and taught to appreciate) this Protestant work ethic. While my parents hard-wired this ethic into me, they are not to be held responsible for my problem. They are often the ones criticizing me for failing at vacation!

My problem with vacation is that I fail to see for what it is, "an extended period of recreation." I fail to see that recreation is just another way to say re-creation. Yes, God's final act in creation was a day of "rest." Yet, none of us believes God stopped creating on the sixth day; God continues to create. Thus, that day of rest could very well be an important time for re-creation.

If so much of our work and our lives involve pouring ourselves out like God does in creation, then it is important for us to step away, so that we can return and continue the work of re-creation. If we don't step away, we might not ever discover where new creation and re-creation is needed in our lives. Some people talk about returning from vacation with new insight, vision, and wisdom. I believe those are the people who see vacation as an opportunity for re-creation.

If my Protestant work-ethic is the reason I struggle with vacation, then it is helpful to remember the theological importance of creation and the need for re-creation in life. The most important work in our lives might very well be the work we allow God to do in us! When God does the work of creation and re-creation in our lives, I have no doubt God speaks the very same words God does in Genesis, "It is good."

So, if failing at vacation is missing an opportunity for creation and re-creation, then I just might have to load up the car and give it another try.

Have a blessed (and re-creative) summer!