



REFRESH

retreat



REFRESH retreat

Hey...you need a rest. You need a recharge. You need some REFRESHMENT.

This is a guide to help you pause, reflect, and spend some much-needed time with the Living Spring, the source of all refreshment, to find health and rest for your soul.

Here's what you'll need:

- ☐ A bottle of cold water
- ☐ Something to write with (apple pencil, actual pencil, whatever)
- ☐ Headphones
- ☐ A refreshing place where you can take a breath (a closet, backyard, go on a walk)
- ☐ 30 minutes...I know...but it'll be worth it.

BEGIN HERE> saddleback.com/thewell

Just bring up this window, we'll let you know what to do with it on the next page.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE>

Take some time today to walk through this guide.

There's no need to "complete" it all. That is not what this is about. This is about the opportunity to spend time with your Father, the giver of living water to your soul. The journey follows through these four sections.

1. **Thirst**
2. **Mirages**
3. **Oasis**
4. **Living Water**

If it's helpful, write down your reflections in the open spots below. (This is an interactive .pdf. It is built for you to use on your phone, tablet, laptop, or device of choice. Just click the links to take you to where you need to go. In the reflection sections, click on the box under the reflection questions and you'll be able to type in your responses and save them.)

ACTIONIZE>

If you'd like to extend this experience, moving the Reflection into Action, try the "Actionize" step in each section for some exercises and tools to help build these principles into your life. These exercises will be found in the "[Actionize Exercises](#)" bundle.



part 1- thirst

THIRST: LISTEN> saddleback.com/thewell

Listen until 4:20 time mark (there will be a pause in the audio).

THIRST: REFLECT>

You may feel like you're journeying through the desert right now. Write down your thoughts about the next few questions, then spend some time in the prayer exercise.

Reflection 1: How would you describe your desert? Like the sun and the sand, what drains you? What makes you feel tired or overwhelmed?

Reflection 2: What long stretches do you experience in your days? What periods of time do you feel like you're journeying in the desert, thirsty, and without a needed break?

Prayer Exercise: Take a few minutes to offer these things to God, and ask for His help, guidance, and endurance during these long stretches.

ACTIONIZE: TIME AUDIT>

Take an extra 10-minutes to think through your day with the "[weekly time audit](#)" exercise in your "Actionize" bundle. What long stretches do you face during the week? When do you get to rest? When do you need to rest up for long journeys ahead? Work through the chart to get a better understanding of your time.



part 2- mirages

MIRAGES: LISTEN>

Listen from 4:20 to 8:20.

MIRAGES: REFLECT>

In the middle of the desert, in our tiredness, we can easily mistake sand for water. These are mirages, that promise refreshment without delivering. Write down your thoughts about the next few questions, then work through the prayer exercise.

Reflection 1: What mirages do you chase to find momentary refreshment (social media, bingeing shows, constant background noise or busyness, junk food)? What makes these initially attractive to you? In what ways do they, on the surface, promise to quench your thirst?

Reflection 2: How do you feel after going to these mirages? How do you feel when you re-engage, after the mirage, with everything you're facing? What has been your experience?

Prayer Exercise: God described this tendency of going to mirages through the Prophet Jeremiah: "My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water." Spend a few minutes confessing to God the ways you try to inadequately quench your thirst. Then, free from those burdens, tell God what you really need from Him.

ACTIONIZE: [BREAK PLAN](#)>

Take an extra 10-minutes to intentionally plan how you'll spend your breaks. What mirages do you chase when you have a 1-minute break, 5-minute break, or a 15-minute break? What about when you have a couple hours? Walk through the "[Break Plan](#)" exercise to name these things, then plan through what you'll do instead.



part 3- oasis

OASIS: LISTEN>

Listen from 8:20 to 11:20.

OASIS: REFLECT>

God has refreshing moments of pause, of quenched thirst, of true peace, around every corner. Come in out of the heat, plunge into refreshing pools of water, and soak in His goodness. These are pit stops throughout the day to remind you of the life abundant.

Reflection 1: Think about the rhythm of your day—the places you find yourself, the patterns of your coming and going. Where might God have placed oases for YOU to be refreshed?

Reflection 2: Pick one or two of the top stressors/challenges you are facing this week, and write out your plan for the oasis you will run to when you notice yourself beginning to thirst.

Prayer Exercise: Take a few minutes and spend time with God. Don't throw requests at Him, don't feel like you need to talk at Him, just spend a few minutes WITH Him. Sit down in a relaxed but upright posture, let your shoulders relax, take a deep breath. If it's helpful to just sit in silence, great. Or think through how grateful you are for today, for this moment. Or, if you can spare it, spend an extra 5 minutes in [this musical oasis](#).

ACTIONIZE: OASIS HUNT>

Take an extra 10-minutes to go on an Oasis Hunt. What oases are lined up for you on a daily, minute-by-minute basis? Walk through the “[Oasis Hunt](#)” exercise to intentionally think through what oases you may be passing, and which ones are most refreshing to you.



part 4- living water

LIVING WATER: LISTEN>

Listen from 11:20 to End.

LIVING WATER: REFLECT>

Do you feel like a river of living water to others? What responsibilities do you lean into that leave you empty? What would it look like to re-think those responsibilities? Write down your thoughts about the next few questions, then work through the following prayer exercise.

Reflection 1: Do you believe God, the source of Living Water, desires to quench YOUR thirst? Take a moment to read through John 7:37-39 again. Write down what you are feeling emotionally and spiritually.

Reflection 2: Who has been a source of Living Water to you? Who could you be a source of Living Water to? What would that look like? A neighbor, family member, friend? What would it look like for “rivers of Living Water” to flow “from your innermost being” to those around you?

Prayer Exercise: Ask God, the One who is the source of all refreshment, to refresh others through you. Ask God to relieve any pressure or guilt about doing so, that this would not come from an attempt at earning His or others’ love, but that it would come from a place of *being* deeply loved by Him.

ACTIONIZE: [LIVING WATER](#)>

How can you intentionally offer living water to others? What responsibilities do you carry that aren’t really yours? Walk through this “[Living Water](#)” exercise to gain clarity to these questions and direction on your next steps.



part 5-closing up

We hope that was REFRESHING! God has a way of bringing living water to our souls, no matter how tired, parched, or beat up we are! As you finish up, thank God for his work in you and through you, capture any notes or thoughts you don't want to lose, then step back into the world God has for you.

So, WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE? Here are some next steps.

Actionize Exercises>

Want to make these reflections a reality in your life?

Walk through the exercises listed at the bottom of each section. You don't have to do this all in one sitting, take your time and focus on just one section a day. It'll serve you, your volunteers, and your family, well.

The Well Podcast> saddleback.com/thewell

"The Well" podcast is a collection of guided reflections prepared by our Saddleback Spiritual Growth team. These 10-15 minute audio experiences are meant to help you quench your thirst with the Living Water, as you meditate on Scripture, pray, and spend time talking to God about what is welling up within you.

Reach Out> saddleback.com/grow

We want to help you grow. We've got loads of resources, podcasts, pathways, etc. to help you grow more and more into the abundant life He has for you. Shoot us an email at maturity@saddleback.com or visit saddleback.com/grow to check out what other resources are available to you.



REFRESH RETREAT

“ACTIONIZE” EXERCISES

If you'd like to extend this experience, try the “Actionize” step in each section for some exercises and tools to help build these principles into your life.



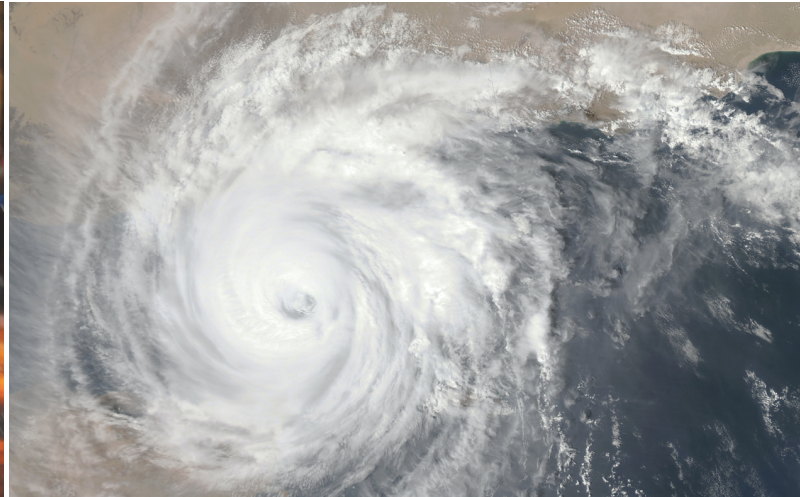
WEEKLY TIME AUDIT

ACTIONIZE: WEEKLY TIME AUDIT>

We're glad you're taking this time to get real with your week. The next few minutes could be revolutionary for you and all those in your life.



When things get too busy in life, it's easy to feel like you're in a storm, like everything is a hurricane and you're just holding on for dear life. Things are confusing, you feel overwhelmed, and visibility is low.




It is incredibly helpful to get a higher view, to get above the clouds, where the sun is shining, and the visibility is as far as the eye can see. Get high enough, and you can see the storm in full view, know where the eye of the storm is, and which direction it's moving.

This is what this exercise is about.

Begin by walking through the chart on the next page, listing out what you do in the time slots in the chart. The more detailed you get, the more helpful it will be. **Once you're finished** charting it out, here are some questions to think through....

- What long stretches do you see? Where you feel like you're journeying in the desert over long distances without rest? Color red the parts where you know you will be experiencing thirst. These are times to build in intentional, short moments of refreshing with Him.
- What rhythms emerge that you didn't see before? What times of day/week are suited more for work, and what times are suited more for rest? Color green the parts that bring some shade, some potential moments of rest.
- What time-wasters do you see? What blocks of your week could use a bit more planning, now that you see it from a higher level? Color blue the parts that you want to re-think.
- Your life is made up of how you spend your time. Take a moment, look again at this weekly rhythm. If this chart represents what you prioritize in life, what do you see? What needs to be added or taken out? Spend time in prayer, thanking God for His gift of TIME. Then ask for His help to use yours well.

WEEKLY TIME AUDIT

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Early AM (5-9am)							
Morning (9am-12pm)							
Afternoon (12-3pm)							
Late Afternoon (3-5pm)							
Evening (5-8pm)							
Night (8pm-12am)							



BREAK PLAN

ACTIONIZE: BREAK PLAN>

We're glad you're taking this time to get real with your week. There is power in a well-planned moment. No matter how many or how few you get each day, we all have a moment to rest. The question is, how do you use it?



When you're caught up in the moment-by-moment type of life, it is so easy to spend your sacred, few moments of quiet or calm like this...This is what chasing a mirage looks like. Let's be honest, it doesn't refresh you, and it does very little to help you be prepared for all that is coming next.



Believe it or not, even a minute well-spent, in the presence of your good God, the Creator of the universe, can leave you feeling like this. Life is made up of moments, so let's get ahead of it, and plan out how to use these sacred moments well, however few they are.

This is what this exercise is about.

Think through your day—at the moment level. We chase mirages because they are easy, they are close, we don't have to work too hard for them. They are also just sand, so they don't offer you much.

What you CAN do, is get intentional with your time. The next time you have 1 minute, what will you do instead of checking your notifications? The next time you have 5 minutes, what will you do instead of scrolling or wandering?

What do you primarily go to—you don't have to think about it, you just end up using your time that way? Now, what would you RATHER do with those sacred moments of pause? Use the chart below to think through these things, and come up with ideas for how to use your time in a more helpful way. Print it out, put it up on your fridge, or take a picture and put it on the background of your phone.

This isn't about feeling guilty, about putting more burdens on your back. This is about living the life abundant that Jesus has for you. This is for your health. This is for His mission. What brings you life?

BREAK PLAN



MY MIRAGES
(what I usually do)



MY BREAK PLAN
(what I'll do instead)

1-Minute Break <i>(example)</i>	Check phone notifications	Short prayer to thank God for one thing today
Examples: check phone notifications, browse news stories, get frustrated	Ideas: Gratitude prayer, silence, text a friend, read a Bible verse, take a deep breath, stretch break.	
1-Minute Break		
Examples: Scroll social media, busied distraction, grab unhealthy snack	Ideas: Go outside and stare at the sky, listen to a worship song, sit in silence, call a friend, doodle.	
5-Minute Break		
Examples: Scroll social media, watch unhelpful show, vent, read news + get angry	Ideas: Go outside, stare at the sky, listen to a worship song, sit in silence, call a friend, read a book.	
15-Minute Break		
Examples: Scroll social media, wander on device, watch a show, busied clean up	Ideas: Go on a walk, read a book, spend quiet time with God, listen to a helpful podcast, practice a hobby	
30-Minute Break		
Examples: Binge TV, eat unhealthy snacks, vent to loved one, play mindless games	Ideas: Board games with loved ones, intentional conversations, sleep, read, hobby, bake something good	
Multi-Hour Break <i>(evenings)</i>		



OASIS HUNT

ACTIONIZE: OASIS HUNT>

We're glad you're taking this time to get real with your week. You may not know it, but God has oases, sources of refreshing, all around you. Take the time now to peel back the layer of busy, and look beneath the surface to see where/how God is providing Living Water to you.



Who feels like these camels right now? Sand, sand, and more sand. The thing about journeying in the desert, is you have to pay attention to the landscape. Although it may be dry, you can survive by keeping your eyes peeled for signs of life.



God has sources of refreshing for you, that make you feel like this. Often, we're too busy caught up in the tasks and to-dos of life that we just miss them! How can you find places like THIS when you feel like those sad camels over there?

This is what this exercise is about.

There are signs of life all around. What has a bit of green in a landscape of beige? Where do you feel moments of exhilaration, of rest, of refreshment, even amidst your tasks? An Oasis Hunt is all about paying attention to what gives you life, even amidst the craziness of life, then drinking in all the Living Water He has for you in that moment.

Exodus 33:14, God says "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." It's not about having to leave to some other place...God's rest-giving, life-giving rest journeys *with* you. It may be in the moment you child says something surprising, maybe it's the way a Bible verse comes to your mind when you need it, maybe it is in that rare thank you at work, maybe it's the tastiness of that avocado toast in the morning, maybe it's the way the steam dances above your cup of tea. These are moments God is coaxing you into a moment of gratitude and refreshing with Him.

Whatever it is, we often pass it by. We don't stop, soak it in, and get replenished by it. **In the exercise ahead**, write down some of these as you go throughout your day. This will help you do two things:

1. Writing it down TODAY will help you pay more attention to it, keeping your eyes open for signs of oases throughout your day.
2. It will give you hope for TOMORROW by remembering of all the oases in your daily path.

OASIS HUNT



OASES I EXPERIENCED TODAY

HOW GOD REFRESHED ME THERE

Example:
My son asked why my face “looked like that”. I laughed
so hard, realizing I haven’t showered in 2 days.

God reminded me not to take myself too seriously



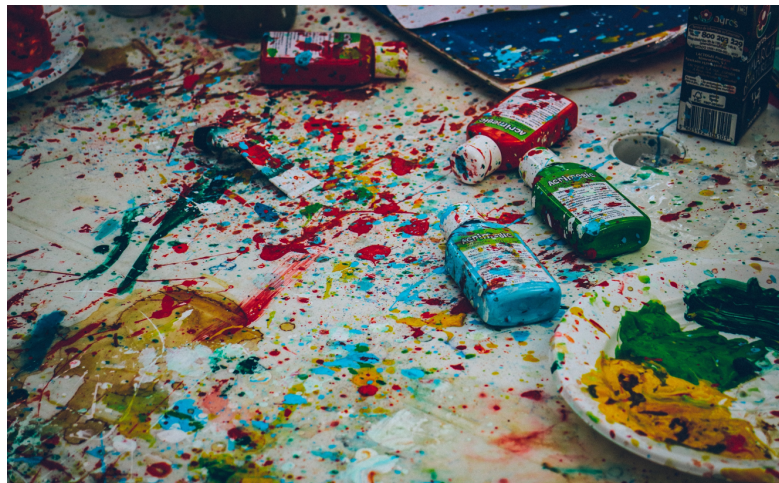
LIVING WATER

ACTIONIZE: LIVING WATER>

We're glad you're taking this time to get real with your week. When you look at your "Weekly Time Audit" (if you haven't done it yet, go back and check it out!), you'll see some chunks of time that you'll wonder about. Believe it or not, we do a lot in our day based on presumptions about who we are and what responsibilities we think we need to fulfill.



This is what we want, when we think about being healthy, right? Time together, time WITH, smiles, connection, learning, growing. We want to offer loving PRESENCE, the way we feel when we are in the presence of God, we want that to overflow to our contexts.



But all too often, this is the reality. Chaos, peanut-butter under our fingernails, chasing a million tasks that we can never get on top of, all the while, completely missing out on what we wanted to be as disciples anyway! Time WITH. Time TOGETHER. Simply put, we're too busy chasing tasks that we miss offering and practicing PRESENCE...with God, with ourselves, with others.

This is what this exercise is about.

Jesus says that for those who believe in Him, "rivers of living waters will flow from within them." (John 7:38) So, why doesn't it feel like this? Why does it feel like I need to manufacture any bit of water to offer others? Well, it is likely because we forget what our true responsibilities are.

We think we are meant to be the solution to everyone's problems, we need to be the source of everything to everyone, that we always have to have the right answer or the best accolades or the busiest schedule or the (fill in the blank here).

This exercise is likely the hardest, as it will take you face-to-face with the stories you may tell yourself. Take some time in the chart below to do two things:

1. Write out what things you may tell yourself are your responsibilities and identities. Then,
2. Write out what God says are your responsibility and identity. Find a verse to back it up!

This is meant to be a freeing exercise, and it is the way to enter into being a source of Living Water to others. It is only when we abide in the vine that we can bear fruit. Take some time to remember who and whose you really are.

LIVING WATER

THINGS I TELL MYSELF ABOUT MYSELF

(my identity, my responsibilities, my burdens to carry, etc.)

THINGS GOD SAYS ABOUT WHO I AM

(my identity, my responsibilities, my real purpose, etc.)

Example:

I am only as good as the work I produce.

I am God's masterpiece...fully loved not because of what I do, but simply that I am. And God has made me as a masterpiece to be a source of good to others.. He's already prepared these things in advance for me to do, so I can just rest in what He gives me.

**Ephesians 2:10