MAKING THE DECISION
JANUARY 6, 2026

Scripture: *"Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed."* — Mark 1:35

You know what I've noticed about rest?
We talk about it way more than we actually do it.
I can't tell you how many times I've said to Tom: "I really need to take a day off." And then I don't.

Or: "I should go for a walk." And then I sit on the couch TikToking.

Or: "I need to start pausing during the day." And then three weeks go by and I haven't paused once.

It's not that I don't believe in rest. I preach about Sabbath. I write devotions about it. I tell other people to do it.

But belief without action is just… theory.

Look at the verbs in Mark 1:35:
Jesus **got up.**
Jesus **left the house.**
Jesus **went off** to a solitary place.

Three active verbs. Three choices. Three movements.

He didn't think about going to pray. He didn't wish he had time to pray. He didn't wait for someone to give him permission.

He just went.

While it was still dark. Before anyone could stop him. Before his own brain could talk him out of it.

That's active choice.

Here's what I'm learning: **Wishing for rest doesn't create rest. Only choosing it does.**

And choosing it means actually doing the thing—even when:

- You don't feel like it
- You don't think you have time
- People might not understand
- Your inner critic tells you you're being selfish

Active choice means you **move first.** You don't wait for conditions to be perfect. You act.

The Saturday between Christmas and New Year, I could feel burnout creeping in. Christmas Eve service was over, but there was still Sunday coming.

I had twelve different things on my to-do list. My inbox was out of control. And I could feel my emotions starting to shut down.

I had a choice:

I could **wish** I had margin. I could **hope** things would calm down. I could **wait** for burnout to force me to stop.

Or I could actively choose to stop now.

So I did something I've never done: I blocked an entire afternoon on my calendar. No meetings. No emails. No "just one quick thing."

I put my phone down.
I went running errands. That had nothing to do with Soul, church, or anything ministry-related. They were simply errands that I wanted to run.
I told Tom: "I'm out—no phone, etc."
His reply? "Good for you!"
I told myself: "This is not selfish. This is stewardship."

And then I actually went.

I hit my favorite stores. Actually didn't buy a thing except some books. I just breathed. And I let my nervous system remember what it feels like to not be in crisis mode.

That one afternoon saved my psyche as we moved into the new year.

Not because the to-do list got shorter. But because I showed up to it as a human being instead of a machine running on fumes.

Active choice doesn't have to be dramatic.

It can be one minute.
It can be turning your phone off during lunch.
It can be saying "no" to one thing so you can say "yes" to rest.

But it has to be **actual**. Not theoretical.

You have to actually do the thing.

Reflection
What's one thing you keep saying you "should" do for your soul that you haven't actually done?
What would it look like to actively choose it this week—not wish for it, but DO it?

Practice (2 minutes)
Right now—not later, not tomorrow, RIGHT NOW—set a timer for one minute.
Close your eyes. Breathe. And say out loud:
"I am actively choosing this. This is not selfish. This is faithful."
Saying it out loud makes it real. Makes it yours.

Prayer
God of action,
Help me stop wishing for rest and start choosing it.
Give me courage to actually do what I know I need.
Move me from theory to practice, from thought to action.
Amen.

Grace and Peace,
Andrea