

The welcome verse for this week is Matthew 11:28-30: “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”



Practicing Sabbath

Genesis 1; Exodus 20; Mark 2:23-28

The Bottom Line: Sabbath was made for you.

Introduction:

In the beginning, God...rested?

God set apart a day for delighting in His good creation.

Written into the fabric of creation, history, and even our very own DNA is the practice of Sabbath rest.

Tension:

Sabbath is probably the most debated of all the spiritual disciplines.

We've made ourselves too busy for Sabbath.

Truth:

We have been left restless, broken, and hurried. This has caused emotional instability, relational strife, and spiritual apathy.

“If the devil can't make you sin, he'll make you busy.”

- Corrie Ten Boom

Dallas Willard once said, “You must ruthlessly eliminate hurry from your life.” When I am hurried, I am not loving. I am not loving God, others, or myself.

Sabbath is a gift from God.

In Exodus, God gives sabbath to us as a rhythm instituted at creation. In Deuteronomy, God gives sabbath as resistance to the ruler of this world.

Egypt is still alive and well.

Most of the more legalistic sabbath restrictions were not added until a long time after Moses.

When Jesus was questioned about the sabbath law, he shocked his listeners with a catchy phrase but a deep truth – “The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath” (Mark 2:27).

Sabbath should be beautiful, not burdensome.

There can be a physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual toll when we resist God’s gift of sabbath.

“If we don’t allow the soil of our souls to rest, we do violence to ourselves.”
- Pete Scazzero

What is Sabbath? It is simply the practice of stopping, resting, delighting, and contemplating.

In sabbath, we take time to rest in God, His creation, and good gifts to us.

We learn four key truths when we participate in Sabbath rest:

1. I am loved apart from my performance.
2. I am freed from the role of holding everything together.
3. I am blessed with the opportunity to just be present.
4. I am kept in the care of Almighty God.

Jesus has become for us our great rest. The grace of God in Jesus Christ has enabled us to rest *from* His love, not *for* it.

Application & Conclusion:

For those who understand sabbath differently, it is important that we not judge them (Romans 14:5; Colossians 2:16). Whether Sabbath rest is a law or a gift, it is good. It is a foretaste of the day to come, when all is right in the world and Jesus is with us again. Until then, we make it our aim to unhurry to enjoy God’s presence in our life.

Your Practice This Week – Schedule a Sabbath day for sometime in the next couple of weeks where you will stop all work, rest, delight, and contemplate God.

