

Pause

A. As our culture ramps back up to hectic speed, we need to pause and ask God to help us reexamine our schedules, motivations, and priorities.

"I observed yet another example of something meaningless under the sun. This is the case of a man who is all alone, without a child or a brother, yet who works hard to gain as much wealth as he can. But then he asks himself, 'Who am I working for? Why am I giving up so much pleasure now?' It is all so meaningless and depressing." Ecclesiastes 4:7-8 (NLT)

"A prudent person foresees danger and takes precautions. The simpleton goes blindly on and suffers the consequences." Proverbs 22:3 (NLT)

Note: We don't need to return to the hectic schedules we maintained before the pandemic.

"As a dog returns to its vomit, so a fool repeats his foolishness." Proverbs 26:11 (NLT)

B. God knows our needs better than we do and instructs us to pause for a Sabbath day each week.

"Remember to observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. You have six days each week for your ordinary work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath day of rest dedicated to the LORD your God. On that day no one in your household may do any work. This includes you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, your livestock, and any foreigners living among you. For in six days the LORD made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything in them; but on the seventh day he rested. That is why the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart as holy." Exodus 20:8-11 (NLT)

1. When we pause from all of our work/activities/entertainment, we have time to be still in God's presence and worship Him.

"... 'Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.'" Psalm 46:10 (NIV)

"My soul, wait in silence for God alone, For my hope is from Him. He alone is my rock and my salvation, My refuge; I will not be shaken." Psalm 62:5-6 (NASB)

"Lord, my heart is not proud; my eyes are not haughty. I don't concern myself with matters too great or too awesome for me to grasp. Instead, I have calmed and quieted myself... like a weaned child is my soul within me." Psalm 131:1-2 (NLT)

2. When we pause from all of our work/activities/entertainment, we have time to surrender our concerns to God and listen for His guidance.

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life." Psalm 139:23-24 (NLT)

"All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NLT)

3. When we pause from all of our work/activities/entertainment, we have time to rest.

"Remember that you were once slaves in Egypt, but the LORD your God brought you out with his strong hand and powerful arm. That is why the LORD your God has commanded you to rest on the Sabbath day." Deuteronomy 5:15 (NLT)

"It is useless for you to work so hard from early morning until late at night, anxiously working for food to eat; for God gives rest to his loved ones." Psalm 127:2 (NLT)

C. Three Life Applications we can make regarding pausing for a weekly Sabbath day:

1. Pausing for a Sabbath day each week requires trust.

"Trust in the Lord and do good. Then you will live safely in the land and prosper. Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you your heart's desires. Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust him, and he will help you... Be still in the presence of the Lord, and wait patiently for him to act." Psalm 37:3-7a (NLT)

"The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still." Exodus 14:14 (NIV)

2. Pausing for a Sabbath day each week is a choice.

“The Lord asked Moses, ‘How long will these people refuse to obey my commands and instructions? They must realize that the Sabbath is the Lord’s gift to you. That is why he gives you a two-day supply on the sixth day, so there will be enough for two days...’” Exodus 16:28-29a (NLT)

“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you. Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you.” Psalm 32:8-9 (NIV)

3. Pausing for a Sabbath day each week should be a delight.

“Keep the Sabbath day holy. Don’t pursue your own interests on that day, but enjoy the Sabbath and speak of it with delight as the LORD’s holy day. Honor the Sabbath in everything you do on that day, and don’t follow your own desires or talk idly. Then the LORD will be your delight.” Isaiah 58:13-14a (NLT)

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Connect Group Discussion Questions

Read Exodus 20:8-11 and then discuss the following questions:

1. Many people say they don’t want to live at the hectic pace they maintained before the pandemic. How realistic is it to expect things to be different in the future?

2. Do you observe a Sabbath day each week? If so, how do you spend the day?

3. Discuss the following opportunities we gain when we pause to observe a weekly Sabbath day.

- When we pause from all of our work/activities/entertainment, we have time to be still in God’s presence and worship Him. (Psalm 46:10, 62:5-6, 131)
- When we pause from all of our work/activities/entertainment, we have time to surrender our concerns to God and listen for His guidance. (Psalm 139:23-24, 2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- When we pause from all of our work/activities/entertainment, we have time to rest. (Deuteronomy 5:15, Psalm 127:2)

4. How do you feel about businesses like Chik-fil-A being closed on Sunday?

5. Discuss the following Life Applications we can make regarding pausing for a Sabbath day each week:

- Pausing for a sabbath day each week requires trust. (Exodus 14:14, Psalm 37:3-7)
- Pausing for a sabbath day each week is a choice. (Exodus 16:28-29, Psalm 32:8-9)
- Pausing for a sabbath day each week should be a delight. (Isaiah 58:13-14)

6. Discuss the following quotations:

“The Sabbath was made to meet the needs of people, and not people to meet the requirements of the Sabbath.” Jesus in Mark 2:27 (NLT)

“The Sabbath is a day to let go, to stop trying to control people and situations. It’s a day to unhook from performing for people or pleasing people. It’s a day to focus on what God is graciously doing all around you and respond to him rather than depending on your own abilities to make things happen. Keeping the Sabbath teaches us to trust God and enjoy Him. It helps us to be governed by our good God in what we do and in how we do it. It’s God’s way to set us free from worry and anxiety, ambition and adrenaline, self-importance and anger, even loneliness.” Bill Gaultier