

## Seven Reasons for Practicing Sabbath

### A. God wants us to practice Sabbath.

“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)

*Note:* God wants us to delight in practicing Sabbath and not see it as a burden. “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.” Isaiah 58:13 (NLT)

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

### B. Seven reasons for practicing Sabbath.

#### 1. Sabbath gives us time to worship.

“O God, you are my God; I earnestly search for you. My soul thirsts for you; my whole body longs for you in this parched and weary land where there is no water. I have seen you in your sanctuary and gazed upon your power and glory. Your unfailing love is better than life itself; how I praise you! I will praise you as long as I live, lifting up my hands to you in prayer. You satisfy me more than the richest feast. I will praise you with songs of joy.” Psalm 63:1-5 (NLT)

“I was glad when they said to me, ‘Let us go to the house of the LORD.’” Psalm 122:1 (NLT)

#### 2. Sabbath gives us 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)

*Note:* Sabbath requires trust. “I wait quietly before God, for my victory comes from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress where I will never be shaken... He is my refuge, a rock where no enemy can reach me. O my people, trust in him at all times.” Psalm 62:1-2,7-8 (NLT)

“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”  
Matthew 6:33 (NIV)

#### 3. Sabbath gives us time to prioritize and gain perspective.

“Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.” Psalm 90:12 (NIV)

“Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again— my Savior and my God!” Psalm 42:11 (NLT)

#### 4. Sabbath gives us time to pray.

“Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God’s peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT)

*Note:* Effective prayer requires time and space free of distractions. “But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.” Matthew 6:6 (NLT)

#### 5. Sabbath gives us time to build relationships.

“They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord’s Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity— all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.”

Acts 2:46-47 (NLT)

“Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.” Hebrews 10:24-25 (NLT)

6. Sabbath gives us time to listen.

“As Jesus and the disciples continued on their way to Jerusalem, they came to a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed them into her home. Her sister, Mary, sat at the Lord’s feet, listening to what he taught. But Martha was distracted by the big dinner she was preparing. She came to Jesus and said, “Lord, doesn’t it seem unfair to you that my sister just sits here while I do all the work? Tell her to come and help me.” But the Lord said to her, “My dear Martha, you are worried and upset over all these details! There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her.” Luke 10:38-42 (NLT)

*Note:* In order to listen we must choose to be still. “Be still in the presence of the LORD, and wait patiently for him to act.” Psalm 37:7 (NLT)

“Only in returning to me and resting in me will you be saved. In quietness and confidence is your strength. But you would have none of it.” Isaiah 30:15 (NLT)

7. Sabbath gives us time to be restored.

“Give the following instructions to the people of Israel. When you have entered the land I am giving you, the land itself must observe a Sabbath rest before the LORD every seventh year. For six years you may plant your fields and prune your vineyards and harvest your crops, but during the seventh year the land must have a Sabbath year of complete rest.” Leviticus 25:2-4 (NLT)

“The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul.” Psalm 23:1-3 (NIV)

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## Discussion Questions

1. What were Sundays like in your home growing up? Was it a special day or just another day of the week?
2. Describe someone you know who works too much. Why do they do it? What would you tell them if you thought they would listen?
3. Read Exodus 20:8-11 and Deuteronomy 5:15. Why do you think Sabbath-keeping is one of the Ten Commandments?
4. React to Isaiah 30:15 and Psalm 37:7. Why is it so hard for most of us to sit still?
5. Discuss the following ideas for Sabbath-keeping. Which of these ideas sound good to you?
  - Attend worship.
  - Take a nap.
  - Read the Bible for an hour.
  - Spend an hour in prayer.
  - Unplug. (No cell phones, email, internet, social media or TV)
  - Prayerfully plan your schedule for the next week (sync calendars with your family).
  - Visit someone who is sick or lonely.
  - Go for a leisurely walk.
  - Have a family discussion about a Biblical topic.
  - Invite a neighbor to dinner or a visitor to worship to join you for lunch.

What other ideas would you add?

6. Read Psalm 42:11 and 90:12. When was the last time you took an hour to evaluate your priorities and how you use your time? When will you next schedule an hour to do this?
7. Discuss the following quotations:

“Fatigue makes cowards of us all.” Vince Lombardi

“The busyness of things obscures our concentration on God ... Never let a hurried lifestyle disturb the relationship of abiding in Him. This is an easy thing to allow, but we must guard against it.” Oswald Chambers

“During Sabbath rest I discover the reality of my life in God’s Kingdom: I am not alone. Everything doesn’t depend on me. Things don’t have to happen my way. God is with me, helping me, and working all things together for my good so I can be happy no matter what!” Bill Gaultiere

“He who cannot rest, cannot work; he who cannot let go, cannot hold on; he who cannot find footing, cannot go forward.” Harry Emerson Fosdick