

The Rest You've Been Looking For

Rest without Rigidity series

by Chris Famisaran

Thank you, Ben. Let's pray, Lord, as we begin a new series. Lord, lead and guide us. Thank you, Lord, for the gift of Sabbath in Jesus name. Amen.

How y' all doing? I missed you. All those of you who are not aware I was gone last week. Took a little bit of a break, but we're back in it today. We are starting a new sermon series and a new small group series called Rest Without Rigidity. Today we're going to be talking and specifically diving into the topic of the Sabbath. Been thinking about this for about a year. And finally, we are here now as a little group exercise. Let's do this as well. Okay?

And I'm gonna say this. We're gonna say this all together. This is a judgment free zone. Are you ready? 1, 2, 3. This is a judgment free zone. You said it with such enthusiasm.

All right, number one. Okay. If you agree, just wave your hand. Open hand. You disagree, shake it. Act as if you're shaking it. And if you're unsure, just. Okay, we all ready? All right. Number one. The Sabbath is just about resting and not working. All right? Oh, okay. I have a few nos. Y' all are not wanting to play along. All right. Okay. The Sabbath is just about resting and not working. Okay? If you agree, if you disagree, if you're unsure.

All right. Okay. All right. This is for those of you who maybe grew up in the church. Okay? Observing the Sabbath can feel legalistic. Oh, yes, I went there. Yes. All right. Remember, this is judgment free zone. We're just getting observations. All right. That's a little too much. I'm not.

Okay. I'm sorry, Moms. I'm going to ruin this for you. Fridays were an excuse to not only welcome the Sabbath, but ensure that mom ensured that the house was clean. All right, Fridays, this is just a. If you've been. If you grew up in the church. Fridays have always been reserved for what? Making sure that the house was spotless. Right.

You know, there's some misconceptions about the Sabbath. Okay? The Sabbath, if some people will say it's outdated, it's irrelevant to me. Or the Sabbath can be taken any day, as long as I just take a day off and rest. Another, more serious cut to the chase. The Sabbath impedes my lifestyle. I want to say this, though, my friends. The Sabbath is an antidote to the stress and exhaustion that is plaguing us in today's society. I'm going to say that again. The Sabbath is an antidote to the stress and exhaustion. Actually, it's more than an Antidote. It is the answer, one of the answers. The Sabbath is an answer to the stress and exhaustion that is plaguing us in today's age.

Now I did some research about stress recently. I think it was published on August 29th of this year. Earlier, according to the American Psychological Association, the APA, stress in America, the majority of Americans stress levels have increased over the five years and it's not just a bump, but over 75% of people now experience physical or emotional symptoms related to stress. Just think about that, okay? Also, the Gallups Global Emotions report a couple years ago, I think in 2023 found that 49% of Americans experience stress daily. So basically everyone, one out of two people here, the person sitting next to you or you are that person, are experiencing a significant amount of stress. And what kind of stress are we talking about? Well, number one is personal finances. Over 66% reported by the APA experience stress because of finances, whether it's leading to anxiety, sleep disruption, even perhaps delaying your health care visits and needs. Inflation. Over 64% reported that they suffer from stress because of inflation. Reduced budgets, reduced spending, even on the essentials. We also have work related stress. Over 76% reported from the American Institute of Stress that they felt burnout, reduced productivity and sometimes they just, they could not show up for work. And of course also leading to health concerns. They are worrying even those preventative care is being delayed. But we also have other stressors such as the political climate. Over 55% feel emotional fatigue. How many of you just feel like I just don't have it in me to complete the task or to see anybody today? Now there's other sources.

Okay, so again, personal finance, inflation, work related climate, all of these things are leading to stress. Gen Z, okay, those who are age roughly 18, 26 are experiencing insecurity with finding a job, climate, anxiety, debt, cost of living. They have the highest rates of anxiety for millennials. Those who are 27 to 42 trying to find a healthy work life balance, child care costs, housing market, can I even buy a home in today's markets. And they're

also suffering from significant burnout even in the middle of their career. GenX 43, 44 to 58, they're experiencing health concerns, retirement concerns, and often caring for not only their children, but also their adults. And then finally the baby boomers, the silent generation, Those who are 59 and older, they don't have as much stress necessarily, but they're worried about health expenses, their fixed income, but their stress is more related to their health Related anxiety.

Have I caused you to become more stressed today? Do you want relief from this stress and anxiety today? I want to invite you to go on a journey with me as we discover and study a gift that God gave to us many years ago in creation. And I think that God designed this because God knew that we were incapable of not wanting to stop. So God says, stop. Stop.

Now, for those of you who are maybe joining us for the first time, especially online, if you click in the description, our sermon notes are there. Go ahead and pull out your sermon notes. We're gonna get started. Here are a couple of verses that we're gonna be looking at today. Okay? Today we're gonna start a series called Rest Without Rigidity. I'm gonna make a bold claim, okay? Now, because when we think about Sabbath, what do we honestly just think about when it comes to Sabbath? What's the number one question that I get asked? Is it acceptable or not to do that on the Sabbath?

Okay, let's not lie. I'm gonna make a bold claim. If by the end of this series and you've sat through all the sermons and you've gone through the small groups and you still come back with me, to me with, well, is that acceptable or not? On the Sabbath, I will have failed. Okay, I'm gonna take. I'm gonna note that. All right, I will have failed. Because Sabbath is not just, okay, I gotta take a break from my job, rest. Sabbath is so much more. Sabbath is a blessing, a gift, and dare I say, it is a necessary part of our existence, especially in today's age.

So let's go to the book of Genesis, okay? And for those of you who maybe never opened the Bible, that's at the very beginning. It's the first book. Okay, I'm gonna go to chapter two, okay, Chapter two. And starting at verse one. And prior to this, God had spent the previous six days creating the heavens and the earth. And it was what it was. Good. And on the seventh day, okay, verse one, then the heavens and the earth were created, completed in all their vast array. By the seventh day, God had finished the work he had been doing.

So on the seventh day, he rested from what? All of his work. And then God blessed the seventh day. He made it holy, because on it he rested from the work of creating that he had done.

So there's a little bit of a split now, okay? Because the first prior six days, God had been working. And God, as John, the Book of John, chapter one says, was spoken into. And the Holy Spirit, just God did what God does. And all of a sudden, light, moon and sun are separated. Earth, plants, creatures, human beings. And on the seventh day, God stops. So everything is complete. And by the seventh day, God had finished the work that he'd been doing. And so on the seventh day, he rested from all his work. Question, does God really need to rest? If we believe that God is omnipotent, can do anything? God spoke and it was done. Did God really need to take a nap?

In fact, you'll find if you go to Isaiah 40:28, do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will neither grow tired or weary. And it's understanding no one can fathom. Okay, so Isaiah is basically kind of giving us a heads up, look, God is capable of doing anything. Or is there a deeper meaning to why God is taking a break? Is it possible that God is teaching us that we also need to take a break?

Yet also, God blessed the Sabbath day. It was not just like, hey, okay, I'm gonna make this day cool. No, God blesses it. It's special. In fact, in the next verse, it says, God set apart or made holy the Sabbath day as a special day. When we think of holy, we think, well, there's gotta be this mystical thing. It's like. No, Holy means to set apart, to make it special, to make it unique. Guys, when you found your spouse, when you found that gal and you saw her, maybe she smiled at you, your heart fluttered and you had goose. You had butterflies in your stomach. Remember that? Okay, ladies, you thought, oh, he's so handsome. And maybe, maybe you thought, hey, maybe if I give you a hint. And it probably went over his head the first couple times. When you found something so valuable, when you found that person, what did you want to do? You wanted to be with that person. That person was special, that person was different. And you thought, I would like to ask that person out. And you did so. And then you became exclusive. And God, he sees that this day is. It's not just any other day. It's a day that is extra special, that should be cared for, that should be valued, it should be treated differently, it should be respected.

And also notice that the car. Sorry, I'm reading my notes. Notice that the author doesn't include that it was good. Because every day, the first six days, what God indicated that it was good. Sabbath was more. Sabbath was great. Amen.

Now let's jump now to Exodus 20. Okay? Exodus 20, Exodus 20. We find ourselves at this point, where in chapter 20, if you. Especially last quarter, we were going through the book of Exodus. What a wonderful, wonderful, powerful story. The date in chapter 19, there's a whole special ceremony, everything where everybody's being prepared. And then God meets with the people and he goes through the ten Commandments. But I specifically want to look at chapter, sorry, verse eight, the fourth commandment, okay? Verse eight.

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. God says remember. Should we take note of that? When God says, remember, write it down, log it in your brain. Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. To keep it set apart, to treat as something special. Six days you'll labor, do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord. On it, you shall not do any work. Neither you nor your son or daughter, nor your male or your female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner rather, residing in your towns. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them. But he rested on the Sabbath day, the seventh day. And therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

So not only did God kind of, in a way repeat what was said in Genesis 2, but actually adds a little bit more. Because if you, if you read more intently, you realize that, okay, God says, remember the Sabbath day. Keep it separated apart. But who is the Sabbath for? It's for everyone. Not just for you, your spouse, your family, those who you oversee and supervise as well. They also get a Sabbath. The Sabbath is egalitarian. And if you're an Israelite and you're journeying, you've left Egypt to go to the promised land. Were you driving in an air conditioned bus, an RV? Do you have really strong rugged boots and climate that you could control the temperatures? No. You were on your feet. Hopefully you had some form of a shoe or a sandal. It was hot. You had to look for the water God provided. But it was hot, it was cold. And I'm guessing at some points they would probably feel a little weary. And God stops him and he says, hey, I want you to remember. And on the Sabbath day, I want you to. God was looking out for their needs. God was not a slave driver. God was not a taskmaster. In today's modern age, God is reminding us, I want to bring you out of Egypt. I want you to find rest.

So let's look back. God is setting an example for us by resting on the Sabbath, as we found in Genesis 2. Okay? God is setting an example for us by resting. And I love the fact that God is clear. God is intentional. Jesus, did Jesus set an example? Did Jesus ask the disciples to do anything that he was not prepared to do? Jesus led by example. And as you in your own homes as well, we've been talking about relationships, we've been talking about leadership. How are you leading? How are you going to lead? By setting an example for resting in your own home or maybe even in your workplace. Because it just seems like in your job it's so easy to become so task driven or feel like you're a machine or a robot and you just want some peace. So follow God's example by resting.

Remember that God blesses the Sabbath day. God blesses. It's something that is special, it's good. It's ordained and God set apart. Okay? Saturday is not just any other day. It's a unique opportunity. Maybe those of you are hearing this for the first time. Okay, I want to encourage you. What can you do to find rest on the Sabbath day? The Sabbath is a gift. It's a message of hope. And even in this fallen world, just to find a little bit of rest can feel amazing. Amen. The Sabbath is a gift and a message of hope. Rest is necessary if you want to live and lead a fruitful, balanced life. Now, based on the statistics that I was talking about earlier, okay, there's a lot of stress going around. Maybe you're experiencing it. I've experienced it. There are some that will say that, well, I'll rest when I'm dead. And that's the hustle culture. We're going to talk about that in a couple of weeks. Okay? Yeah, you can rest. But do you want to have a heart attack at 43? Do you want to live with an autoimmune issue or do you want to have balance? I don't think we're meant to be machines in a cog trying to fulfill someone else's dreams, somebody else's desires, or maybe just make somebody else's money for them. There's more to life. There's more to life than just working. Now, to be fair, okay, I know for some of you it is a grind. It is a struggle because you're just trying to make ends meet.

But let me ask you this, then. How can we be efficient? How can we at home, how can we help lead, make sure that we work as a team to make sure all the tasks are done at home or even in. What influence do you have at work that you can make sure that all the tasks are completed and by Sabbath, by Friday sunset, you can go home in peace and have that time between sunset to sunset and just be able to rest and be at peace.

Now, as you know, I love to play the guitar. I'm not going to sing you a song. The guitar is made up of different parts, okay? You have the top, the sides, the back is made of wood. You have the bridge and the strings. You have the headstock and the tuning pegs and the

sound hole. Of course, in order for the strings to work properly, you have to create, what, Tension. Okay? So if I just play this, I could either raise it, maybe your boss gave you a little bit of anger and your blood pressure has gone up, or you find peace and you can relax.

Okay? The point being, though, is that this guitar is usually always in constant tension. Is that okay for the guitar, or is it always going to stay perfectly at the right amount of tension? You put it in a cold area, you put it in a hotter area, it will rise or dip. Being under constant tension as well can cause, especially if it's really hot for the body to crack, the neck can be bowed, and it's not healthy. And oftentimes to keep a guitar properly in tune and set up, you have to provide maintenance. Sometimes you have to make adjustments. And especially if I don't play a guitar for a while, if I put it away, I'll tune it down a whole step. So basically, let's say it's tuning it down to two frets down just to release the tension. Today's day and age, I feel like everyone is constantly under tension, just ready to explode.

Have you been in a restaurant and you're just trying to mind your own business and somebody starts to yell and complain that they got the sauce wrong on their burrito, or they didn't get their sauce, they ran out of it. Or you go to Starbucks and they get their. You get. You see somebody get their order wrong. Or maybe the line at banks is not moving fast enough and it's awkward because it's like, dude, relax. Maybe they've been having a horrible day, okay? I don't know. It just feels like everybody's on edge. Amen.

Maybe we need a little rest. We all need to relax, to find some peace and to find some rest, you know? The guitar is created with intention. It's cared for. Much like every one of us, we're all created in the image of God and the Sabbath. In a way is the act of being able to loosen the strings just a little bit, just to give us some room. To be able to take a breath, to reflect, and hopefully we have enough time. We'll be able to be restored, to be made whole. It's not just a pause from work. It's a return to wholeness.

So today we've begun a journey in the hopes that this Sabbath will be a blessing in your life. And I truly hope. I truly hope that you will be able to find the rest that you have been looking for as we reflect this week, okay, what does the Sabbath reveal about God's character and God's priorities for us? Okay, what does the Sabbath reveal about God's character and priorities? I think right off the bat, I think that God's love is shown through the Sabbath, but also ensuring that we can be whole.

So as you reflect, maybe even share, as you prepare to meet for your small groups now this week, okay, talk with somebody about what the Sabbath means personally to you and pray for discernment on how you can honor God through the Sabbath. And don't just pray and discern, but go and do. Amen. All right, let's pray. God, we thank you for the opportunity to experience the Sabbath.

Lord, right now where we can just take a pause and find breath to release the tension that has been built up all week. Lord, Lord, may we find balance. And as we begin this journey, this rest without rigidity. Lord, I pray that God, everybody will find peace, they will find rest and they will find hope in Jesus name, Amen.

Grace and peace, everyone.