



The life of faith often calls us to live differently than the culture around us. One aspect of this is what we call sabbath, or a day of rest, refreshment, and blessing. It's something that God modeled at the close of the creation account, and something He has called, actually commanded, His people to embrace. It's our desire to embrace the rhythms of God to experience life as He intended for us. Understanding and living a life with "sabbath" is one key aspect we need to understand and live out.

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DISCUSSION #1: SABBATH - GOD DID IT

The life of faith often calls us to live differently than the culture around us. One aspect of this is what we call sabbath, or a day of rest, refreshment, and blessing. It's something that God modeled at the close of the creation account, and something He has called, actually commanded, His people to embrace. It's our desire to embrace the rhythms of God to experience life as He intended for us. Understanding and living a life with "sabbath" is one key aspect we need to understand and live out.

In all that we do, followers of Jesus strive to follow God's actions in the world. In this discussion we will look at how God modeled sabbath by resting on the 7th day of creation.

MY STORY | Starting Place

Describe your ideal day off.

DIGGING DEEPER | Practical Biblical Application

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation. Genesis 2:1-3

Try to put yourself in this amazing account as an eyewitness. What do you think God did on the 7th day? In what activity do you think he might have engaged? Was it specifically as a model for Adam and Eve, or do you think God rested somehow?

For Adam and Eve, do you think it was like being at a mall with all the shops closed, or was there a different "redemptive" activity or experience?

GROWING TOGETHER | Spiritual Friendship

Is it hard for you to slow down? Why do you think that is so?

A lack of sabbath can be motivated by many things. Of the below options, which one do you most likely identify with?

Taking on too much responsibility

Lack of trusting others (people around you to do what they should)

Lack of trusting God. Explain.

MOVING OUTWARD | Faith in Action

Purposely plan and exercise sabbath this week. Even if it's for only 2 hours, make it happen.

DISCUSSION #2: A DAY OF REST

The life of faith often calls us to live differently than the culture around us. One aspect of this is what we call sabbath, or a day of rest, refreshment, and blessing. It's something that God modeled at the close of the creation account, and something He has called, actually commanded, His people to embrace. It's our desire to embrace the rhythms of God to experience life as He intended for us. Understanding and living a life with "sabbath" is one key aspect we need to understand and live out.

In this discussion we will unpack how God's people have always been called to keep a sabbath/day of rest, (a 24-hour-period each week), as a public display of faith in the provision of God and trusting Him.

MY STORY | Starting Place

How was rest modeled for you? How did your parents or caregiver rest growing up? Vacations? Day off? Other?

DIGGING DEEPER | Practical Biblical Application

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. Exodus 20:8-11

You are to speak to the people of Israel and say, 'Above all you shall keep my Sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, the Lord, sanctify you. Exodus 31:13

God made the priority of sabbath clear for the community of His people. Discuss what that must have looked like specifically for kids, servants and neighboring people?

Do you think a sabbath has to be spiritual, or is there value in simple rest? Explain.

Read Exodus 31:12-17

God is pretty emphatic about His people valuing the sabbath. Do you think it's strictly for their rest, or also the witness to the neighboring people groups? Explain.

What positive fruit do you think God's people practicing sabbath for generations cultivated?

What negative things could have emerged?

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What kinds of activities truly refresh you?

Are there things you need to turn off or get away from to truly rest? Are there things (objects, locations) that actually help you rest?

What keeps you from reserving time weekly for refreshment? How could your friends help you in this?



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Purposely plan and exercise sabbath this week. Even if it's for only 4 hours, make it happen.

DISCUSSION #3: REDEMPTIVE ACTIVITY

The life of faith often calls us to live differently than the culture around us. One aspect of this is what we call sabbath, or a day of rest, refreshment, and blessing. It's something that God modeled at the close of the creation account, and something He has called, actually commanded, His people to embrace. It's our desire to embrace the rhythms of God to experience life as He intended for us. Understanding and living a life with "sabbath" is one key aspect we need to understand and live out.

In this discussion we will see how sabbath is not the absence of activity, but rather the absence of self-focused activity. Oftentimes on sabbath, we actually engage in activities that bless us and those around us.

MY STORY | Starting Place

How much rest do you need to be your best? How much sleep? How much alone time?

DIGGING DEEPER | Practical Biblical Application

Read Isaiah 58:3-14

In the Bible, "fasting" and "sabbath" are somewhat synonymous. Fasting typically refers to abstaining from food, and sabbath refers to abstaining from work, both in order to emphasize our dependence on God.

In the above passage, God corrects His people for fasting and sabbath that are totally self-focused.

Picture and discuss what their fast/sabbath looked like. What specific abuses is God trying to correct in His people?

In v.6-7 the passage changes direction and begins addressing the WHY of sabbath. Make a list of the various purposes of sabbath.

Verse 8-14 beautifully outlines the many benefits of keeping and honoring the sabbath. Make a list of the amazing promises God gives us.

GROWING TOGETHER | Spiritual Friendship

How can you maintain the balance of sabbath being restful for yourself, but being a vehicle of blessing others?

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Purposely plan and exercise sabbath this week. Extend your time to 2/3 of a day (morning/afternoon, afternoon/evening).

DISCUSSION #4: WHAT REFRESHES YOU?

The life of faith often calls us to live differently than the culture around us. One aspect of this is what we call sabbath, or a day of rest, refreshment, and blessing. It's something that God modeled at the close of the creation account, and something He has called, actually commanded, His people to embrace. It's our desire to embrace the rhythms of God to experience life as He intended for us. Understanding and living a life with "sabbath" is one key aspect we need to understand and live out.

In this discussion we will learn how sabbath rest was given to us by God to refresh and restore us. It was always designed for people, not to simply be held as a required religious activity.

MY STORY | Starting Place

What was your most peaceful location or experience? Explain.

DIGGING DEEPER | Practical Biblical Application

The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. Mark 2:27

Discuss what you think Jesus meant by this. Feel free to read it context of Mark 2:23-28.

He appears to be encouraging that true sabbath gives us great freedom. Based on what you have learned in this study, what insights, or guidelines would you list to best live a life of biblical sabbath?

GROWING TOGETHER | Spiritual Friendship

When you think about a sabbath/rest time. What do you "need" for that time to truly be refreshing? Physically? Relationally? Spiritually?

How can people in your life help you sabbath?

What advice would you give them to best support YOU in this discipline?

What advice would you give to someone else seeking to practice sabbath?

MOVING OUTWARD | Faith in Action

Purposely plan and exercise a full day sabbath this week.