



REST PT.2: SABBATH

If you have a pattern of having someone share their *Story of Faith* (life before Jesus, encountering Jesus, life since/lately with Jesus) and/or sharing *Evidences of God's grace*, begin with that, followed by a time of thankful prayer for Christ's work in the individual's life/the grace in your lives.

OPENING COMMENT

Gordon MacDonald wrote: "We do not rest because our work is done; we rest because God commanded it and created us to have a need for it." Today's passage takes a closer look at Sabbath rest - an often misunderstood and lacking habit in our spiritual routines. But if we are to truly have relationship with Jesus, we must understand and engage Sabbath rest because Jesus declared himself the lord of it.

READ THE TEXT: Mark 2:22-38

²²And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins - and the wine is destroyed, and so are the skins. But new wine is for fresh wineskins. ²³One Sabbath he was going through the grain fields, and as they made their way, his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. ²⁴And the Pharisees were saying to him, "look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?" ²⁵And he said to them, "Have you never read what David did, when he was in need and was hungry, he and those who were with him: ²⁶how he entered the house of God, in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him?" ²⁷And he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. ²⁸So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath."



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Last week you answered these questions: 1) Are you too busy? 2) Do you find your weekly routine manageable? 3) Are you able to relax and truly rest? 4) Would you say that you're spiritually tired or at rest? Having given the topic more thought this past week, have your answers changed?
2. The ultimate goal(s) of life for a follower of Jesus - To know Jesus (relationship) and to make Him known (relationship). To do this we need to practice Sabbath so that we can refocus. What was your experience with "The Sabbath" when you were growing up? Is there a difference between Sunday worship and Sabbath rest?
3. What's one of the first questions we usually ask when we meet someone new? ... "So what do you do for work?" ... or ... "Where do you work?" Wouldn't it be interesting to start a conversation with, "So, what do you do for rest?" ... What does rest look like in your life? How do you believe that would go?
4. Read the following Scriptures in their context to get a glimpse of the importance of regular rest and withdrawal: *Mark 6:31, cf. 2:13; 3:7; 3:13; Matthew 14:13,23; Mark 1:35; 6:46; Luke 4:42; 6:12; John 6:15; Luke 5:16; John 4:6; Mark 4:38; Psalms 46 and 131* - How is the Holy Spirit speaking to you through the texts?
5. In book 1 of the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, J.R.R. Tolkien describes a time of rest and healing in the house of Elrond in Rivendell. *"The future, good or ill, was not forgotten, but ceased to have power over the present. That's Sabbath."* Where is your (Rivendell) Sabbath - that place, that time, where fear and anxiety lift - where health and hope grow strong - where relationship, R&R, relinquishing, relying and refocusing happen?
6. Sabbath deepens our relationship with God and others. It is meant to rejuvenate, renew, refresh and revitalize the whole person. Part of Sabbath is to help us relinquish control of life over to God and rely on Him as sustainer, provider and defender in every way. How do you need to adjust your priorities to allow Sabbath into your life?

CONCLUSION

According to tradition, when the apostle John was overseer in Ephesus, his hobby was raising pigeons. It is said that on one occasion another elder passed his house as he returned from hunting and saw John playing with one of his birds. The man gently chided him for spending his time so frivolously. John looked at the hunter's bow and remarked that the string was loose. "Yes" said the elder, "I always loosen the string of my bow when it is not in use. If it stayed tight, it would lose its resilience and fail me in the hunt." John responded, "And I am now relaxing the bow of my mind so that I may



be better able to shoot the arrows of divine truth.”

This will be the final Sermon Study Guide, breaking for the summer. They will resume September 17, for the 2017/18 season.

SHARE & PRAY

- Share how you can pray for each other around rest and good soul care.
- Conclude by spending some time praying for one another, for the areas of growth and grace you are seeking, and the needs among you.
- Pray for the summer season, many spend time traveling as schedules change, most Life Groups break for the summer. Remember to connect & check-in with one another over summer.

