

SUMMARY AND REVIEW:

1. Take 5-10 minutes to discuss this past Sunday's sermon. How did it encourage or challenge you?
2. Share about your own experiences with Sabbath.
3. What did you learn about intimacy with God when you were "boxed in" for three days during the flood?

Genesis 2 says that God rested (in the Hebrew, *Shabat*, which we call Sabbath). *Shabat* means to stop, cease, complete, and even celebrate. After six days of "universe-sculpting work," God rested (he celebrated his work). God didn't simply suggest this day of rest but he himself took it, and then he blessed it and made it holy.

READ Read Gen. 2:1-3, Ex. 20:8-11, Deut. 5:12-15, and Matt. 11:28-30

ANALYZE THE TEXT

1. What do we learn about God's character by his creation of the Sabbath?
2. Blessed, in the Hebrew, is *barak*, meaning, "to make more life." Do you think the Sabbath day has life-giving ability? If so, how have you seen this?
3. Compare the Ex. and Deut. Passages. What are the similarities and difference? Why do you think this is?
4. Read Exodus 16:23: What actions are the Israelites to do *before* the Sabbath? Why do you think this is?
5. Based on the Matthew passage, in whom do we find our rest? How have you seen this practically happen in your life? Where has this been difficult?

A FEW THINGS TO CONSIDER

There is a rhythm to this world, a rhythm that we all innately recognize and long for but don't actually live into. A rhythm that was prescribed beginning in Genesis 1: For 6 days you will rule and subdue, work and labor, and for 1 day you will take a Sabbath,

celebrate life, rest, and worship. In Genesis we see the Lord set this rhythm as a norm for his people.

Then, in Deut., Moses explains to the Israelites that by not observing the Sabbath they are not merely going against the rhythm of life, but they are actually returning to their life of slavery that they left in Egypt.

John Mark Comer explains, "The Sabbath is about leaving Egypt behind, about emancipation from Pharaoh's suffocating rule. It's about freedom... Sabbath is an act of resistance to Pharaoh and his system. Egypt's cycle of brick making and supply-city building is unending. Sabbath is a way to break the addictive pattern of accomplishing more, accumulate more, repeat. It is an act of defiance and rebellion against the endless, restless grind of workaholic and consumerism. (Garden City, 210, 214)"

Not only is Sabbath defiance to slavery but a solution to fatigue, anxiety, and burnout. It is a time where we get to proclaim in our words and deeds that God is God and we are not, and the world will continue just fine without us.

Sabbath is a day of rest and worship: a holy day given to God's people so that they could live into their full humanity. Sabbath is not simply a day to not work but a day to delight in the life you have carved out in partnership with God and to delight yourself in God himself.

APPLY:

1. Why do you think Sabbath is so hard for Americans? FPC Members? You personally?
2. Would you be willing to take a Sabbath this week? If yes, what day is good for you? If no, why not?
3. What would a Sabbath look like for you and your family? (Ask yourself these questions: Is this restful? Is this worshipful? – if yes to both, it should be part of your Sabbath).
4. Who in your small group is going to ask you about your Sabbath experience next week?

Suggestions for Further Reading: *Keeping the Sabbath Wholly*, Marva Dawn; *Garden City: Work, Rest, and the Art of Being Human*, by John Mark Comer