

## **Sabbath: Sacred Rest for a Hurried World**

*Week 6: Living from the Seventh Day*

June 14, 2026

### **Introduction**

Aloha everyone! I'm Mark and I want to welcome you to our service. Today is the final week of our series on Sabbath. This is the first time, to my knowledge, our Church has ever done an entire series on the practice of Sabbath. So we knew full well that this would probably be the first time many of us had ever given any real thought to the practice of Sabbath. We also knew it would be ambitious to expect that we would immediately begin incorporating Sabbath into our weekly rhythm. That's not how change happens. So our goal with this series was to spark conversations and raise awareness to a Biblical practice that is near to God's heart but often overlooked. And that is happening! So as we reach the end of our series, don't beat yourself up if you're not already practicing a weekly 24-hour sabbath! The fact that conversations are happening and experimenting is taking place is a huge win! But the other concern, especially if you've been in Church for some time, is that we will now change channels and shelve this whole Sabbath thing until some unforeseen date. And all of this talk about Sabbath will be just that, 'talk' or just another 'nice' idea.

But we really believe our next series will create space for us to continue to meditate on our weekly rhythms and rest. Next week we will kick off a brand new series called, *Sacred Service*. We will be talking about our service unto the Lord and unto others. And on the surface, this might sound very counterintuitive! "Wait, you're going from sabbath to service? Talk about whiplash. What's the tagline for that series? *Sacred Service: Break's Over! Or Sacred Service: Back to Work!*" And in a sense that's not totally off. Throughout this series we've been saying that Sabbath is a day but it's a day that changes every other. We've spent six weeks talking about a day but now we will see how the Sabbath day informs the rest. You almost can't talk about work without understanding rest. Remember, we don't work *for* rest but *from* rest. So what does it look like to serve from a place of rest? How does Sabbath inform our service to God and others? How does one day inform the other six? So you see, we're not changing channels, we're simply going deeper and expanding our understanding!

But I have been so blessed by our series on Sabbath. I pray that it has been a blessing for you as well. In Week 1 Pastor Theresa and Pastor Mike talked about Mary and Martha. And they did something that completely set the tone for the entire rest of the series — they didn't demonize Martha. And this is so critical because Martha isn't a villain in this story. Martha represents all of the normal, daily activity that needs to get done in order for life to happen. And Jesus isn't demonizing any of that stuff. But in true Jesus fashion, He's pulling back the cosmic curtain to reveal a deeper heavenly reality. He's saying all of that stuff is good, but there's more. In fact, there's something better. And at the beginning of our series we heard Jesus lovingly invite us to pause from our daily grind and our weekly tasks to choose the better thing and be with Him.

Then in Week 2 we saw that choosing the better thing requires us to stop. God actually calls us to stop an entire day out of the week. And this isn't some arbitrary thing but something God Himself wove into the fabric of creation and modeled in the beginning. Scripture shows us a sacred rhythm of six days of work and a seventh day of rest and it is a rhythm that persists across time, space and culture. For most, stopping is the hardest part about sabbath. Life often feels like a runaway train and trying to stop it feels like standing in front of a locomotive! We're going to get run over. So before many of us can stop, we may have to start with slowing.

And in Week 3, Dr. Brian taught us the benefits of slowing and resting in God. The Bible paints a picture of sheep resting under the watchful eye of the shepherd. And we saw from science how our bodies are hardwired to operate from rest and what happens when we don't rest well.

In Week 4 we were treated to a delightful conversation between Pastor Glenn, Giscelle, and Braiden! Not only did God cease on the Sabbath, He delighted! So the Sabbath is intended to be a day of delight. Christians often say they follow God, they obey God, they worship God, but when was the last time you heard someone say, "I delight in the Lord"? When was the last time we truly delighted in God? Yet God invites us to delight in Him and all that His hands have made. And when we make time every week to delight in God's goodness, everything changes. Our gratitude shifts, our relationships grow, and our worship increases.

Last week we saw how Sabbath ultimately leads us to a place of Worship. When we pause and rest in the Lord, when we delight in all His hands have made, we can't help but worship Him. This is actually a natural progression. How many of you can relate? If it's been a long time since you've had a break and you go on vacation, do you start enjoying it immediately? Most of us have been on 'go' for so long it takes a whole day (maybe two) before we're even present. We just need a whole day to rest and get out of 'work mode'. Then after our soul has caught up to our body and we're "there" we start to enjoy things and have fun. It's hard to delight when you don't feel rested. And when you're overflowing with delight and gratitude, it's easy to worship and give thanks to God, not because life is perfect, but because you've spend time with the One who is, as Giscelle so beautifully put it. But God is saying we don't have to wait for our next planned vacation, retirement, or until we're dead, before we stop and rest. He wants this to be our weekly rhythm.

Today I want us to think very practically about the practice of Sabbath. We've talked at length about the 'Why' so let's have a conversation about the 'How'. First, it goes without say that observing the Sabbath is going to take tremendous intentionality. Listen to the words God chooses in Exodus,

*"Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy," (Exodus 20:8 NIV).*

Remember and keep. Remember and keep. Why does God choose these words when it comes to the Sabbath? Because scripture shows us time and time again that,

## **1. THE SABBATH HAS A WAY OF BECOMING LOST AND FORGOTTEN.**

Even among God's chosen people the Sabbath had a tendency of becoming lost and forgotten. A day like any other. A day of work, a day of labor, a day of toil, a day of striving. If we're not intentional to remember and keep, this sacred time of rest will become lost and forgotten. It will become a day like any other. That word 'Holy' in Exodus literally means

Consecrated, dedicated, hallowed, sanctified, separate.

So we are not to treat the Sabbath day like the other six. It is to be holy, set apart, separate and consecrated for communing with God. This is where we get the phrase 'Holiday'. A holiday is a holy day — a day set apart for remembrance, gratitude and reflection. Sabbath is a weekly holiday — a day set apart for rest, gratitude, and remembrance. And God commands us not to treat this day like the rest. It is to be set apart. What if you can't presently set aside an entire day? What can you set aside? Is there a weekly pocket of time that you can consecrate to the Lord and set apart? Maybe a morning in your week dedicated to stopping, resting, delighting, and worshipping. My encouragement would be to set it and protect it. Remember it and keep it. Start small but start now. Pray that God would multiply that time.

But we have to be intentional because,

## **2. SABBATH REST REQUIRES PREP!**

Your day will not clear itself out for you! Pastor Theresa shared this passage last week and I think it bears repeating.

*<sup>21</sup> “Each morning everyone gathered as much as they needed, and when the sun grew hot, it melted away. <sup>22</sup> On the sixth day, they gathered twice as much—two omers for each person—and the leaders of the community came and reported this to Moses. <sup>23</sup> He said to them, “This is what the Lord commanded: ‘Tomorrow is to be a day of sabbath rest, a holy sabbath to the Lord. So bake what you want to bake and boil what you want to boil. Save whatever is left and keep it until morning,’” (Exodus 16:21-23 NIV).*

*<sup>42</sup> “It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath),” (Mark 15:42 NIV).*

In Leviticus we see that Sabbath was observed from evening of the sixth day to evening of the seventh day. And we actually saw this when we were in Israel. On Friday evening businesses started closing, busses stopped running, the whole town became quiet and still. Everyone was preparing. It's like Thanksgiving. There's cooking and cleaning so that the celebration can begin. So not only must we remember and keep the sabbath, we must prepare for it. The first time Jalee and I tried to Sabbath we just stopped everything. Here was our sink that day.

[Picture of the kitchen sink]

Then we took a page out of Israel's history and Friday became a day of preparation. So that afternoon we cleaned the house, cooked enough for two days, I did the yard, and we prepared for an entire day of rest. I told the staff I would be unreachable on Saturday save a life-threatening, world-ending, catastrophe. Then my wife and I put all of our devices away and celebrated the Sabbath.

You can't just stop everything. You'll be thinking about all the unfinished assignments, the house will look like a tornado, there will be nothing to eat. You have to prepare to rest. Rest requires work. But this is the rhythm God set into motion from the beginning of time.

## **3. WHEN YOU PRACTICE REST, EXPECT RESISTANCE.**

When you practice Sabbath, you go against the grain of culture. The world tells you you need to earn rest, you need to produce to be valuable, work defines you. Sabbath flies in the face of all of that. Sabbath invites us to rest in God before we've done anything to deserve it, our identity in Him is what defines us and makes us valuable. Jesus is our model for life but He was very counter-cultural and got a lot of pushback for the way that He lived. Jesus had an all-important mission but He didn't give into the demands of work and life. He lived according to a sacred rhythm and trusted that God would provide.

*<sup>35</sup> “Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where He prayed. <sup>36</sup> Simon and his companions went to look for Him, <sup>37</sup> and when they found Him, they exclaimed: “Everyone is looking for You!” (Mark 1:35-37 NIV).*

In order to protect His time with God and choose the better thing, Jesus had to pull away.

*15 "Yet the news about him spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. 16 But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed,"*  
(Luke 5:15-16 NIV).

At the height of His ministry when things were growing and expanding Jesus withdrew and chose the better thing.

*"The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.' But wisdom is proved right by her deeds,"*  
(Matthew 11:19 NIV).

You may feel guilty for delighting in the Lord and His goodness. You might think, I shouldn't be having this much fun. Jesus was accused of being a party animal. People might get legalistic on you about the way you practice the Sabbath. Jesus was criticized for the way He kept Sabbath. I'm just saying, if you're going to practice the Sabbath, don't expect people to roll out the red carpet and strike up the band. You will face pushback, there will be criticism, and there will be resistance. Why? Because sabbath is resistance! Sabbath is resisting the broken rhythms and values of this world and the enemy doesn't like that. Sabbath is a taste of Eden and a foretaste of when God's Kingdom returns in full and brings rest to creation. We need a generation of people who live from that place — the place of rest. We need people to show a weary world what rest in God looks like. So I pray that you would join the resistance.

### **Group Discussion Questions**

1. What time in your week can you consecrate to the Lord regularly? What can you do to ensure this time stays set apart?
2. What kind of preparation would it take for you to be able to stop and sabbath?
3. What do you foresee being the greatest forces of resistance to you honoring the sabbath?