



Series: Stop & Sabbath (Part 1)

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INTRODUCTION

We live in a world that constantly tells us to keep going. There is always another task to complete, another message to reply to, or another problem to solve. We fear that if we stop, something may go wrong.

Yet, from the beginning, God gives us a different rhythm and shows us the importance of stopping and resting. In Genesis, after six days of creation, God stopped and rested on the seventh day. He blessed the day and made it holy. Later, in Exodus, God gave His people the Sabbath and told them to remember it and keep it holy. This is important because after the fall, when sin entered the world, work became painful and tiring. Instead of simply receiving work as part of God's good creation, we can begin to work out of fear of not having enough

The Sabbath is not simply about taking a break. The word *Sabbath* means “to stop” or “to cease.” It is God’s invitation to stop our normal work, learn to trust Him, rest in His presence, rejoice in what He has given us, and allow Him to restore us.

DISCUSSION

1. If you suddenly had a completely free day tomorrow - no work, no chores, no responsibilities-how would you spend it?

2. Read Genesis 2:1–3. After six days of creation, God rested on the seventh day and made it holy. God was not tired or in need of recovery. Instead, He was showing us a rhythm for life - a rhythm of work and rest.

- a. What stands out to you about God's pattern of six days of work followed by a day of rest? Why do you think God built this rhythm into creation?
- b. Adam and Eve were created on the sixth day, so their first full day was a day of rest with God. How is this different from the way many of us live today? How might your approach to work change if you learned to work from a place of rest rather than working until you feel you have earned the right to rest?

3. Read Genesis 3:17–19. After sin entered the world, work was no longer simply something good that God had given us. It became marked by struggle, frustration and toil.

- a. In what ways can work today bring pressure, anxiety or frustration into our lives? How can we move away from constantly seeing work as something we must use to prove our worth?
- b. What fears might be causing your need to keep working or stay productive? What would it look like to bring those fears to God and trust Him, rather than trying to solve everything through more work?

4. Read Exodus 20:8–11. God gave His people the Sabbath as a command: “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy”.

The Preacher shared three practical ways to prepare for Sabbath:

- Schedule and protect the time
 - Finish what needs to be done beforehand
 - Choose a worship activity and a life-giving activity
- a. What would this look like practically for you? And which of these would be the most challenging?
 - b. 1. Sabbath is also an invitation to be restored by God. What areas of your life need restoration in this season? What might it look like to intentionally carve out time to simply be with God, not always coming to Him with something to do, fix or ask for, but simply to enjoy His presence?

WHAT WILL YOU DO

Sabbath reminds us that we have limits and that we need to stop and rest. From the beginning, God built a rhythm of work and rest into creation. He rested and delighted in what He had made, and He invited humanity to enter into that same rhythm.

Because of sin, work can easily become connected with anxiety, striving and the fear that we will never have enough. Sabbath is therefore not simply about taking time off. It gives us an opportunity to stop, trust God, enjoy His goodness and make space to be with Him.

As we practise Sabbath, may we learn to stop striving, rest in God's presence, rejoice in His goodness, and allow Him to restore us.

MEMORY VERSE

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labour 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, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner 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 seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. - Exodus 20:8-11