



Freedom: Embracing the Rhythm of Work and Rest

Key idea:

True freedom embraces the rhythm of work and rest, for body and soul, that God built into creation.

Key text:

Genesis 1:26-28

Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

Genesis 2:1-3

Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. ² By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. ³ And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

Genesis 2:15

The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

Key points:

1. Because humans are the image of God, it is part of our very nature to work.
2. Our call to work existed prior to the fall. Work is not a consequence of the fall - it is essential to the creation and nature of humanity.
3. God finished the work of creation and “rested” or “ceased” His work as an example to humanity that we were created for rest.

4. There are several aspects to understanding the biblical concept of Sabbath. Among these are:
 - a. True rest includes rest for body and soul.
 - b. True rest is a sign of trust in God's provision for us.
 - c. True rest reminds us that our identity is found in Christ, not our labors.
5. A plan for Sabbath rest in our lives should include several components:
 - a. Daily Sabbath - rest for body and soul each day.
 - b. Weekly Sabbath - a day of total rest for our bodies, and the rest of corporate worship for our souls.
 - c. Periodic times of extended Sabbath - a longer season of rest and refreshment for our body and soul.

Questions for discussion/application:

1. What part of Sunday's teaching stood out most to you? Why?
2. When I think of "work" what emotions does it produce? Do I think of work as a blessing or a curse? Why?
3. Does a biblical view of work and calling include only paid labor, or is it broader? How would I biblically define calling and work?
4. When I think of "Sabbath" or "rest" what emotions does it produce? Does the idea of rest sound enjoyable or boring? Why do I think I have this reaction?
5. Why does a biblical Sabbath include rest for both body and soul? How does this relate to the topic we studied last week (The Freedom of Embracing Body and Soul)?
6. Why is it important to include a daily time of Sabbath? What in the creation story in Genesis 1-2 indicates that there is to be rest even during the six days of work?
7. What would a day of rest for my body look like? What activities would be allowed? What activities would not be allowed? Do I practice a Sabbath day each week? Why or why not?
8. What would a day of rest for my soul look like? What activities would be allowed? What activities would not be allowed? Do I practice rest or my soul on my weekly Sabbath day? Why or why not? How might I grow in this area?

9. Why is the idea of life “rhythms” so important for human flourishing? What do I see in the creation account that indicates rhythms as a structure for life and human flourishing? Does our culture encourage or discourage this? How can I grow in this area?
10. Who will I call or see to encourage this week?

For Further Study:

[Called To Work \(Part 1\)](#) (October 21, 2012)

[Called To Work \(Part 2\)](#) (October 28, 2012)

[The Covenant of Creation \(Part 3\)](#) (January 26, 2020)

[The Refreshment of Rest](#) (January 25, 2015)

[Resting In A Relentless World](#) (October 13, 2013)

[Sloth](#) (March 4, 2018)

For a full series on the concept of calling and work, see the series [Called](#) (2012)

Preview of next week: Freedom: Embracing the Rhythm of Feasting and Fasting (Genesis 2:15-17)