

THE GIFT OF SABBATH REST

The Gift of Sabbath Rest

Key idea:

Sabbath rest is not a legalistic restriction but rather a gift from God to allow us to be refreshed as we rest from our daily vocations and activities so we can focus on God and His provision for us.

Key text:

Leviticus 23:1-3

The LORD said to Moses, ² “Speak to the Israelites and say to them: ‘These are my appointed feasts, the appointed feasts of the LORD, which you are to proclaim as sacred assemblies. ³ “There are six days when you may work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest, a day of sacred assembly. You are not to do any work; wherever you live, it is a Sabbath to the LORD.

Key points:

1. Sabbath is not a burdensome restriction, but rather a gift of rest from God to us as His image bearers.
2. The central idea of ‘sabbath’ is rest; the rules restricting activity are given for the purpose of allowing rest.
3. Biblically, weekly Sabbath rest is given for at least five main reasons:
 - a. A day of rest to refresh body and spirit
 - b. A day to gather with believers to remember our redemption
 - c. A day to rejoice in God’s provision for our needs
 - d. A day to restrict the materialism of our age
 - e. A day to regard eternity

Questions for discussion/application:

1. What part of Sunday's teaching stood out most to you? Why?

2. How do I feel when I think about taking a full 24-hour period off each week? Does that sound like a wonderful gift or an unrealistic burden to me? Why?
3. What is the central idea of 'sabbath'? How do I know this?
4. Is the principle of Sabbath something that only applied to Israel, or did God give it to all people? How do I know? Why is this important?
5. In Genesis 2:3 we read that God rested and blessed that day. Why did God 'rest'? What am I intended to learn from this?
6. Since God 'rested' on the seventh day (Genesis 2:3) and this is the basis for Sabbath for humans (Exodus 20:11), what does this tell me about Sabbath? Is it something that came as a result of sin? Or is it part of God's creational design for humans from the beginning?
7. When I consider the five reasons for Sabbath (Key point 3 above), which one do I need to learn about and grow in practicing the most this year?
8. What practical steps do I intend to take to begin or grow in my practice of Sabbath rest in 2024? Which day will I practice Sabbath each week? When will I begin and end my Sabbath? What activities will I NOT do so that I can rest in body and spirit? What steps will I take to actively rest in body and spirit?
9. What is the biggest thing preventing me from gathering with God's people each week to remember redemption and be spiritually refreshed? How do I plan to grow in this area in 2024?
10. Who will I call or see to encourage this week? Who can I encourage to gather with God's people to worship this King this coming Sunday?