



SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

SABBATH

INTRODUCTION

Like a boat needs an anchor so it doesn't drift away, we need simple spiritual practices to anchor us. We need them in every season, but right now, they matter a lot.

Last week we looked at Crafting a Simple Rule of Life in our daily rhythms. Hopefully you have been able to find some simple daily practices that are already anchoring you, helping you get in sync again, and connecting you with Jesus even in the chaos. If you weren't able to connect with the spiritual practice last week, you can find it [HERE](#). Simply scroll down to the "Spiritual Practices" section of the page.

Today, we continue our anchoring rhythms by looking at the practice of Sabbath. Last week when we reviewed the creation account, we saw how God created the earth and all that is in it in six days. On the seventh day, He rested.

When God created Sabbath, it was not for him. God is complete without rest. But he knew we are not. We are finite. We have limits that are very real and cannot be ignored. We grow tired and weary. We desperately need to be refreshed, renewed, revived.

God modeled this for us in a beautiful and loving way. Mark Buchanan paints the picture like this: "So, God, knowing both our need and our folly, took the lead. He set the example. Like a parent who coaxes a cranky toddler to lie down for an afternoon nap by lying down beside her, God woos us into rest by resting...God commands that we imitate him in order to discover again that we're not him, and that we need him."^[1] He modeled rest, inviting us to follow.

When we practice Sabbath, we are reminded of who we are and to whom we belong. We also remember that God is ultimately in control.

We invite you to have a family conversation about beginning a Sabbath rhythm into your schedule right now.

[1] Mark Buchanan, *The Rest of God*, (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2006), 88.

FOR FAMILIES WITH PRESCHOOL OR ELEMENTARY-AGE CHILDREN

If you have preschool or elementary-age children, use the 4th Commandment Bible Study for Children (complete with a coloring page, game, and crafts!) to walk through this practice with your family. You can find that [HERE](#). It includes a fun game to demonstrate Sabbath rest, a Bible memory verse, a coloring page, and a craft to help you talk with your children about Sabbath.

FOR ADULTS OR FAMILIES WITH MS OR HS STUDENTS

Take some time to read through the following Scriptures:

Genesis 2:2-3

Exodus 20:8-11

Deuteronomy 5:12-15

Spend some time answering these questions about the Scriptures you read:

- What do you notice Scripture says about the Sabbath?
- Why do you think God places such emphasis on remembering the Sabbath day?
- What do you think it would mean to set aside a day as “holy”?
- What would that look like in your life?

Take a moment to pray, inviting God to show you what Sabbath would look like for your life. Spend time sharing with God and one another what you would need from a Sabbath rest.

Before moving on, check out this video from The Bible Project on the meaning of Sabbath: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/what-is-the-sabbath/>

CHOOSING SABBATH:

This week, choose a day when you will unplug and spend time delighting in God and in your family. Sunday is a great day since you can worship together. Saturday is a great day too. If you have a day off from work, choose that day. Begin with simple things. Consider these four simple ingredients for Sabbath: Stopping, Resting, Delighting, and Worshipping.

Stopping

On the Sabbath, we stop. The word shabbat (the Hebrew word for Sabbath) means to stop or cease. Make a list of what you could stop on Sabbath. Consider social media viewing, watching the news, screens or technology in general. Consider freezing your purchases for the day. Think about setting aside any house projects or work-related communication. Just unplug and stop for a day. What would stopping look like for you on the Sabbath?

Resting

On the Sabbath, we rest in God. We rest from work. We nap. We wake without an alarm. We allow our bodies to catch up from the work of the week. We cease worrying and rest in His hands. Consider what is restful to your mind, soul, and body. Do those kinds of things. What would resting look like for you and your family?

Delighting

On the Sabbath, we delight in God. We delight in one another and the beautiful gifts of relationships. We delight in creation, enjoying the beauty of nature. We breathe. We play. We enjoy good food. We linger around the table. Consider how you can delight in God. What would delighting in God look like for you and your family?

Worshipping

On the Sabbath, we worship God. We remember. We remember what He's done and how He's been faithful. We remember His promises and what He's currently doing in our lives. We celebrate His goodness. Consider how your family can remember. Maybe you can share the ways you see God working around you right now during a meal. Maybe you have a gratitude wall filled with post-it notes that gets attention on this day. Maybe you put on a worship playlist while you're together and sing at the top of your lungs. What would worshipping God look like for you and your family?

SO HOW DO I BEGIN?

As you've made your list, begin to craft your Sabbath.

1. Choose a day your family agrees to be the best day to Sabbath.
2. Choose one way you will stop, one way you will rest, one way you will delight, and one way you will worship on that day.

And then begin simply. You will probably not be able to implement all your ideas in one Sabbath. Start slow. Take simple steps. Have grace as you begin. There isn't a law for the Sabbath. It's an invitation we've been given to take advantage of as a gift.

Pastor and author, John Mark Comer says, "Sabbath is coming for you either as discipline or delight." I have found that to be true in my own life. If I don't choose Sabbath, it chooses me by default through weariness. So, let's choose to be anchored by delight instead.

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Sabbath for Families & with Children: "Hit the Pause Button" from Focus on the Family: <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/hit-the-pause-button/>

This one has so many good things!!! Including Books and sermons on Sabbath. It's my favorite online curation of Sabbath materials is
HERE: <https://practictheway.org/practices/sabbath>

Article: "Six Ways to Practice Sabbath" by Tim Keller: https://www.redeemer.com/redeemer-report/article/six_ways_to_practice_sabbath

"How to Start a Sabbath" from Emotionally Healthy Discipleship: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=isAIZGnrXqY>

From Sacred Ordinary Days: <https://sacredordinarydays.com/pages/sabbath>

The Spiritual Discipline of Rest by Richella Parham: <https://renovare.org/articles/the-spiritual-discipline-of-rest>

The Bible Project: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/what-is-the-sabbath/>