

## 24/6

“Stillness” there is nothing quite like it, it’s wonderful and for some of us (in our current culture) awkward at the same time. Our culture moves so fast, our speech our activities and our pace and we rarely get a pause or a chance to take a breath, let alone stop or dis-connect.

We weren’t made and designed to go constantly, we were made to work for 6 days then...

*“By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. <sup>3</sup> Then 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 2:2-3)*

After each day of creation God said it was “good”, after he made man and woman it was “very good”. But when he came to the seventh day he said it was “holy”. He called it “Sabbath” that simply meant to cease from working.

God stopped, he showed restraint, for most of us this is very hard to emulate...to stop and rest.

This is connected to a larger truth of resting from our work, our labor and efforts.

After 20 generations of slavery, God gave Israel a structure, the commandments. The first three commandments are about him; the last six are how we are to live with each other. Right in the middle of these is the fourth commandment.

*“Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. <sup>9</sup> Six days you shall labor and do all your work, <sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>11</sup> 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)*

“Holy” means different and uncommon it will do something in you and your life.

In Israel (even today) on the Sabbath they will greet each other by saying:

me.

In Israel (even today) on the Sabbath they will greet each other by saying; “*Shabbat shalom*” meaning “may you experience peace today” or “may God’s peace be yours”.

*“One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grain fields, and as his disciples walked along, they began to pick some heads of grain. <sup>24</sup> The Pharisees said to him, “Look, why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?” <sup>25</sup> He answered, “Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need? <sup>26</sup> In the days of Abiathar the high priest, he entered the house of God and ate the consecrated bread, which is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions.” <sup>27</sup> Then he said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. <sup>28</sup> So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.” (Mark 2:23-27)*

### **The Law of the Sabbath: Danger of Legalism**

The Sabbath is about Jesus and was never intended for you to serve it but it was meant to serve you.

*“The Pharisees said to him, “Look, why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?” (:24)*

- **Unbiblical**

The Pharisees tried to protect the Sabbath, so over time they added 39 regulations that ended up corrupting it and it became unbiblical.

Jesus is saying to the religious teachers, I’m not breaking God’s Law; I’m breaking your rules. Rules begin to be more important than people and the very purpose is lost.

- **Unloving**

The Sabbath became more important than people and instead of being life giving, it became unloving, even destructive.

- **Unsafe**

We can begin to defend what can become an idol. Many times this will end in a bad place, for the Pharisees in the end they wanted to kill Jesus.

### **The Lord of the Sabbath: Fulfillment of promise**

This “rest” will be seen on 2 levels in scripture, internal and external. God has done something through Christ Jesus, stop striving just believe.

- **Rest**

**The gospel is not *DO* but *DONE*.**

- **External Rest**

## o External Rest

*“Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.” (Deuteronomy 5:15)*

Slavery was their identity; God is saying their (your) life is in my hands. The work that we do will drive us to exhaustion and weariness. Our identity is found in what he has done for us don't walk back into slavery.

## o Internal Rest

*“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30)*

In light of what we are studying maybe we'll see this scripture in a new way, it will give you rest for you soul.

*“Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.”<sup>8</sup> For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day.<sup>9</sup> There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God;<sup>10</sup> for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his.<sup>11</sup> Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience.” (Hebrews 4:7b-11)*

### • Renewal

*“The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.”*

The Sabbath was a protection for us, he wants this to be renewing for us but it is also a celebration.

### • Reverence

**The Sabbath wasn't just a day to rest; it was also a day to worship.**

**“You're not called to create rest, but to enter in, stop and rest”**

## Discussion Questions

- 1) How hard is it for you to experience “stillness”? Do you find it difficult to pause, take a breath, even stop and rest?
- 2) During our study we begin to realize that the truth of the Sabbath is bigger than it first appears and connected to a larger truth of resting from our work, our labor and efforts. Please discuss the importance of rest from our physical labor and ceasing our labor and work to find

from our work, our labor and efforts. Please discuss the importance of rest from our physical labor and ceasing our labor and work to find rest and peace, (spiritually).

- 3) In Exodus the people of God have been set free and now God is giving Moses the commandments. The first three are about God and how we relate to him, the last six are about how we treat one another. But sandwiched in-between these is the 4<sup>th</sup> commandment about the Sabbath. First, why did these former slaves need the commandments and why this one in particular? Second, what is the significance of it being holy?
- 4) (Referring back to your notes on pages 2 and 3) How did the Sabbath become “unbiblical, unloving and unsafe” between the giving of the commandments to Moses and Jesus walking in the grain fields?
- 5) The fulfillment of the promise of the Sabbath has to do with ‘*rest*’. This “rest” will be seen on 2 levels in scripture, *internal* and *external*. Please discuss both external (Deuteronomy 5:15) and internal (Matthew 11:28-30) rest.
- 6) Lastly, what has the Holy Spirit spoken to you about setting aside a day to rest, pause or stop for your physical well-being? Also are you at that place where you stopped trying to do it in your own strength and ability? Or have you found the rest and peace for your soul that only the Lord of the Sabbath can give you? *Shabbat shalom* to all of you!