

Exodus: Journey of Revelation - Week 6

Sermon Date 10/23/2016

QUICK REVIEW

- 1) Looking back at your notes from Sunday's teaching, was there anything that caught your attention?

The Goal

This week we are unpacking the fourth commandment, remembering the Sabbath, found in Exodus 20:8-11. Let's be real for a moment. For many of us our schedules are out of control, and we never slow down and rest. But that is not how God created us to live our lives.

Furthermore, God demonstrated for us the model of work and rest when He created the world in six days and rested on the seventh. Because of how important rest is for you and I, we can see how important it must be to God. In this study we will unpack what rest is and what it is not.

MY STORY

- 1) From last week's study, did you discover any idols in your life you needed to address with God?
- 2) Did last week's study shift the way you think about the Ten Commandments, and if so, how?
- 3) What stood out to you the most from last week's study?

DIGGING DEEPER

Exodus 20:8–11 (NLT)

⁸“Remember to observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. ⁹You have six days each week for your ordinary work, ¹⁰but the seventh day is a Sabbath day of rest dedicated to the LORD your God. On that day no one in your household may do any work. This includes you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, your livestock, and any foreigners living among you. ¹¹For in six days the LORD made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything in them; but on the seventh day he rested. That is why the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart as holy.”

How are Christians obligated to remember the “Sabbath day”? May a Christian work on Saturdays? The fourth commandment is unique among the Ten Commandments, because it contains both ceremonial and moral elements. It also establishes a key element in a religious calendar, designating one day in seven as holy. But the commandment is also moral, directing people to be imitators of God in His rest from the work of creation, and to use His gift of time for sacred purposes. Because it can be viewed in both a ceremonial and moral sense, this

commandment became a center of controversy in Jesus' ministry, and continued to be so in the history of the church.

Jesus violated first-century Jewish ceremonial customs regarding the Sabbath (Mt 12:10–13; Lk 13:10–17). He also defended His disciples when they violated the Sabbath customs (Mt 12:1–8), even though OT law mandated the death penalty for those who worked on that sacred day (Ex 31:14–15; 35:2). Likewise, the apostle Paul de-emphasized the need for Christians to maintain Jewish customs related to the calendar (Rm 14:5; Col 2:16). At the same time, Jesus was careful to keep the moral aspects of this command, stating that “it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath” (Mt 12:12). Jesus saw beyond the ceremony to the sacred use of time. Every day, but especially the Lord's Day, is to be used to accomplish the work of God.ⁱ

However, as Christian's, we believe a Sabbath rest day can be any day of the week.

- 4) In what state of employment or lifestyle were the Israelites prior to God bringing them out of Egypt? In the context of slavery, what was God doing for them?
- 5) Who is our model for working six days and taking a rest day? Why do you think God took a day of rest?
- 6) What was the given purpose of the Sabbath?

God gave the Israelites a vacation day each week to rest and recharge, which was not their experience. Rather, they worked seven days a week from sun up to sun down as slaves in Egypt.

Psalm 127: 2 (MSG)

It's useless to rise early and go to bed late, and work your worried fingers to the bone. Don't you know he enjoys giving rest to those he loves?ⁱⁱ

- 7) What is God's motivation for you to find rest, and how does that impact you?

Matthew 11: 28-30 (MSG)

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.”ⁱⁱⁱ

- 8) From the passage above, where are we as Christians supposed to find our rest?
- 9) What are some activities that we think are restful but in actuality are not? Are these the same for every person?

Activities that we may think are restful, but really are not, may include: binge television watching, drinking heavily, engaging in hard sports activities, reading romance novels, and playing video games. This is not a complete list. Some folks recharge in the mountains, while others just need a comfy chair and a fireplace. The point is that we need to find how we best

connect with Jesus, and make it a priority to do those activities on a regular basis. Rest is also needed in other areas of our lives. See the following thoughts by Rick Warren.

TAKING IT HOME

Rick Warren wrote the following three great points about finding rest:

- **Rest your body.** God has made us so that we need rest. If your car engine heat light were showing red, you would stop because you would know it's going to damage the engine. God says if you don't take one day out of seven to rest, if you keep pumping the adrenaline all day, every day, seven days a week, your engine is going to explode somehow. So your best requires rest. You have to take the time to rest.
- **Recharge your emotions.** Just be quiet! Or maybe you need to reconnect in your relationships. Maybe there's some kind of recreation that rejuvenates you. I'm not talking about competitive recreation. Some of you aren't recharging your emotions out on the golf course. You're just getting angry at the other guy!
- **Refocus your spirit.** During your Sabbath, you don't take a day off from God. You worship! Worship puts life into perspective. If you're too busy for God, you're just too busy. To make this happen, you have to schedule it.^{iv}

10) What is your favorite way to recharge your body?

11) Has the idea of recharging your emotions ever been a part of your thought process?

12) What do you do to recharge your emotions?

13) If you could do anything to refresh your spirit, what would it be?

CHAIR TIME TOOLS

This week during your Chair Time, read and think about the following passage.

Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath

12 At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. ² But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, "Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath." ³ He said to them, "Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, and those who were with him: ⁴ how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? ⁵ Or have you not read in the Law how on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are guiltless? ⁶ I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. ⁷ And if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. ⁸ For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath."

A Man with a Withered Hand

⁹ He went on from there and entered their synagogue. ¹⁰ And a man was there with a withered hand. And they asked him, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?” so that they might accuse him. ¹¹ He said to them, “Which one of you who has a sheep, if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not take hold of it and lift it out? ¹² Of how much more value is a man than a sheep! So it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.” ¹³ Then he said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And the man stretched it out, and it was restored, healthy like the other. ¹⁴ But the Pharisees went out and conspired against him, how to destroy him.^v

- 14) What does Jesus want in the previous passage and how can we apply it in our own lives?
15) Looking back at the *Taking It Home* section, is there something you need to put into your schedule to find regular rest?

ⁱ Ted Cabal, Chad Owen Brand, E. Ray Clendenen, et al., *The Apologetics Study Bible: Real Questions, Straight Answers, Stronger Faith* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2007), 117–118.

ⁱⁱ Eugene H. Peterson, *The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2005), Ps 127:1–2.

ⁱⁱⁱ Eugene H. Peterson, *The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2005), Mt 11:28–30.

^{iv} Rick Warren, <http://pastorrick.com/devotional/english/what-does-a-sabbath-look-like>, accessed, October 11, 2016, at 9:30 am.

^v*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Mt 12:1–14.