

SABBATH REST (WHY WE GATHER AT CHURCH)

God created a day for us to rest together in Him for our own good!

KEY POINTS

- ❖ God created us to be relational. We see it in His earliest interactions with Adam and Eve. In fact, we see it all over the Bible, like in Matthew 22:35-37, and 1 John 4:20 tells us that we can't love God if we don't love His children. And it's difficult to love God's children if we hardly ever see them.
- ❖ Technology has been an absolute blessing during the past months of isolation, and it will continue to be a blessing going forward. But in the relationship game, technology is an aid, not a solution.
- ❖ People continually express a desire for fellowship. And, yes, we're all busy, but people have been busy throughout human history. That's why God created a day for us to rest together in Him, for our own good!
God created the Sabbath concept for us, His people.
- ❖ A primary theme in the Book of Hebrews is "faith." Hebrews 4 talks about the Sabbath rest, but we need to understand this in the context of faith, so that we may believe that God will deliver on His promises because we trust and obey Him.
- ❖ There are three dimensions to Sabbath rest that the writer of Hebrews refers to. The first comes from Genesis, which he quotes in verses 3 & 4: "And yet his works have been finished since the creation of the world. For somewhere he has spoken about the seventh day in these words: 'On the seventh day God rested from all his works.'" By Adam and Eve's **disobedience**, humanity lost out on this continuous Sabbath rest.
- ❖ The second dimension to Sabbath rest comes from the Land Covenant, in which Canaan is seen as the destination where Israel would have their Sabbath rest. But the writer of Hebrews refers to those who formerly had the good news proclaimed to them (*but*) did not go in because of their **disobedience** (see v. 8).
- ❖ So, we come to our present-day opportunity, the third dimension to Sabbath rest, where verse 9 reads, "There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God."
- ❖ God's offer of rest in Jesus, and humanity's propensity to decline it by **disobedience**, is a recurring theme we can't miss in biblical history.
- ❖ So, when we talk about "Sabbath rest" today, it's about a specific biblical way of plugging into Jesus so we can recharge.
- ❖ As Christians, we might miss our Sabbath occasionally and not notice a difference. But slowly over time, as missing our Sabbath becomes more common, we'll find our dependence on God shifting. We won't necessarily stop believing in Him, but we'll begin to relate better to how heathens seem to prosper without serving God.
- ❖ God gave us the Sabbath concept so that we and our family lines could remain in right standing with Him. We

KEY SCRIPTURES:

Hebrews 4:1-13 (NIV), 10:24-26; Luke 4:16;
2 Chronicles 36:21

- won't be blessed without it.
- ❖ So, if this Sabbath concept was made for man, how are we to benefit from it?
God's idea with the Sabbath concept is that we should rest.
- ❖ But this rest is more than sleeping; it's about plugging into Jesus, so that we can recharge. It is also more than just an individual rest. It's about community as well.
We rest together in community for our mutual benefit.
- ❖ Hebrews chapter 10 calls for a perseverance in faith, with verse 24 telling us to "consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds."
- ❖ It's so easy to get lulled into a routine, even when we know it's not best for us. So, how can we spur, or push, one another forward towards love and good deeds?
- ❖ Well, here's how to **not** do it. Verse 25 says, "...**not** giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing..." If we want our faith in God to persevere to the end, we cannot give up meeting together.
- ❖ God knows that, left to our own devices, we'll schedule Him out of our schedules—to our own detriment.
- ❖ God's pattern is clear in the Bible: He set up Sabbath rests in various ways, the most common being the seventh day of the week.
- ❖ We sense an urgency in the writer as he warns against ignoring getting together, telling the saints to come together and encourage one another—and all the more as they see the Day approaching (v. 25).
- ❖ Even secular society has demonstrated the importance of in-person fellowship. If the church isn't your community, what is?
- ❖ So, here is an invitation: let us all come to church in person next Sunday, the Sunday after that...and you can see the pattern.
- ❖ **God created a day for us to rest together in Him for our own good!**

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. Have you ever called in sick to work when you were not really sick? What did you do instead and, in your opinion, was it worth it?
2. Have you ever "called in sick" to God by not attending church? What did you do instead and did you feel your absence was worth it?
3. Is making time for God easy/hard? Explain why.

PRAYER TIME

Lord, help me to rest in You, together with my brothers and sisters. In Jesus' name, Amen.

WEEK OF SUNDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2021

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

✓ (Reminds me/Confirms) 💡 (New idea) 🧠 (Think about)

! (Do this) ❤️ (Speaks to my heart) ↺ (Must share)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS

Go deeper with your Life Group family.
CONNECT-REFLECT-DISSECT THE WORD
Your Life Group ~ Your Lifeline

Start-up: What do you like to do when you have a day off?