

5 2 W E E K S
O F G R O W T H

Give it a Year
Week 11

WEEK 11

Exodus 20:8-11

“Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 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. 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.”

Rest is so important that God commanded it for an entire day. 6 days to work, 1 to rest. What a glorious and gracious commandment that He incorporated for us to participate in each week. A full day of rest. Think about it...how recharged would you feel if you took 1 entire day off from every type of work including housework? One entire day to rest, refill, read, be out in nature, be present with the people around you, put your phones down, turn the TV off, take a walk, grab coffee with a friend, play with your dog, visit family members. Just take a moment and imagine how that could feel for you.

So, if this is such a good feeling, and God commanded it for our benefit, then why aren't we doing it? Well...because to Sabbath is hard! We are so used to society norms of working harder or catching up on the weekend or filling our life with so much busyness that there is no margin to take a day off. It feels odd to Sabbath in this culture. We feel guilty or lazy for taking a day to rest. But if Jesus did it then it's something that we should strive to do too. So how do we start?

All throughout the bible, people opposed the message of God and the messengers of God. Even Jesus experienced conflict wherever He traveled and even amongst His own followers. Our lives won't be any different. Not everyone is going to like our message, and values, and the light of Jesus on our lives and that will cause chaos and conflict.

When we experience conflict in our homes, with family, neighbors, people that we work with, people in our community, even in our church...it can be all consuming. Conflict is designed to distract us from the real work that God is calling us to do and fulfill. It is designed to stop us and keep us stuck and stunt our growth. The Christian life is surrounded by distractions where the enemy wants you to take our eyes off of God and off of loving Him and loving others.

So instead of being rash and turning to your feeling and giving into sin, remember that this comes with the calling and learn to anticipate it. When you feel frustrated with the people around you, turn to God and keep your eyes focused on Him.

Well, Sabbath is a spiritual practice which means it requires practice. It is something that we have to learn to do all while giving ourselves massive amounts of grace. It's a practice that you can start slow and attempt to get a little better at it every week. Start with a couple hours each week and build up to a quarter of the day to half a day to a full day. You will never be perfect at Sabbath because perfection is not the point anyways.

The purpose of Sabbath is to:

1. Rest our body. Physical rest. Our bodies were not built to be on the go 24/7. When we push our bodies to the limit, it will eventually shut down and force rest upon us in the form of injuries, sickness, inflammation, etc.

2. Recharge our emotions. You can't keep running on a drained battery. You need to recharge. If you care enough to recharge your phone, then we need to feel the same for our body.

3. Refocus our spirit. Sabbath can be a weekly spiritual tune-up. We connect stronger to God when we are rested. We are, also, more aware of His presence and His voice and His nudges and direction for our life after we've rested. The more time you spend alone with God, the more relaxed you're going to be.

So try it out and see if you begin to notice a difference in your life.

READ:

Genesis 2: 2-3

Exodus 20:8-11

Leviticus 23:3

Hebrews 4:9-10

REFLECT:

- Have you ever practiced Sabbath? Maybe you didn't intentionally call it Sabbath, but you took a full day to rest and refill. If so, how did it make you feel?
- What is keeping you from practicing Sabbath every week? Make a list
- How do you think you could be less busy this week and have more margin to rest and refill?

PRAYER:

Father God, thank You for the beautiful gift of the Sabbath. Begin to stir in my heart and mind the desire to practice this glorious gift that You so graciously gave us. Show me where I can begin to get some margin in my life and make this practice a reality. Give my soul a desire to yearn and rest in You. In Jesus name I pray. Amen.