

I am going to give away my age this morning to start this sermon. Does anyone remember the Carousel of Progress at Disneyland? It was one of my favorite Disney experiences.

There were four stages in the center the carousel. These stages rotated revealing only one at a time to the audience. Each one showed the labor saving devices from successive eras starting with the turn of the century in America.

In the turn of the century, the mother in the scene shows her new "wash-day marvel" that helps her do laundry in five hours, instead of two days,

In the 1920's the father tells guests that Thomas Edison has brought electricity to his home. He also tells them that they can now get news and entertainment on their radio from all over the country.

In the 1940's, Dad is now relaxing in his sweater while sitting at the kitchen table. New kitchen technologies include a refrigerator that holds more quantity of food and ice cubes and an automatic dishwasher. John mentions he is now part of the "rat race" and they now have television, when it works, and that John Cameron Swayze brings the news every night.

The final act was the 21st Century. In this act the grandfather then remarks that he cannot believe the new gadgets that people have today. Technologies have arisen such as car phones, laser discs, high-def TVs, and automated plumbing.

As each act transitions to the next, the family would sing:

There's a great, big, beautiful tomorrow

Shining at the end of every day  
There's a great, big, beautiful tomorrow  
And tomorrow's just a dream away

Man has a dream and that's the start  
He follows his dream with mind and heart  
And when it becomes a reality  
It's a dream come true for you and me

Some of us might be inclined to think that the technological age we live in is more of a nightmare than a dream come true.

Our phones never stop buzzing. News headlines seem designed to keep us anxious. Families carry burdens, marriages face pressures, finances fluctuate, health concerns emerge, and the future often feels uncertain.

Many people are searching for peace, yet genuine peace seems increasingly difficult to find. We have more conveniences than previous generations, yet many hearts remain troubled. We have more ways to communicate, yet many feel isolated. We have more information, yet less certainty.

Into this restless world, Jesus speaks these remarkable words:

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27)

Notice that Jesus does not merely offer peace; He offers His peace. He offers His peace that will calm our anxiety in spite of the trouble we are facing.

My wife and I have gone through a very troubling couple of years. We have had much anxiety over situations that are out of our control. One of

the things that has helped us is taking a day of rest when possible. The Bible refers to this as a Sabbath day.

Today, I want us to consider three truths about sabbath rest.

1. A day of rest is God's gracious gift to people.

"By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. 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

God spent six days creating the world and all that was in it. This verse says that on the seventh day "he rested." That is an amazing thing, isn't it? The english words "he rested" are a translation of a single Hebrew word, SABAT. It is the word from which we get our word Sabbath. A sabbath is a time of rest from one's labors.

Why did God view Sabbath rest as such an important matter? It was important because He was giving a gracious gift to the people he loved.

A day of rest is a gracious gift because, it will increase our chances of living peaceful lives. God desires that for us.

None of us would argue that we don't need rest. But, why did God rest on the seventh day? God is all powerful, so surely he was not tired! God "rested"—not because He was tired, but to set a rhythm for you and me. The point of God's resting is that we, who are made in his image, are to imitate Him by resting as well.

We are to work six days and then to rest. If there is any doubt about the importance God placed of doing just that, look at Exodus 20: 8-10:

"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, . . . Exodus 20:8-10a

This passage begins with the word, "Remember". The idea of Sabbath rest is not a new idea; God is calling His people to remember what had been written in Genesis 2:2-3. The idea to set apart the Sabbath to God is rooted not in Israel's history, but in creation. Sabbath is part of the created order. In other words, we were made to work for six days and rest on the seventh.

How serious was God about the command to keep the Sabbath?

2. A day of rest is not optional.

"For six days, work is to be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day must be put to death." Exodus 31:15

Aren't you glad we are not under the Old Testament Law? Not many of us would be alive now if this were the Law for us. Most, if not all of us, have worked seven days straight at some point. Some of us are in a habit of doing that now.

Up until this point in my message you might be thinking I am saying that we can do no work on Sunday. You might be thinking that I am saying this is God's law for us. That is not what I am saying.

What I am saying is that the idea of a day of rest originated with God and is an enduring PRINCIPLE in order to find peace in life.

When I bought my Prius in 2017, it came with an owner's. manual. Here is what I learned:

Every 5,000 Miles: Rotate tires, visually inspect brake discs

Every 10,000 Miles: Replace engine oil and oil filter.

Every 30,000 Miles: Replace the engine air filter and cabin air filter.

Inspect the exhaust, steering linkage, and hybrid cooling system.

Every 60,000 Miles: Replace spark plugs and inspect drive belts.

Pausing to have routine maintenance performed on my car is never convenient. It is sometimes expensive. I would rather just drive my car and never have to worry about pausing to take care of it. However, that would lead to my car breaking down.

I have another user manual.

The Bible is our user manual. In the sections that discuss Sabbath we are warned against overuse of our bodies and souls. We were made to operate at peak efficiency for no more than six days in a row. I know that to pause and rest is inconvenient. We have important work to do!

But to work and not rest will start to cause a breakdown in the way we function. I searched the internet for signs of overwork. Here are some of the things I found:

Overwork can cause headaches, stomach issues, muscle aches, difficulty sleeping, anxiety and irritability. Overall, one who is overworked will feel emotionally, physically, and mentally exhausted.

We live in a world that glorifies hustle, rest is often seen as laziness. Even among believers, "rest" can feel like a luxury rather than a necessity. But God actually commands us to rest—not just for our bodies, but for our souls.

When God commanded his people to keep the Sabbath, he was giving them a gift. He knew people would push themselves too hard. You see, Sabbath was not just law; it was grace built into time.

The Sabbath as a gift to God's people was reiterated by Jesus. In Mark 2:23-28 Jesus reiterated the purpose of the Sabbath.

23 One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grain fields, and as his disciples walked along, they began to pick some heads of grain. The Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?" Mark 2:23-24

"Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath." Mark 2:27-28

The Pharisees had developed a long list of rules to constitute what would count as work during the Sabbath day.

Buying, selling, and other business transactions were prohibited. Cooking or reheating food was considered a violation of the Sabbath. Some other man made rules prohibited: sewing, tearing cloth, and finishing work already started. I want to show you another thing that was defined as work and thus prohibited to be done on the Sabbath

(Tie a knot in a piece of rope)

That's right, you could not tie a knot on the Sabbath. The result of these laws was that keeping the Sabbath was a burden for the people. By Jesus' day, it was primarily regarded as a Jewish person's duty in order to please God.

But Jesus was not interested in setting up more rules to decide what can or cannot be done on the Sabbath. He wanted to bring into focus God's will for the Sabbath.

Clinton Arnold has written, "God did not create the Sabbath primarily for humans to obey but for human well-being. One can never interpret the law correctly unless one refers back to God's intention behind the law.

God intended the Sabbath as a gracious gift to release human beings from the necessity of endless toil."

As the Lord, he could interpret the proper observance of the Sabbath. As far as Jesus was concerned, people's needs came before a strict adherence to the Law. The principle of sabbath was an enduring reminder of God's intent to provide rest for his people.

As we shall now see, he wanted to provide rest for us here and now and also for eternity.

This brings me to my last point about sabbath rest in this sermon today:

### 3. A day of rest foreshadows eternal rest.

Sabbath rest was given by God to give us a glimpse of heaven.  
A job well done. illustration?

In Hebrews 4:8-11 we read:

"For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day. There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his." Hebrews 4:8-10

"Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience." Hebrews 4:8-11

The writer of Hebrews was drawing attention to the fact that the Israelites failed to enter the promised land under Joshua's leadership. The land of Israel was to be a place of rest for them. It would be a kingdom where God would dwell with them.

But, as we know they failed to enter that rest. So, God said that rest is still available to those who will seek it. But how do we attain that rest?

In this same chapter of Hebrews, we read this:

"Now we who have believed enter that rest, . . ." Hebrews 4:3

We who have trusted in Jesus depend on his death on the cross for the forgiveness of our sin. It is not a result of work on our part. When we find ourselves in relationship with Jesus we can rest in him.

The rest we have in Jesus is more than rest enjoyed on one day of the week. That rest is available every day of our lives. We can also look forward to it as the rest that we will enjoy in heaven.

This was Jesus' plan all along. He came to rescue us from the toil associated with a world broken by sin. He came to give us eternal rest by his side. The Sabbath that was first described in Genesis 2 had the implication of a heavenly rest to come.

So, there are two dimensions to Sabbath. Here and now we experience weekly rest and spiritual renewal. In the future, we will enjoy eternal rest with God.

Now, I would like to end by suggesting three ways that we all can apply the concept of Sabbath rest in our daily lives.

Three steps to apply the principle of Sabbath rest.

1. Reclaim the rhythm God intended for your life.

If you are not in the habit of doing so, set aside a day weekly for rest. One of the benefits of doing this reminds us that we are not God—the world runs even when we stop. It reminds us that He is the ultimate provider for us.

Remember, this is not a law, it is a gift. A good question to ask is: what recharges your battery? Maybe you will choose to read a book. Another might find rest in gardening. It would always be appropriate to spend extended time in worship and prayer. But maybe a family day out with the kids doing something fun is what will fill the bill. I often choose to spend the day woodworking in my garage. Other times, sitting and doing nothing is what I need to do to recharge.

The point is to cast the worries of your work upon the Lord. Trust him to manage them for the day. He will do that because he cares for you.

## 2. Rest in Jesus' presence.

The Sabbath is ultimately about relationship, not rule-keeping. When we spend time in God's presence, we rest from performance, from guilt, and from self-reliance. Jesus' invites us to come to him.

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 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. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Matthew 11:28-30

When meteorologists fly into the eye of a hurricane to measure wind speed and pressure, the outer edges of the storm are terrifying. The winds howl, the rain falls in sheets, and the turbulence is severe. But when the plane breaks through the eye wall, it enters a place of brilliant blue skies and absolute calm.

We spend so much time flying through the turbulent outer bands of anxiety. But God invites us into the center—His presence. When our focus shifts from the terrifying circumstances (the roaring winds) to the presence of God (the center of the storm), our fears begin to disappear. Try to find that center and linger there.

## 3. Anticipate a restful eternity.

True Sabbath rest begins now in Christ, but it will be complete in glory. Let Sabbath stir your longing for heaven. Heaven is a place and time when we will rest from our labors.

Then I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on."

"Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them." Revelation 14:13

I don't think this verse is saying we will do nothing but rest in heaven. In fact, Jesus taught there will be a kingdom on earth to run and we will be part of that.

Rather this verse is pointing out that we will not be in control. We will find peaceful rest knowing that Jesus, the king of kings, has done the hard work already. We will simply be following his lead and worshiping Him in the process.

So, we have learned today that Sabbath rest is not optional—it's essential. It is rooted in creation, reiterated by Christ, and ultimately fulfilled in eternity.

Remember, God doesn't just command us to rest—He invites us. In a world of noise and exhaustion, the Sabbath is God's whisper: "Be still and know that I am God."