



# GENESIS CH. 2

Rest



# Work / Life Balance

- Are We Too Busy?
- When did you last rest?
- How do you define rest?
- How are you balancing Life?

# Are We Too Busy?

“Our **demon** says: ‘We are **too busy** to pray; we have **too many needs** to attend to, **too many people** to respond to, **too many wounds** to heal.’”

Henri Nouwen, *The Living Reminder*

*The frenzy of our activism neutralizes our work for peace. **It destroys our own inner capacity for peace.** It destroys the fruitfulness of our own work, because it kills the root of inner wisdom which makes work fruitful.*

– Thomas Merton, *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*, 81

# God calls us to rest

- Like a lot of people, I maintain a full schedule with work, church, and family obligations. It is hard to find time for rest and renewal.
- None of the things that take up my time are wrong in and of themselves:
  - *humanity was made for work,*
  - *Christians are called to ministry, and serving one's family brings great joy.*
- But as sinful people are prone to do, I can easily avoid rest for the wrong reasons.
- We as believers often justify our obsession with work under a thin veneer of spirituality.
- We can't rest because of ministry responsibilities or because we must fulfill our calling.
- We exalt those who work hard and rest little as champions for the kingdom.
- But this perversion of a godly work ethic refuses to acknowledge that God calls us to rest as well as work.

# Genesis 2:1-3

- **The seventh day of Creation** was the day of rest.
- Genesis 2:2–3 (ESV)
- <sup>2</sup> And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. <sup>3</sup> So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

# The Seventh Day (2:1–3)

- On the **seventh day**, God **rested from all his work** (verse 2).
- “Seventh” comes from a Hebrew root meaning “to be full, completed, entirely made up.”
- “Rested” (Heb. *shabat*) means ceased or desisted from activity (cf. Exod. 40:33).

*There is no implication that God felt fatigued by His creative activity and needed to rest. He simply stopped creating because He had finished His work (cf. Isa. 40:28–29).*

- *It wasn't that God was tired out and needed a rest.*
- *It wasn't that He had to get ready for more creative work, because the work had already been **completed** (verse 1).*
- *Rather, God “rested” on the seventh day in order to set an example.*

Tom Constable, Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible (Galaxie Software, 2003), Ge 2:1.

Thomas Hale, The Applied Old Testament Commentary (Colorado Springs, CO; Ontario, Canada; East Sussex, England: David C. Cook, 2007), 132–133.

# The Seventh Day (2:1–3)

- First of all, in addition to sleep each day, we humans need periodic physical and mental rest.
  - *But more than that, we need to regularly cease from our daily work and turn our attention to God. We need spiritual refreshment.*
- God made the seventh day **holy, because on it he rested** (verse 3).
  - *The word “Sabbath” comes from the Hebrew word “to rest.” When we rest on the Sabbath, we also make it holy and thus honor God (see Exodus 20:8–11).*
- This Sabbath-rest is also symbolic of a permanent spiritual “rest” for the people of God—namely salvation, or eternal life (Hebrews 4:9–11).
  - *The Sabbath gives us a special opportunity to praise and thank God for His gifts to us—above all, the gift of His Son Jesus Christ, through whom we receive eternal rest, eternal life.*



sabbath

- What is “sabbath,” biblically speaking?

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# Day of Rest

- “The eternal God did not rest, as one weary, but as one well-pleased.”
- “Unquestionably, the number *seven* marks in Scripture the sacred measurement of time.”

Tom Constable, *Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), Ge 2:1.

- Day of rest, considered holy to God by His rest on the seventh day after creation and viewed as a sign of the covenant relation between God and His people and of the eternal rest He has promised them.
- The word “sabbath” comes from the Hebrew *shabbat*, meaning “to cease” or “desist.” The primary meaning is that of cessation from all work.
- The day became a time for sacred assembly and worship (Lev. 23:1–3), a token of their covenant with God (Exod. 31:12–17; Ezek. 20:12–20).
  - *Death was the penalty for desecration (Exod. 35:1–3).*
  - *The true observance of not following one’s own pursuits on that day would lift a person to God’s holy mountain and bring spiritual nourishment (Isa. 56:1–7; 58:13–14), but failure to keep the Sabbath would bring destruction to their earthly kingdom (Neh. 13:15–22; Jer. 17:21–27).*

Barbara J. Bruce, “Sabbath,” ed. Chad Brand et al., *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), 1426.

# EXODUS 20:8–11

# EXODUS

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep 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, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

# Is the Sabbath for Today?

## *The Sabbatarian Arguments Set Forth*

1. God commanded Adam and Eve to keep one day out of seven as a Sabbath rest.
2. In the Ten Commandments (fourth), God commanded Israel to keep one day out of seven as a Sabbath rest.
3. The Fourth Commandment begins with the word, “Remember.” Moses was not introducing something new, but, rather, he was reminding them of the Sabbath-keeping which had been practiced since man was created.
4. Christ said, “The Sabbath was made for man” (Mark 2:27).
5. Hebrews 4:9 states that the Christian is still to observe a Sabbath day of rest.
6. The Sabbath was practiced before the Fourth Commandment was given (Exodus 16). Therefore it was observed since the Creation itself.
7. In Matthew 24:20, Christ prophesied that Christians would be observing the Sabbath even at the end of the world.
8. The silence of the New Testament as to the Christian’s obligation to keep the Sabbath proves that they were all keeping it.

Robert A. Morey, *Is the Sabbath for Today?* (Orange, CA: Research/Education Foundation, 1995), 2–3.

# Sabbath – Lord’s Day – Finding Rest

- God “blessed” the seventh day of inactivity in that He set it apart as different from the other days of creation.
  - *It was a memorial of His creative work. God was satisfied with the work that He had done.*
- Note that God did not command Adam to abstain from work on the Sabbath.
  - *This came later with the Mosaic Law.*
  - *Scripture does teach the importance of periodic rest (cf. Exod. 20:8–10; 23:10–12; Lev. 25:2, 4; Deut. 15:1–18; Heb. 4:1–11; et al.).*
  - *Part of bearing the likeness of God involves resting as He did after completing His work.*
  - *“In the first six days space is subdued; on the seventh, time is sanctified. This day is blessed to refresh the earth. It summons humanity to imitate the pattern of labor and rest of the King and so to confess God’s lordship and their consecration to him. On this day they cease to subdue the earth.”*
- The writers of Scripture used the Sabbath to anticipate the hope of Messianic redemption throughout the Old Testament. In the creation account the Sabbath points forward to the time when God will bring ...
  - *“... a perfect and complete cosmos out of chaos.*
  - *The weekly rest-experience of the Sabbath [under the Mosaic Law] served to epitomize the future peace and rest of the Messianic age.”*
- “The seventh day of the week, the Jewish Sabbath, symbolized the old creation and the covenant of law;
  - *first you work, then you rest.*
- The first day of the week, the Lord’s day, symbolizes the New Creation and the Covenant of Grace:
  - *first you believe in Christ and find rest, and then you work (Eph. 2:8–10).”*
- The sabbatical and jubilee years in ancient Judaism also pointed to the liberation Messiah would provide for His people.

# EXODUS 31:13–17

## EXODUS

“You are to speak to the people of Israel and say, ‘Above all you shall keep my Sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, the LORD, sanctify you. You shall keep the Sabbath, because it is holy for you. Everyone who profanes it shall be put to death. Whoever does any work on it, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day shall be put to death. Therefore the people of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout their generations, as a covenant forever. It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.’ ”

# Sabbath – symbol of heavenly rest

- The habit of Jesus was to observe the Sabbath as a day of worship in the synagogues (Luke 4:16)
  - *but His failure to comply with the minute restrictions brought conflict (Mark 2:23–28; 3:1–6; Luke 13:10–17; John 5:1–18).*
  - *At first, Christians also met on the Sabbath with the Jews in the synagogues to proclaim Christ (Acts 13:14).*
  - *Their holy day, the day that belonged especially to the Lord, was the first day of the week, the day of resurrection (Matt. 28:1; Acts 20:7; Rev. 1:10).*
  - *They viewed the Sabbath and other matters of the law as a shadow of the reality which had now been revealed (Col. 2:16–23), and the Sabbath became a symbol of the heavenly rest to come (Heb. 4:1–11).*
  
- *Christian’s Lord’s Day.*

# Rest

- Ge 2:2 - And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done.
- Mt 11:28–30 - Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”
- Heb 4:8–9 - For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God,



# an important theological lesson

- The believer enters into a life of Sabbath rest from works and embarks on a life of holiness in that rest.
- We learn from the creation account
  - *(1) that God is a redeeming God who changes darkness to light, death to life, and chaos to blessing;*
  - *(2) that God is absolutely sovereign over all life and all pagan ideas that would contend for our allegiance; and*
  - *(3) that God works by His powerful Word—to create, to redeem, and to sanctify.*
- Obedience to His powerful Word, either the written Word, or the living Word, our Savior, will transform believers into His glorious image.”

Tom Constable, Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible (Galaxie Software, 2003), Ge 2:3.

# “The Biblical Sabbath: The Adventist Perspective”

- Ángel Manuel Rodríguez stated,
  - *“The blessing pronounced by God on the seventh day was not for the benefit of God but for those who were present with Him, enjoying communion and fellowship with him, within the fraction of time called seventh day.”*
- The biblical text places the origin of the Sabbath in God’s work during the creation week.
  - *His work, followed by rest, anticipated and modeled what was to be the experience of the human race.*
  - *The Creator in His own activity revealed the interaction of work and rest that will characterize the mode of existence of humans.*
  - *He did not have to create in six days and then rest on the seventh; but by doing that He was establishing a pattern for His intelligent creatures.”*

Ángel Manuel Rodríguez, “The Biblical Sabbath: The Adventist Perspective,” in *Perplexing Doctrinal Questions Answered* (Bellingham

- Adventist theologian Hans K. LaRondelle stated,
  - *“Without the divine communion and fellowship on the seventh day, without man’s entering into God’s rest on that day, the whole creation would be cut off from its Maker and necessarily have to find its purpose and sense in itself.*
  - *Then God’s rest indeed would rather be the cryptic indication of God’s return to the aseity (the absolute self-existence) of the inner glory of His being and existence, leaving man and the world to themselves.”*
  - *He adds, “God’s rest then means His ceasing the work of creation in order to be free for the fellowship with man, the object of his love, for the rejoicing and celebration of His completed work together with his son on earth, the imago Dei, his festive partner.”*

Hans K. LaRondelle, *Perfection and Perfectionism* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1971), p. 72.

- Sabbath/Rest:  
An action, not an *inaction*.

# Ministry in the Flesh

- Ministry tends to isolate you from others
- Ministry pressures you to give up your identity
- Ministry tells you lies about yourself (too positive or too critical)
- Ministry can reopen old wounds
- Ministry leaves you open to temptation
- Ministry brings you face to face with evil in the world
- Ministry alienates you from God (God is your “employer”)

“Be serious and frequent in the *examination* of your **heart** and **life**...

Have a special care of two portions of time, namely, **morning and evening**; the morning to **forethink** what you have to do, and the evening to **examine** whether you have done what you ought.”

John Wesley

# The Examen of Consciousness

1. Prayer of enlightenment (Spirit-guided)

2. Reflective thanksgiving

3. Personal examination of actions

Moods, feelings, urges, movements of the Spirit

4. Contrition and sorrow

Sorrow brings richness to our joy

5. Hopeful resolution for the future

Trusting God more completely and allowing  
God to lead us

# Cultivating Sabbath Rest in a Busy World

- Anchor the weekly schedule with regular worship in a local church.
- Augment times of rest with personal worship in prayer and Bible reading.
- Make your rest consistent but not constricted.
- Learn to see rest in the context of your entire life.
  
- To summarize, God calls us to rest just as he calls us to work.
  - *He wants to bless our relationship with him by giving us time to experience his presence and celebrate our redemption.*
  - *As believers who love our Lord, we worship him and grow in devotion when we find time for rest.*
  - *It may not be today, but it should be soon.*
  - *Develop habits of Sabbath rest so those times of celebration are never far away.*

Dr. Michael Burer, associate professor of New Testament Studies at DTS, <https://voice.dts.edu/article/rest-and-rejoice-christian-take-on-sabbath/>

