

2022 Community Groups

WEEKLY GUIDE

March 20 - Community Guide

Our theme this week is the spiritual practice of Sabbath keeping. Karl Romeus shared about this important practice to help us understand God's design for us to live at a different pace than our culture urges us to live. God invites us to regularly take time to rest and reconnect with him. He shows us a different rhythm than the world follows so that we can live a life that is truly centered in worship, delight and joy.

Community Prayer:

Lord, as we look more deeply into the practice of Sabbath-keeping, we ask for your Holy Spirit to guide our conversation. The world is a busy place, but we know that you have created us to live differently. Open our eyes to see you in a new way through this time of study and conversation. We ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen

Opening Questions:

1. What is your favorite way to "unplug" from your busy schedule?
2. When was the last time you took an entire 24 hours to just rest? What did you do?

Exploration: Sabbath comes from the Hebrew word, "shabbat" which means stop and delight. It is a day of **complete rest** from secular work following six days of labor. The concept of Sabbath was established and modeled by God. As we will see in this study, sabbath is included in both the Old and New Testament.

We begin our study in the New Testament by reading a passage in 2 different translations. Have someone read each one slowly and allow about 30 seconds of silence between the readings. Invite each person in your group to pay attention to the words or ideas that stand out to them.

Matthew 11:28-30 NIV *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."*

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*



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heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."

3. As you read this, what stands out to you about this passage?
4. What does it mean to keep company with God so that you'll learn to live freely and lightly?

Exodus 20:8-11 NIV ⁸ "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ 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.

5. What would it look like to keep a day "holy"?
6. When you think about doing all your work in 6 days, what concerns or challenges might there be?

Deuteronomy 5:12 & 15 NIV

¹² "Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy, as the Lord your God has commanded you.

¹⁵ Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the Lord your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the Lord your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.

7. God commanded his people to observe the sabbath as a way to remember what he had done for them. How do you respond to this knowing that it was a command rather than a recommendation?

Genesis 2:3 NIV ³ 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.

Hebrews 4:9-11 NLT ⁹ So there is a special rest still waiting for the people of God. ¹⁰ For all who have entered into God's rest have rested from their labors, just as God did after creating the world. ¹¹ So let us do our best to

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enter that rest. But if we disobey God, as the people of Israel did, we will fall.

Mark 2:27-28 NRSV ²⁷ Then he said to them, "The sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath; ²⁸ so the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath."

8. What are some of the barriers that might keep people from observing the sabbath?
9. What do you think might be some of the benefits to regularly observing the sabbath?
10. What would have to change in your life for you to be able to rest from all work for one day each week?

4 Truths: Helping you apply the sabbath to your week

- I'm not what I do
- The world will not stop if I cease "doing"
- Jesus holds everything together
- We live "for" and "from" the sabbath

11. Which of these truths stand out to you the most and why?

The Takeaway:

Sabbath keeping at its core is a profession of faith. Through observing the sabbath we are confessing our need for God.

The concept of taking a day each week to rest, worship and delight in the Lord is counter cultural and may be difficult to imagine. Take some time this week to pray and seek the Lord about how he may be calling you into this holy practice.

Prayer Request

