

The Ten Commandments – Week 4

The Sabbath

Main Text: Exodus 20:8-11

Main Idea

The Sabbath is God's gift of rest to His people. While Jesus fulfilled the Sabbath and changed how believers observe it, the wisdom behind the command remains. God calls us to intentionally create rhythms that help us rest in Him, trust Him, and delight in what He has done.

Introduction

The Ten Commandments were never intended to be a scorecard for salvation. God gave them to Israel after He had already delivered them from Egypt. Their relationship with Him came first. The commandments showed them how to walk faithfully with the God who had redeemed them.

The same is true for believers today. We are not saved by keeping commandments. We are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. However, the commandments still provide wisdom for how God desires His people to live.

The fourth commandment addresses something many people struggle with today:

Rest.

"Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy." (Exodus 20:8)

Key Takeaways

1. Remember the Gift of Rest

When God says "remember," He means more than simply recalling information. Biblical remembrance involves responding to what God has done. It is remembering in a way that changes how we live.

The word "Sabbath" means to cease from work. It is a deliberate stopping. God established this pattern in creation when He rested on the seventh day.

God did not rest because He was tired. Scripture tells us that God never grows weary. Instead, He rested because His work was complete. He delighted in what He had made. He was satisfied in His finished work.

This helps us understand an important truth about Sabbath rest:

Biblical rest is not simply doing nothing. It is delighting in God and what He has done.

The Sabbath was meant to be different from the other days. It was set apart for the Lord. It was a time to worship, reflect, trust, and rejoice in God's provision.

Supporting Scriptures

- Exodus 20:8-11
- Genesis 2:2-3
- Isaiah 40:28
- Psalm 121:3-4

Questions for Reflection

1. When you hear the word "rest," what comes to mind?
2. Do you regularly take time to delight in God's goodness and provision?
3. What keeps you from slowing down and focusing on the Lord?
4. How is biblical rest different from simply being inactive?

2. Jesus Is Our True Sabbath Rest

Jesus declared that He is "Lord of the Sabbath." In doing so, He revealed the deeper purpose behind the commandment.

Over time, religious leaders had turned the Sabbath into a burden filled with rules and restrictions. Jesus reminded them that the Sabbath was created for people, not people for the Sabbath.

The Sabbath was always intended to point people toward the rest that only God can provide. Ultimately, that rest is found in Christ.

Jesus invites weary and burdened people to come to Him. He offers more than physical rest. He offers rest for the soul.

Many people become exhausted trying to earn God's approval, overcome their guilt, or fix themselves through their own effort. Jesus says we do not have to carry that burden alone. Through faith in Him, we receive the rest our hearts are searching for.

Supporting Scriptures

- Mark 2:27-28
- Matthew 11:28-30
- Hebrews 4:1-11

Questions for Reflection

1. What burdens are currently weighing on your heart?
2. Have you been trying to earn God's approval through your own efforts?
3. What does it mean to find rest in Christ instead of in your own performance?
4. How have you personally experienced God's peace and rest?

3. Develop Rhythms That Help You Rest in God

Because Jesus fulfilled the Sabbath, believers are not bound to observe it exactly as Israel did under the Old Covenant. However, the wisdom of the command remains.

Paul teaches that believers may hold different convictions regarding special days, but each person should thoughtfully seek the Lord and be fully convinced in their own mind.

The question is not whether rest matters. The question is how we intentionally create space in our lives to receive the rest God offers.

The Sabbath reminds us that time is a stewardship issue. We must intentionally set aside time to focus on God, trust Him, and allow Him to renew us.

Pastor Todd highlighted several practical rhythms:

Daily Time with God

Spend intentional time in prayer and Scripture each day. Allow God to renew your heart and reorient your focus toward Him.

Weekly Worship Gathering

Gather regularly with God's people to worship, encourage one another, and celebrate God's faithfulness together.

Time Away from Work

Create regular opportunities to step away from work responsibilities and trust God with what remains undone.

Time Away from Distractions

Sometimes receiving God's rest means disconnecting from the constant noise and demands of technology so we can focus on Him.

Supporting Scriptures

- Romans 14:5-6
- Colossians 3:23
- Hebrews 10:24-25

Questions for Reflection

1. What rhythms currently help you focus on God?
2. Are there areas where work has become more important than trust?
3. What practical changes could help you create more intentional time with the Lord?
4. How does gathering with other believers strengthen your faith?
5. What distractions most often prevent you from resting in God?

Discussion Questions

1. Why did God give His people the Sabbath commandment?
2. What does it mean that God rested after creation?
3. How does Jesus fulfill the meaning of the Sabbath?
4. Why do you think so many people struggle to find true rest today?
5. What is the difference between physical rest and spiritual rest?
6. How can work become a substitute for trusting God?
7. Why is it important for believers to develop healthy spiritual rhythms?
8. What practical steps can help you slow down and focus more on God this week?

Application

Evaluate your schedule this week.

Ask yourself:

- Where am I intentionally making time for God?
- Am I trusting God with what I cannot accomplish?
- Have I created space for worship, prayer, and reflection?
- What distractions need to be removed so I can better focus on Him?

Choose one specific rhythm to strengthen this week, whether it is daily quiet time, consistent worship attendance, disconnecting from technology, or setting aside time to simply rest in God's presence.

Weekly Challenge

Set aside a specific block of time this week to unplug from work, responsibilities, and distractions.

During that time:

- Read Scripture.
- Pray.
- Worship.
- Reflect on God's goodness.
- Thank Him for His provision.

Use that time to intentionally delight in the Lord and remember that your value is not found in what you produce, but in your relationship with Him.

Memory Verse

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

Matthew 11:28

Bottom Line

True Sabbath rest is not found in a day. It is found in a Person. Jesus invites us to trust Him, delight in Him, and develop rhythms that continually lead us back to the rest only He can give.