

# Setting the Captives Free

November 5-11

Read Isaiah 58:9, 10

## Connect

- What are the chains of injustice that are happening around you? Who is carrying a particularly difficult burden (physically, mentally or spiritually)? What are the sins that oppress the people around you? Go ahead and write them down as a list.
- What are your struggles? What weighs heavy on your mind? What are the sins or negative thought patterns that hold you back? Add these to your list.

## Dig

- What is keeping you from addressing, or from being more effective at addressing, the issues above? (Time? Money? Ability? Something else?) Write one or more things next to each issue identified on your list.
- Isaiah talks about keeping the Sabbath in context of fasting. In Isaiah God is very specific about what a fast should be
  - Read Isaiah 58:6,7

## Apply

- If we look at Sabbath as a type of fast, we see the Sabbath hours as a resource we give up to accomplish the purposes listed above. Most people feel like they could do more good if only they had more time or resources or training. Sabbath is a time dedicated to delight in the things that matter to God (Is 58:13). How could the 24 hours of Sabbath be used to create the time, energy, attention, etc. to address the needs and problems that you listed? How will you use that time?
- Start with just one solid goal for yourself to make Sabbath a time for you to help someone. Make it something that's practical and doable, complete with a start date

## Reach out

- Who can you include in this plan and what purpose will they serve? Maybe you need an extra hand, or some expertise, or resources, or just some accountability.

# Believers Rest

October 29 - November 4

## Connect

Think of a risk you've taken that turned out well. How did you decide to take the risk?

What makes the God of the Bible difficult or easy for you to believe?

## Dig

- ◆ What about the sermon on belief and rest did you find helpful, challenging, or troubling?
- ◆ What is the connection between the promised land and rest? (see Joshua 24:13)
- ◆ How does Israel's disobedience on the border of the promised land inform our experience of Sabbath-keeping? (see Numbers 32:11).
- ◆ How is the Sabbath relevant to followers of Jesus today? (see Hebrews 4:9-10)
- ◆ What effort is needed for us to enter God's rest? (see Hebrews 4:11)

## Apply

Do you tend to act on God's promises or live like they may not apply to you? Why do you think this is?

How is God leading you to enter His rest today? How does this inform the way you keep Sabbath?

## Reach Out

List ways you could encourage others to believe in God this week.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_

# Loyal to a Higher Authority

October 22 - 28

## Connect

What has your experience with authority been like? Do you see it as mainly a good thing or a bad thing?

How have authority figures in your life shaped the way you relate to God's authority?

## Dig

- ◆ What about the sermon on loyalty to God's authority did you find helpful, challenging, or troubling?
- ◆ How did God demonstrate His Lordship for the people of Israel? (see Exodus 20:2) What does this say about God's authority?
- ◆ What is God's rationale for keeping the Sabbath? (see Exodus 20:8-10)
- ◆ What did He want the people of Israel to remember? (see Deuteronomy 5:15) How does this help us understand Sabbath rest?
- ◆ How does the Sabbath influence the way we see God and ourselves? (see Ezekiel 20:12)

## Apply

What emotions do you feel related to God being the absolute authority in your life?

How can Sabbath-keeping deepen your loyalty to God this week?

## Reach Out

The next time someone asks how you are doing, talk about your gratitude for something God has done.

# Restoration

October 15 - 21

## Connect

Think of a time when you were shown mercy. How did you respond? What affect did being shown mercy have on your thinking and behavior?

## Dig

- ◆ What about the sermon on restoration did you find helpful, challenging, or troubling?
- ◆ How did the Old Testament law provide for hungry travelers? (see Deuteronomy 23:25) What does this say about God's care for us?
- ◆ How did Jesus' view of the Sabbath differ from that of the Pharisees? (see Mark 2:24-26) How did David's act of eating the consecrated temple bread excuse the disciples?
- ◆ What must a person do to keep the Sabbath holy? (see Exodus 20:8-10) How does this instruction meet our physical and spiritual needs?

## Apply

How restorative has been your experience with keeping the Sabbath? Why do you think this is?

What can you do or not do to experience more the physical and spiritual restoration of the Sabbath?

## Reach Out

List some ways you can show mercy this week to ease the needs of those around you:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_