

**INTRO:** Good Morning! It is a joy to be with you again! For those of you I do not know my name is Adam Watson. I was once the young adults pastor here at Fellowship several years back. I was launched out of here about 4 years ago to serve a church in Austin, TX. AND am once again on the move as Team Watson. As a family are moving to London England to plant a church and train people to be sent from the nations living in London to unreached nations.

**Watson Family picture (Slide 1)**

Jumping into this series on Sabbath with you is SO delightful. I mean really. If you have not been with us in this series I want to actually ask you to go back and listen to the previous two sermons. You are hearing a community of voices on the subject or topic of Sabbath. Each of us have things to share and are bringing our different experiences, life stages, personalities and voices to this conversation as a church family.

**(Slide 1)**

Week 1 Caleb called us to **STOP peace be still.**

Week 2 Garrett called us to **REST.** He gave us practical ways and scriptures to rest. Our rest practices included Prayer, Community, Identity, Silence & Solitude and Ministering the Lord. These are great ways to being to practicing a regular Sabbath.

This week we will explore what it means to **DELIGHT** on the Sabbath.

Next week Noah will close out our series preaching on **WORSHIP** on the Sabbath.

I want to begin this week with a confession. I might be the worst at practicing Sabbath. In fact I preach to you as one who has often neglected, missed out and been burned out due to not receiving and experiencing the gift of Sabbath rest. Several years ago when pastoring in Austin I was given a book by John Mark Comer called *The Relentless Elimination of Hurry*. I was essentially being told, “hey bro you need to chill out.” Church family do miss this chance to experience Sabbath rest. Do not miss the opportunity to image Christ in this way.

I had excuse after excuse not to Sabbath. Not to receive this weekly gift of rest that God has for me is not only rejecting a good gift from God but what is best for my soul. If I really believe God’s way is the best way then I would receive His gift of Sabbath. Can I just encourage you whatever your two words are from Repurposed, your APEST, spiritual gifts, do not over spiritualize Sabbath. At the same time let's not make excuses based on our personalities, or enneagrams, or even our stage of life.

I don't know what your excuses are. Maybe you're saying. IF I had more financial security then I would Sabbath. IF I had more time then I would Sabbath. IF I had more \_\_\_\_\_ then I would Sabbath. Friends, Fellowship, Sabbath is not a luxury, it is a necessary gift for our souls to

receive. A weekly reminder of our ultimate rest in Christ to come. Instead of talking about what Sabbath is not or what we are not supposed to do on the Sabbath we are going to focus on what Sabbath can be. It **CAN BE** a delightful weekly celebration, spiritually refreshing, physically reenergizing joy bomb, and gratitude filled day to recognize the goodness of our God. If Sabbath is boring to you then check your heart. *One writer says, "If Sabbath is boring to you then Heaven will be boring to you."*

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## **CHRIST OUR DELIGHT** (Slide 2)

(Slide 3) Author Dan Allender writes in his book Sabbath, "The only parameter that is to guide our Sabbath is *delight*. Will this be merely a break or a joy? Will this lead my heart to wonder or routine? Will I be more grateful or just happy that I got something done?"<sup>1</sup>

I love the words of delight that we expressed as church this morning. I would add **Christ is our true blessing and true joy.** (Slide 4) **The Words of Delight, thank you Noah for leading us in that moment.** Take delight in it. Taking delight is a choice. Joy is a choice. JOY is a feeling and Happiness and joy. JOY is a condition and a Character trait. JOY is a discipline. *Now, sabbath is a delivery mechanism or vehicle for joy.* This delight, this joy takes action, it requires us creating space, and it is an intentional emotional life.

Delight is a gift from God. As you just wrote out Words of Delight, there was hopefully joy and hope that filled your hearts. When rightly placed, our delight, our affections, our gratitude, our worship and our anticipation of God's goodness shift our hearts and attitudes. The Psalms give us not just information but the emotional example to follow. We must engage our emotions and attitudes on the Sabbath as well.

(Slide 5) **Psalm 1:1-3** "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; **2** but his *delight* is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. **3** He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers."<sup>2</sup>

Delight in the law of the Lord. Church you are called Fellowship Bible Church. You have a rich history as a faith community of delighting in the law of the Lord, the word of God. There is wisdom from His word. It is imperative though that we not just know this information but experience the transformation God wants to give us through this. Sabbath is a gift of Spiritual, emotional, relational rest. V.3 Shows us this is a long-term, seasonal pursuit giving wisdom and life.

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<sup>1</sup> Dan B. Allender, Sabbath

<sup>2</sup> Psalm 1:1-3 ESV

Just like we talked about the first two weeks, Sabbath sets us apart as God's people. As God's people one of our greatest gospel tools is how we celebrate the goodness of our God. Think about what you find delight in. Food? I bet if I asked to hear your favorite foods, there would be restaurants mentioned, dishes, but there would also be smiles. How about music? What is your favorite music? We do this all the time, we ask each other about what we delight in. Is food bad? No! It is a gift. It is delightful, delicious, we even have this gift from God called SOUL FOOD. Yes, Sabbath is countercultural, yes. But it is a gift. A time of reverence but also of good. Maybe you grew up thinking Sabbath is just Sundays when chick fil a is closed. Or maybe you grew up when more was closed on Sunday other than just chick fil a.

This kind of Sabbath delight is only for God's people. The consistency of Sabbath, the consistency of delighting in the law of the Lord plants you like a tree by streams of water. That yields fruit. In Season. Does not wither BUT prospers. The consistency of delighting in the Lord requires faithfulness and produces fruit in our lives.

**(Slide 6) Psalm 37:4** “*Delight* yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.”<sup>3</sup>

Check our hearts, Lord. His desires are our greatest delight. The affections of our hearts. Jesus warns us of when we delight in the things of this world. ***What could it look like for you to start delighting in the Lord?*** Could it be a weekly dinner with your family? Some of the most fruitful seasons of Laura and I's lives have been when we have a weekly rhythm with a few close friends where we eat together and pray together. This gives a time to look forward to being with the people of God to simply enjoy the goodness of God.

Psalm 119:92-93 “If your law had not been my *delight*, I would have perished in my affliction. I will never forget your precepts, for by them you have given me life.”<sup>4</sup> We delight in His word and His word gives us life. We delight, enjoy, behold, dwell on His goodness, His word and His example. As we reflect and consider our own hearts' desires we should pay attention to Jesus' desire on the Sabbath.

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### **CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE** (Slide 8)

Author and pastor John Mark Comer writes, “***Our time is our life, and our attention is the doorway to our hearts.***”<sup>5</sup> Boom. In reality to say yes to Sabbath is to say no to our flesh. This is an ancient spiritual practice that has deep relevance to us today in Dallas, TX in 2023. We must live more intentionally than ever to be in the world but not of the world.

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<sup>3</sup> Psalm 37:4 ESV

<sup>4</sup> Psalm 119:92-93 ESV

<sup>5</sup> John Mark Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry: How to Stay Emotionally Healthy and Spiritually Alive in the Chaos of the Modern World*

Let's just say the average person lives 70 years. If you lived and that means you would have heard the creation story, the blessing of children, gratitude for the goodness of God over a communal meal during a Shabbat dinner at least 3640 times in your life. If you participated in 24 hour Sabbath you would have spent 10 years of your life STOPPING, RESTING, DELIGHTING, and WORSHIPING OUR GOD. So 10 years of your life trusting that God is giving you rest. The Jewish Sabbath begins at Sundown on Friday evening and ends at Sundown on Saturday evening. A dinner to a dinner bookend the weekly rest and reverence we give to our God.

(Slide 9) **DO YOU TRUST GOD ENOUGH TO REST?** Do you TRUST that God is working when you're resting? We live in one of the most individualistic and self-reliant generations to ever walk the face of the earth. We see the brokenness of the world, of Michael Jordan and Kobe Bryant are famously two of the greatest basketball players of all time. They shared a coach, Phil Jackson. The best players in history both sat on the bench at specific times for their good and for the good of the team. Whatever your APEST or gifting is, do you trust that God can sit you down? That He is working for your good and for the good of all His children.

(Slide ) **Matthew 12:1** “At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. **2** But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, “**Look**, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.” **3** He said to them, “Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, and those who were with him: **4** how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? **5** Or have you not read in the Law how on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are guiltless? **6** I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. **7** And if you had known what this means, ‘**I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,**’ you would not have condemned the guiltless. **8** For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath.”<sup>6</sup>

V. 2 “**Look**” as if Jesus didn’t see His disciples. Notice how they accuse the disciples and do not talk to them directly. Do not compare your sabbath to other peoples. Don't lose the point of the Sabbath. **CHRIST FULFILLS THE LAW** - *He is the only guiltless one.*

V. 2 He is the Lord of the Sabbath He ate the bread of the presence. **CHRIST IS OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST** - *He takes on our accusation and covers us.*

V. 3-4 **CHRIST IS THE BREAD OF LIFE** - *His disciples were hungry, he feeds them*

V. 6 **CHRIST WAS SACRIFICED SO THAT WE MAY RECEIVE MERCY**

Immediately, Jesus our greater priest, Jesus the bread of life, displays why He is the Lord of the Sabbath and what His desire and His delight is in.

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<sup>6</sup> Matthew 12:1-8 ESV

(Slide ) **Matthew 12:9** “He went on from there and entered their synagogue. **10** And a man was there with a withered hand. And they asked him, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?”—so that they might accuse him. **11** He said to them, “Which one of you who has a sheep, if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not take hold of it and lift it out? **12** *Of how much more value is a man than a sheep! So it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.*” **13** Then he said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And the man stretched it out, and it was restored, healthy like the other. **14** But the Pharisees went out and conspired against him, how to destroy him.”<sup>7</sup>

There are 613 laws in the Torah, Jewish Law. There are specifically 39 creative, work related commandments that are required to cease. These are a reflection of God’s rest on the 7th day of creation. However, we see the very heart of God in Jesus' response. THERE is one exception to the law, one exception to the 39 tasks that must cease on the Sabbath. This exception is referred to as *Pikuach nefesh* (Hebrew: פקוח נפש, lit. 'watching over a soul') When human life is endangered, a Jew is not only allowed, but required, to violate any Sabbath law that stands in the way of saving that person.<sup>[15][16]</sup> The concept of life being in danger is interpreted broadly; for example, it is mandated that one violate the Sabbath to take a woman in active labor to a hospital. Preservation of human life ALWAYS supersedes on the Sabbath rest.

Do you see God’s priority? Do you see His purpose for the Sabbath? MERCY OVER SACRIFICE. Jesus desire. His delight is showing Mercy to us. Wouldn't inviting people into His rest be one of the best evangelistic gospel tools we have? Invite others into this rest.

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## **CHRIST OUR ULTIMATE REST**

(Slide 3) The invitation of rest and delight. Right before our main passage. This is gospel.

(Slide 3) **Matthew 11:28** “Come to me, *all* who labor and are heavy laden, and *I will give you rest*”<sup>8</sup> Fellowship this is an Invitational moment as a church. Jesus repurposed us and Jesus empowered us through the Holy Spirit to Sabbath. TO delight in Christ in a way that welcomes the world around us. To a world that is exhausted and crying out for rest. JESUS is telling you His desire is MERCY over sacrifice. And He showed us on the cross. He showed us when He gave His life. He showed us when He rose again. He shows us now by His invitation to Sabbath. You can invite the lost and the broken to rest.

**O ALL** Communal Good versus relaxation. WE NEED COMMUNITY to live out the Sabbath. How wonderful would it be if you were not alone in this pursuit? Well friends look around this room. You are not alone. You have a church that wants this. Families that want this. Set a part for His glory.

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<sup>7</sup> Matthew 12:9-14 ESV

<sup>8</sup> Matthew 11:28 ESV

Christ is OUR delight, OUR example, and OUR ultimate rest. Dan B. Allender, Sabbath, “The Sabbath is not a vacation; *it is a grateful celebration*. Who are you celebrating? To whom do you owe your life, your current taste of re-creation? Who marked you with kindness that has enabled you to offer care in return? Who has scarred you with heartache that has enabled you to enter the wounds of others with grace? We are called to bless those who love us and those who love to do us harm.”<sup>9</sup>

You might be asking how can I Sabbath as a young mom or dad? How can I delight if I am grieving? How can I rest when my family needs me to provide

GOD IS SO GOOD. Lucy... in the midst of depression.

How do we enter this rest? We enter this rest through Christ’s completion on the cross of all the work needed for us to enter into His victory and grace. He has won the victory and the battle is over. We rest as we choose to have our total being, our spirit, our will, heart, imagination, and conscience centered in His perfect work.

Author Sylvia Gunter writes, “*This is rest to be enjoyed in fellowship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This is the rest of God Himself in our spirits and hearts, based on relationship with Him. God is longing to give you His God-size rest of spirit, soul, and body as you abide in Him. Allow His God-sized rest full of victory, finality, security, and strength to take care of everything that concerns you today and enjoy Him in it.*”<sup>10</sup>

**CLOSING: (Invite Band up to play)** Christ is OUR delight, OUR example, and OUR ultimate rest. **(Slide 3) Hebrews 4:9-11** “There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; **10** for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his. **11** Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience.”<sup>11</sup>

This Sabbath rest is a gift from our Heavenly father to His children. When we enter His rest we are imagining Him to the world around us.

Let us enter His ultimate and eternal rest with Him. This ultimate rest, this final Sabbath is depicted in Revelation 19<sup>12</sup> as a feast, the wedding feast of Heaven. Revelation 21:4-5<sup>13</sup> tell there will be no more **4** “He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed

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<sup>9</sup> Dan B. Allender, Sabbath

<sup>10</sup> Gunter, Sylvia. God Sized-Rest. Prayer Portions page 293-242. ©1991, 1995 Sylvia Gunter.

<sup>11</sup> Hebrews 4:9-11 ESV

<sup>12</sup> Revelation 19 ESV

<sup>13</sup> Revelation 21:4-5 ESV

away.” **5** And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”

**PRAYER:** Jesus you are our delight, our example, and the one we find our ultimate rest in. We trust you are working when you cannot see it. We trust you are.

**BENEDICTION:** God is so good. Amen!! Fellowship, delight in the goodness of God. Behold his goodness, trust in his goodness. Receive the rest our God gives, invite people into saving the power of His eternal rest. Delight, take joy, take confidence in the reality of our final rest.