

I. **Mark 4: 35 – 41 ESV (SLIDE)**

- a. <sup>35</sup> That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” <sup>36</sup> Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. <sup>37</sup> A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. <sup>38</sup> Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?”<sup>39</sup> He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.<sup>40</sup> He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?”<sup>41</sup> They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”
- i. This was not the first storm the disciples had been in. Some of them were fishermen by trade and they knew the danger of the sudden storms on the Sea of Galilee.
    1. This word for storm is also the word for “whirlwind” in Job 38:1.
  - ii. Jesus addresses the storm with a short command which shows us the authority he has.
    1. “Peace, be still!”
      - a. Literally, “Be silent. Be muzzled” or “Quiet now, Be calm”
  - iii. “Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?”
    1. This is a question to the disciples who were with him.
    2. It’s also an appeal to the reader of the text to have faith, to trust Jesus.
      - a. What does this mean – “to have faith.”
        - i. Faith in Mark means in part a recognition that Jesus is Christ and Son of God.
          1. Have you placed your faith in Jesus?
        - ii. For the believer, the question would be . . .
          1. If you trust in me and believe these things to be true, why are you still afraid?
- b. **2 Questions to Think About from this passage**
- i. How does Jesus maintain a non-anxious presence during the storm? Whirlwind? Chaos? (SLIDE)
    1. We will see in scripture that Jesus regularly makes time to be with His Father.
  - ii. How do we become people who are able to have peace during the storm and bring calm to the chaos and whirlwind going on around us? (SLIDE)
    1. **Make room for Christ to captivate our hearts as we abide in Him. (SLIDE)**
  - iii. This is the current theme of our ministry year.
- c. What does it mean to Abide?
- i. “Remain”
  - ii. Many of us already practice different ways of abiding or remaining with the Lord.
    1. Scripture reading
    2. Prayer
    3. Quiet time

II. **Sabbath: Make Room for Christ**

- a. As we continue to pursue making room for Christ and abiding, we want to introduce a practice of abiding that has been present since creation – Sabbath. A time of rest that God built into the rhythm of Creation.
- b. Why are we calling this a Sabbath Practice

- i. I know this is new language to some and could sound new age or that we are merely promoting mindfulness – while I understand the potential apprehension from the language, I'd love to ask for your grace in this.
- ii. **Our goal at fellowship is to produce DISCIPLES that call each other to live out our God-given purpose in Christ every day.**
- iii. Disciples are people who do the following:
  1. Be with Jesus – abide in his presence and move at his pace
  2. Become like Jesus – be formed into a person of love
  3. Do what Jesus did – become the person Jesus would be if he had our gifts and talents
- iv. To do this, we think the following are necessary:
  1. Teaching (with the Bible as our source of truth)
  2. Community (we gather together to share what we are learning)
  3. Practice (we experiment and reflect on how we are growing)
- v. ***Information alone is not enough to produce transformation. (PTW)***
  1. We need to *practice* Jesus' teachings, to get his ideas into the muscle memory of our bodies.
- vi. **Luke 6: 46 – 49 ESV (SLIDE)**
  1. <sup>46</sup>“Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do what I tell you? <sup>47</sup> Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: <sup>48</sup> he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built.<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>49</sup> But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.”
- vii. We see in this text that Jesus calls us to hear his words and do them.
- viii. We are going to journey together to grow in our knowledge of God through scripture and practice our way into becoming more like Jesus.
- ix. In this pursuit we will become disciples who disciple and live out The Great Commission in Matthew 28 where Jesus commands his disciples to **“go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.”**
  1. Jesus is not merely charging his disciples to go convert people to a philosophy.
  2. He is calling them to make disciples who uniquely live together in the Messiah's community.
- c. Over the next 4 weeks, we are going to learn more about Sabbath and practice this in community
  - i. Stop
  - ii. Rest – Garrett Hall
  - iii. Delight – Adam Watson
  - iv. Worship – Noah Mitchell
  - v. IN COMMUNITY – Room 201 or Life Group
- d. So, what does Sabbath mean?
  - i. Definition of Sabbath
    1. Shabbat (Shavat) – “to cease, to end, to rest”
- e. Sabbath in Scripture
  - i. **Genesis 1: 31 – 2: 3 (SLIDE)**
    1. <sup>31</sup> And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.<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.

- a. Walter Bruggeman says in his book on the Old Testament:
  - i. “The liturgical characterization of creation in Genesis 1 culminates in Genesis 2 with the authorization of Sabbath as a God-given, God-practiced, God-commanded observance. The day of cessation from work declares that God’s creation is, at root, an unanxious environment for life that is not defined by energetic productivity or self-preoccupied consumption but is defined by the peaceableness that has confidence in the reliability of the world as God’s creation without excessive exertion on the part of God or humankind. Thus Sabbath is the discipline of pause that relishes the human role in creation as “image of God.” (SLIDE)
- b. In the Genesis passage, we see God live into a pattern of life that we were destined to live into before sin entered the world. When sin entered the world, peace was turned in to chaos and presence with God being enough was replaced with a temptation for us to try and produce on our own rather than trust the one who is the ultimate provider.
- c. Bruggeman goes on to say . . .
  - i. “Sabbath became the lived testimony . . . that the “rhythms of cessation” as trust in the Creator constitute a mighty alternative to the frenzy of production-consumption that marks the world when it does not know that the world belongs safely to the God who has called it “very good.””
- d. The sad truth is that, since the fall, rather than filling the void of our life resting in a sufficient Savior, humankind has tried to fill the void our lives with insufficient solutions.

### III. Is sabbath a binding command that we must obey?

- a. Sabbath was instituted before the fall of man
  - i. Part of the rhythms and habits of the Lord pre-fall and was included as one of The 10 Commandments
    1. While scholars have differing thoughts about whether it is binding or not - It is an invitation to stop so that we can practice the rhythm that God showed us during creation to stop doing and just be – to stop producing and be present
    2. It’s a counterculture move to stop production and trust that the Lord of creation – that our King will give us everything we need and that resting in him, delighting in him, and worshipping him signals to a frenzied, oppressed world that we are different because our king is different.
    3. Unlike the other gods and idols of the pagan culture, our king doesn’t need anything from us to satiate his desires, he only desires relationship with us that creates intimacy. It is from this relationship that peace is produced.
- b. As believers in Jesus though, we are no longer under the law, but under grace
  - i. We see Jesus address the Sabbath in a story in the gospel of Matthew.
  - ii. Matthew 12: 1-8 ESV (SLIDE)
    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. <sup>2</sup> But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, “Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.” <sup>3</sup> He said to them, “Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, and those who were**

Sabbath  
Stop

Mark 4:34-41;12:28-34, Genesis 1:31-2:3

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with him: <sup>4</sup>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?<sup>5</sup> Or

**have you not read in the Law how on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are guiltless? <sup>6</sup> I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. <sup>7</sup> And if you had known what this means, ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,’ you would not have condemned the guiltless. <sup>8</sup> For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath.”**

- a. We see a passage where, on the surface, the teachers of the law confront Jesus about his disciple’s unlawful behavior on the Sabbath.
  - b. The real issue here is not whether plucking a few grains of wheat is prohibited on the Sabbath. The real issue here is who has the authority or power to interpret God’s will as expressed in the Torah – Jesus or his detractors, the Pharisees?
  - c. Jesus makes it clear that he is the ultimate interpreter of the law and that we must look to him as to how follow it.
  - d. He also makes it clear that rather than worrying about the law and who was breaking it, a healthier response by teachers of the Law would be to be hospitable and offer food to those who are hungry.
- c. If Jesus is the ultimate interpreter and has the power to interpret God’s will as expressed in the law, how does he do that? What does he say is the greatest command?
- i. This is the question that a teacher of the law posed to Jesus.
  - ii. **Mark 12: 28 – 34 ESV (SLIDE)**

1. **And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, “Which commandment is the most important of all?” <sup>29</sup> Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. <sup>30</sup> And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ <sup>31</sup> The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” <sup>32</sup> And the scribe said to him, “You are right, Teacher. You have truly said that he is one, and there is no other besides him. <sup>33</sup> And to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one’s neighbor as oneself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.” <sup>34</sup> And when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” And after that no one dared to ask him any more questions.**

- a. We see in Jesus’ response that the greatest commands are
  - i. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.
  - ii. Love your neighbor as yourself.
- b. How can we invite the kingdom of God to break out where we are by following this command?
  - i. We become people of love.
  - ii. Even though Sabbath may not be a binding command, it is a countercultural invitation to stop and be with the God of love.

IV. How do we become people of love that live out the greatest commands?

- a. We spend time with the one who is love – we abide with God – we practice Sabbath.
  - i. God is love.

1. **I John 4: 7 – 21 ESV**

- a. **<sup>7</sup> Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. <sup>9</sup> In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. <sup>10</sup> In**

this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. <sup>11</sup> Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup> No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. <sup>13</sup> By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. <sup>14</sup> And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. <sup>15</sup> Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. <sup>16</sup> So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. <sup>17</sup> By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. <sup>18</sup> There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. <sup>19</sup> We love because he first loved us. <sup>20</sup> If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot<sup>[e]</sup> love God whom he has not seen. <sup>21</sup> And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

2. Is your current pace one that produces love?
  - a. **Matthew 11: 28 – 30 MSG (SLIDE)**
    - i. <sup>28-30</sup> **"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 heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."**
      1. How do you feel when you hear this passage?
        - a. This passage speaks to the weariness caused by living in a society endless productivity is the expectation.
        - b. 2 possibilities
          - i. Could have referred to the strenuous taxation system of the Roman Empire
          - ii. Could have referred to the endless requirements of an "over-coded religious system that required endless attentiveness."
        - c. In Sabbath as Resistance: Saying No to the Culture of Now, Walter Bruggeman writes:
          - i. "Jesus offers an alternative: come to me and rest! He becomes the embodiment of the Sabbath rest for those who are no longer defined by and committed to the system of productiveness." (SLIDE)
      - ii. If we are going to be people of love, love for God and love for neighbor, Sabbath offers us a chance to rest in the one who is love.
      - iii. Sabbath is a proactive practice that moves us in the direction of being with our creator
        1. The purpose of Sabbath
          - a. Not a legalistic requirement to check the box
          - b. It is an invitation to be with God, Father, and Spirit and stop, rest, delight, and worship.

- c. Sabbath is a means to an end – it's a practice that allows us to be with our Father.
  - i. Our goal is not to sabbath
  - ii. Our goal is to be with the one who is the sabbath rest for our weary souls
- iv. The practice of Sabbath is an offensive posture to a world that prides itself on systems of production, efficiency, and consumption.
  - 1. It is a rejection of the idea that our hope is in how much we can produce.
  - 2. It is a practice that puts our hope and trust in the one who has already produced.

**V. Closing (invite worship band out)**

- a. Over the next 4 weeks, as we continue to unpack Sabbath, my prayer and hope for all of us is that we would start small and practice your way into Sabbath. We are learning and practicing together. Not in a legalistic way, but in a free way to experience the grace of the Father.
  - i. 10 minutes
  - ii. One hour
  - iii. Half a day
  - iv. Panters are currently starting every Friday night with Pizza, a dance party, and usually a movie that we watch together
  - v. Practice in community and rest in the Lord.
    - 1. Share a meal with a friend and be present with the Lord
    - 2. Practice not perfection
- b. Dan Allender in his book Sabbath writes:
  - i. "Perhaps one of the most radical gifts we can bring the developing Third World and the decaying Western society is the Sabbath. Not a day off, but a day of celebration and delight. The Sabbath is a day when the kingdom to come has come and is celebrated now rather than anticipated tomorrow. It is a fiction, a theater of diving comedy that practices eternity as a present reality rather than a future state. Sabbath is not about time off or a break in routine. It is not a minivacation to give us a respite so we are better prepared to go back to work. The Sabbath is far more than a diversion; it is meant to be an encounter with God's delight. The Sabbath mimics God's response on the seventh day; certainly he was not tired from his busy creational enterprise. If we need to get downtime or chill, then we should use another day and not the Sabbath. In fact, if we enter the Sabbath with joy, then it will spill its abundance into the other six days, thus keeping from indulging in idolatrous overwork that leads to even more intense indulgence in riotous pleasure. The Sabbath is the kind of delight that leads to life.
- c. So, Fellowship Dallas, as we engage in the practice of Sabbath, may we heed the words of Jesus – "Peace, be still!"
- d. PRAY