

Exodus 20:8–11 (ESV) “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep 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, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. 11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

What is the sabbath? When is the true sabbath? What do I do with it?

Sabbath means rest – it is a ceasing from labor and work.

In the beginning, God established this pattern of working six days and resting one.

In the 10 commandments, he re-established this precept into law.

For a couple thousand years, the Sabbath day for the Jews was Saturday.

The first we hear about this is in connection with special priestly sacrifices on the seventh day (Num 28:9–10). We also see the references to synagogue worship in the NT (Mk 1:21; 6:2; Lk 4:16–17, 31; 6:6; 13:10; Acts 13:14, 27; 15:21; 17:2; 18:4), where the emphasis is on reading and expounding the Scripture and debating its meaning.

When Jesus came, everything changed – He made all things new including the Sabbath.

Jesus comes without sin. God becomes a man, lives a perfect life in full, complete, total obedience to the entirety of the law. He goes to the cross, substitutes himself, suffers and dies in our place for our sins as our Savior. He rises from death on Sunday.

Acts 20:7 (ESV) On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight.

This was no small deal.

And Constantine took Christianity from being forbidden to being legalized, and around 321 A.D., he declared that Sunday was the new Sabbath day. So then it shifted in the Roman Empire from Saturday, which the Jews had adhered to, to Sunday, which the Roman nation adhered to.

In 1908, a New England mill became the first American factory to institute the five-day week. It did so to accommodate Jewish workers, whose observance of a Saturday sabbath forced them to make up their work on Sundays, offending some in the Christian majority. The mill granted these Jewish workers a two-day weekend, and other factories followed this example. The Great Depression cemented the two-day weekend into the economy, as shorter hours were considered a remedy to underemployment.

God is gracious and we are blessed to get double days off in the West.

1. The Sabbath is God's example.

Vs 8 "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Vs 11 *For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day.*

The verb "rested" means "the cessation of creative activity"

God was not inactive on the first sabbath. His rest included His rule.

2. The Sabbath is God's design

Vs 9-10 *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*

This command is not just about resting – its about working.

A. Some of us "Over-work."

We over-work because we are trying to be our own savior. We cannot fathom that God would provide for us, give us security, or approve of us more than our work, biz or job would.

B. Some of us "Over-rest."

We over-rest because we are trying to be our own savior in that if we evade work we can finally enter into some kind of rest. Some of you have found ways to get out of work, to make excuses, to justify your "less-than" work ethic. In actuality you are doing the same thing the over-worked do, that is be your own God by providing your own comfort. There are no promises that life would be easy and that especially goes for work as we beat back the thorns and thistles; however, Jesus said he would not leave us orphans but send to us a Helper who is our – Comforter.

This also works out in the spiritual as well. You were created by God – in His design – to rest in him. Some of you over-work to cover your shame, guilt and sin. If I can do enough Christian stuff, God will accept me. You're restless. You have NOT entered His rest.

Some of you are over-rest from thinking about spiritual things – about eternity – about God and your relationship to Him. You are spiritually lazy and don't do the necessary work to grow in knowledge of Him and you are restless. You are anxious - so in order to get from your perceived hell on earth to Heaven on earth, you find substitute gods to save you. (alcohol, pills, porn, shopping, etc.) You are anxious and restlessness because you have never entered into the rest of God.

3. The Sabbath is God's gift

Vs 6b *Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.*

Mark 2:27 (ESV) *And he said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.*

Exodus was written to former slaves. They probably never got a day off. So, for them, a day off, it's like, "Really, a whole day? What a gift from the Lord. He must really love us to give us this great gift."

Exodus 5:5 (ESV) *And Pharaoh said, “Behold, the people of the land are now many, and you make them rest from their burdens!”*

Earthly masters place more burdens on us; only God gives you true rest.

We can become our own Pharaohs.

Hebrews 4:9–10 (ESV) *So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, 10 for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.*

Hebrews 4:1–3 (ESV) *Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. 2 For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened. 3 For we who have believed enter that rest...*

What are you trying to make your peace? What are you trying to make your rest? What are you resting in?

Matthew 11:28–30 (ESV) *Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For 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 heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.”*

it's more about who we worship than when we worship. It's a person to rest in before it's a day to rest in.