

I. Intro

A. Genesis 1-3

1. The first three chapters of the Bible set up patterns of how God calls us to mature into true reflections of His image. They reveal Who He is and who we are called to be.
2. We've looked at a few
 - a. God's blessing, a place, people, and blessing
 - b. Rebellion and obedience, saw, desired, took vs. saw, received, gave
 - c. Dominion, godly imaging vs beastly imaging
 - d. Salvation, chaotic waters and Jesus rescue

B. One final pattern for our series - the 7th day rest

II. Development of the Sabbath

A. Genesis 2:1-3; 15-17

1. 2:1-3 (read)
 - a. God finished creation and then He rested (*shabot*: to cease or stop)
 - b. God blessed (invoked His divine favor) and made holy (set it apart; special treatment)
 - c. Missing on day seven, morning and evening: Rest is something that exists in perpetuity.
2. 2:15-17 (read it)
 - a. "Put him in the garden."
 - 1) We think: ok, get to work, no dilly dallying, hop to it.
 - 2) Text actually says: Put = *nuakh* (to rest, be at rest, to remain)
 - b. "The Lord God took the man and rested him in the garden ..."
 - 1) God settled or set up the man in the garden. Gave him a tour and let him settle in.
 - 2) Before Adam went to work, he rested; implication later

B. Exodus 20:8-11 and Deuteronomy 5:12-15

1. Both passages
 - a. Sabbath to the Lord your God: a sabbath that belongs to Yahweh
 - b. Six days you work, one day you rest.
 - c. Holy - Gen 2 (God blessed and made holy); Exodus and Deuteronomy (Remember and keep holy)
2. Why Sabbath?
 - a. Exodus 20:11 – Recognize and remember that time belongs to God, not me.

*Every seventh day we renounce autonomy and affirm God's dominion over time.
Keeping the Sabbath is accepting the Kingdom and sovereignty of God!

- b. Deuteronomy 5:14-15 - To recognize and remember that all I have dominion over belongs to God
- 3. Purpose of the seventh day rest/Sabbath
 - a. The Sabbath is meant to inconvenience us by interrupting our "rule" so that we remember that God is the master of time and everything we own or that answers to us.
 - b. In remembering the Sabbath, we reflect God and participate with Him in His work throughout human history.

C. Matthew 11:25-12:8

- 1. 11:25-27 - the authority and identity of Jesus
- 2. 11:28-30
 - a. Invitation: "Come to me. I will give you rest"
 - 1) Who? Everyone who is tired, who is not experiencing rest
 - 2) Rest
 - a) Gen 2: God put/rested them in the garden (rested, give rest, remain)
 - b) Matt 11: I will give you rest; *anapauo*=to cause to rest, to give rest, remain

*The same sense of rest is used to connect these two passages. Jesus is saying that He is the embodiment of God's rest!

- b. Experience: "take my yoke"
 - 1) Yoke: a rabbi's way of teaching Torah; his set of teachings on how to be human

*A way to shoulder the weight of life - marriage, prayer, money, sex, relationships, conflicts, resolutions, government, etc.

- 2) Three goals of a disciple
 - a) Be with
 - b) Become like
 - c) Do what
- 3) Easy and light (verse 30)
- c. Process: "learn from me ... you will find rest"
 - 1) Life is simplified and unified through the person of Jesus Christ.
 - 2) This is the process of becoming less like me, reflecting the fallen nature and culture; and becoming more like Jesus, reflecting the image of God.

*You will be in perpetual Sabbath - no morning or evening!

- 3. 12:8 Lord of the Sabbath
 - a. Sabbath meant to help us remember God's sovereignty and our further rest which we can experience in part right now.

b. Jesus says, "I am that rest. In Me is the rest you so desperately seek."

III. Implications

A. "To rest" or "from rest"?

1. God rested Adam in the garden.
2. Human physiology: we cannot catch up on our rest.
 - a. Working to get rest as reward vs resting to do our best work
 - b. Working for the weekend
3. Jesus' nighttime was to be rested and prepare for the day ahead, not to recover from the day behind.
4. Challenge: Do you work so you can rest or do you rest so you can work? Is it reparation or preparation?

B. Two-fold purpose of Sabbath

1. Friday evening to Saturday evening=Jewish Sabbath
2. Impossible? Maybe. But ...
 - a. Is there anything you do on a weekly rhythm that is in recognition of God's ownership of your time and His sovereignty over those you care for and the stuff that you own?
 - b. We tend to practice Sabbath as playtime rather than God's time.
 - c. Similar concept as tithing - 10% and 1 day out of 7
 - d. What will you do weekly that focuses you on remembering and recognizing God as master of time and all that you own?

C. Process: Come, take, learn

1. Jesus' invitation is to travel through life at His side, learning from Him how to shoulder the weight of life.
 - a. I'm a follower of Jesus and I'm tired.
 - b. If you want to experience the rest of Jesus you have to adopt the lifestyle of Jesus.
2. Our frustration, exhaustion, and disappointment all come from the same root-shouldering the weight of life following anyone or anything but Jesus.
 - a. Come to Jesus with your worst
 - b. Take what He has to offer - forgiveness, new life, transformation
 - c. Learn from Him who you are and what He has already secured for you.

Prayer



REST

GENESIS 2; EXODUS 11; MATTHEW 11:25-12:8
FEBRUARY 2, 2020 | PASTOR MATT WHITEFORD



GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER (USE JUST ONE OR ALL OF THESE QUESTIONS TO CONNECT AS YOU START YOUR CONVERSATION)

- 1 Complete the following sentence: “I wish I had more time to ...”
- 2 Do you think we live in a culture that values rest? Why or why not? If yes, what kind of rest do you believe our culture values?

This Sunday, we wrapped up the series, “Patterns.” Pastor Matt had us look at the pattern of rest, by helping us with a deeper understanding of sabbath. Most people have a certain idea of rest in mind—to rest after a busy week or to get rest after a busy season of life. Here is the issue: our frustration, exhaustion, and disappointment all come from the same root—that we try to shoulder the weight of life following anyone or anything but Jesus. Let’s look into these passages and examine our lives to see how we measure up to the biblical idea of rest.

QUICK REVIEW (OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE TO SHARE WHAT MOST STOOD OUT FROM SUNDAY’S MESSAGE)

Looking back at your notes from this week’s message, was there anything you heard that caught your attention, encouraged, challenged, or confused you?

DIG DEEPER (OBSERVATIONS FROM THE SCRIPTURE OR COMPLEMENTARY SCRIPTURES FROM SUNDAY’S MESSAGE)

- 1 Someone read **Genesis 2:1-3** in their Bible

Genesis 2:3 says God set apart a day as holy and rested from His work or ceased His work. What is the difference between resting in God and being lazy? Why does rest please God, even though He values work so much?

- 2 Someone read **Genesis 2:15-17 & Exodus 20:8-11** in their Bible

In Genesis 2:15, it says that God put Adam in the garden. Matt shared on Sunday that in the original Hebrew, that the Old Testament was written in, is the word “nuakh” which translated means to rest, be at rest, to remain. So essentially, God took Adam and rested him in the garden and let him settle in. Before Adam got to work, he rested.

How does understanding the language in the commentary above help you understand how God views rest?

Matt shared on Sunday that the Sabbath is meant to inconvenience us by interrupting our “rule” so that we remember that God is the master of time and everything we own or that answers to us. In remembering the Sabbath, we reflect God and participate with Him in His work throughout human history.

Recalling what Matt shared in the above statement and looking at the passage in Exodus, what should be the purpose of Sabbath? How might this change your understanding of rest and its purpose?

3 Someone read **Matthew 11:25-12:8** in their Bible

What do we learn about the character of Jesus from this passage?

In taking up Jesus' yoke and learning from Him, what kind of rest is He promising you will find?

The Jewish people struggled under an enormous load of religious expectations and legalities that were laid on them by their religious leaders. Jesus, on the other hand, was offering them a life of freedom. While following Him still requires work, it is work that is motivated by love for Jesus and a desire to serve Him. In asking us to take up His yoke, Jesus invites us to travel through life at His side, learning from Him how to shoulder the weight of life.

How is Sabbath meant to help us remember God's sovereignty over our lives and everything we oversee?

LIVE IT OUT (DISCUSS HOW YOU CAN LIVE OUT THE TRUTHS YOU JUST OBSERVED IN SCRIPTURE)

1 **Do you work so you can rest, or do you rest so you can work? It is reparation or preparation? How have you developed that perspective?**

2 **How would you describe the difference between resting (leisure rest) and resting with God (Sabbath rest)?**

3 **Considering what Sabbath rest really means, is there anything that makes you hesitant about observing the Sabbath this way? How can we resolve any hesitancy so that we can follow Jesus' command about observing the Sabbath?**

4 **What will you do on an ongoing basis that focuses you on remembering and recognizing God as master of your time, those you care for, and all that you own?**

CLOSING PRAYER

Matt shared that our frustration, exhaustion, and disappointment often come from the same root—shouldering the weight of life following anyone or anything but Jesus. Take a few moments to “rest in Him” together before you wrap up your night together. Give the opportunity for anyone to pray, thanking Jesus for His gracious love He shows to us and asking Him to show us how to carry the weight of everything we deal with in our lives.

NEXT WEEK

“SIT WITH ME”

Next week, Pastor Matt will kick off a short two-week series about the value and need for us to develop the willingness to invite people to experience the love of Jesus we share together at CrossPoint and to walk with you as you live more like Jesus. Read through Luke 5:27-33 and come prepared to discuss what he shares on Sunday and what God challenges you with from that message.

PRAISE/PRAYER REQUESTS (TRY TO HAVE ONE OR A FEW PEOPLE PRAY FOR ONE TOPIC AT A TIME)

Use this space or the back of this paper to write the requests and find a way to share those with the group so you can be praying for each other during the week.

How to Use this Discussion Guide

The guide is meant to serve you and your group as you intentionally create a healthy environment for Gospel community, growing in friendship, and living like Jesus together. Use the guide as a tool to help your unique group.

With that in mind, please review the guide before your group meets to see if some content or questions might resonate more or less with your group. Don't feel pressure to read all the content during your group discussion or to hit on all the questions. The guide is not meant to be something you power through for the sake of completing. Pick the content from the guide you feel will help your group grow in Gospel community.

In addition, spend some time praying for your group each week, preparing your heart, and asking God for wisdom and guidance as you lead. We are praying for you too!

Visit cpmodesto.org/groupleaders to download the sermon discussion guide every week. Not in a Home Group, but want to be in one? Visit cpmodesto.org/homegroups and use the Home Group Finder!

COMMENTARY

GENESIS 2:1-3; 15-17

2:1-3 These verses bring to a conclusion the opening section of Genesis by emphasizing that God has completed the process of ordering creation. The repeated comment that God rested does not imply that He was weary from labor. The effortless ease with which everything is done in Ch. 1 suggests otherwise. Rather, the motif of God's resting hints at the purpose of creation. As reflected in various ancient Near Eastern accounts, divine rest is associated with temple building. God's purpose for the Earth is that it should become His dwelling place; it is not simply made to house His creatures. God's "activities" on this day (He finished, "rested," "blessed," "made it holy") all fit this delightful pattern. The concept of the Earth as a divine sanctuary, which is developed further in 2:4–25, runs throughout the whole Bible, coming to a climax in the future reality that the apostle John sees in his vision of a "new Heaven and a new Earth" in Rev. 21:1–22:5. God blessed the seventh day and made it holy (Gen. 2:3). These words provide the basis for the obligation that God placed on the Israelites to rest from their normal labor on the Sabbath day (see Ex. 20:8–11). There is no evening-followed-by-morning refrain for this day, prompting many to conclude that the seventh day still continues (which seems to underlie John 5:17; Heb. 4:3–11).

2:15-17 The Hebrew word translated as "placed" literally means, "caused to rest"; this pre-sin state of rest anticipates the "rest" ("relief"; 5:29) that would again come to humanity because of righteous Noah, as well as the rest that God

would again give Israel following its episode of calf worship (Ex 32:1-21; 33:14). As a being created in God's image, Adam, like God, was to be a worker. Without the taint of sin, work was an undiluted blessing. The verb translated here as "work" literally means "serve." Adam's second task in the garden was to watch over it. The verb is used elsewhere to refer to the action of God toward His people (Ps 121:3-4).

MATTHEW 11:25-12:8

11:25-26. The original context of verses 25-30 is unknown, but Matthew includes them here to show that despite the growing opposition to Jesus, discipleship remains the only alternative that satisfies the deepest of human longings. In what is apparently a public prayer, Jesus praises God. He again reveals His intimate relationship with God as His Father but also underlines God's sovereignty as Master of the universe. The increasingly polarized response to Jesus in fact forms part of God's eternal plan. "These things" refers to the overall significance of Jesus' mission.

"Infants" refers to those who respond to God by acknowledging their dependence on Him. The wise and learned, as the opposite category of persons, must therefore represent those who feel they have no need for God. Jesus does not contrast "wise" versus "stupid," but He does declaim a godless intellectualism.

11:27. If verses 25-26 claim that humility is a prerequisite for receiving God's revelation, verse 27 adds that one cannot come to God without accepting Christ. All things are left unspecified but probably carry the sense of all authority. Clearly Jesus and God have a unique relationship. He is God's Son in a different sense than believers are God's children (John 1:12).

11:28-30. Jesus now appeals for a response to His revelation. All may come, at least all who hurt and who recognize their spiritual need. The "infants" (v. 25) will accept Him and thus demonstrate their election (v. 27). The "wise and learned" (v. 25) are precisely those who reject His call and thus show they were not chosen. The distinction between the two categories of individuals is therefore not intellectual but volitional. "Weary and burdened" reflects the daily labor of carrying a pack on one's back. Tired workers need refreshment and renewal (cf. Jer 6:16); Jesus equates the Christian life with spiritual rest. In describing His provision of this rest, Jesus borrows imagery from the plowing of fields. Like the yoke that couples oxen together, discipleship does not exempt one from work but makes it manageable. Jews commonly spoke of taking on the yoke of the Torah to refer to the acceptance of the stipulations of the law. But, as the Sermon on the Mount has made plain, Jesus calls people not to the law, but to Himself.

"Learn" echoes the exhortation of rabbinic instruction. No doubt, like many of the Jewish teachers, Jesus is gentle and humble. But unlike them, Christ offers work that is refreshing and good because it brings salvation. Christ's yoke is thus light. None of this implies that Jesus' "greater righteousness," as illustrated in the Sermon on the Mount, is not extremely challenging or demanding. Jesus' requirements are no less stringent than those of the Jewish teachers, but they can be accomplished more readily because of the strength Christ provides through the Holy Spirit. Jesus did not escape the hard life, but He could experience rest and refreshment in its midst. Christians are not promised freedom from illness or calamity, but they may experience God's sustaining grace so that they are not crushed or driven to despair (2 Cor 4:8-9). By way of contrast, most Jews found the interpretations of the law imposed on them by their leaders increasingly burdensome.

12:1. pluck heads of grain. The edges of a field were not normally harvested, so that the poor and hungry, foreigners, orphans, and widows could gather food for themselves (see Lev. 19:9; 23:22). This law showed the compassion of God for those in need.

12:2. Pharisees. A laymen's fellowship, popular with the common people and connected to local synagogues, chiefly characterized by adherence to extensive extrabiblical traditions, which they rigorously obeyed as a means of applying the law to daily life.

12:4. ate the bread of the Presence. Twelve loaves of bread, representing God's covenant with the 12 tribes of Israel, were to be baked and placed in the tabernacle on each Sabbath as an offering. The bread was only to be eaten by the priests (Lev. 24:5–9), but Scripture does not condemn David for eating the bread during his escape from Saul. The law was intended to serve God's people, rather than God's people being intended to serve the law (cf. Mark 2:27).

12:5. The fact that priests, in carrying out their duties, had to work on (and thus “profane”) the Sabbath, but were guiltless in doing so, shows that God made allowances within the law.

12:6. something greater. The Sabbath points to Christ (see v. 8) and to the “rest” He gives from the impossible task of earning salvation by good works (cf. 11:28).

12:7. I desire mercy, and not sacrifice. is a quotation from Hos. 6:6. “Sacrifice” summarized observance of religious rituals. More important to God was “mercy” (the Septuagint rendering of Hb. *hesed*, meaning “steadfast love”), which would have led the Pharisees to care for these sinners as Jesus did.

12:8. the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath. Jesus does not challenge the Sabbath law itself but rather the Pharisees' interpretation of it. As Messiah, Jesus authoritatively interprets every aspect of the law (cf. 5:17–48) and here points out the Pharisees' blindness to the actual intent of the Sabbath—to bring rest and well-being. This final argument in response to the Pharisees' challenge (12:2) is the decisive argument—that because of Who Jesus is, He has the authority to interpret the law.