

### Introduction

- Chick-fil-a - New diet - haven't had a friend chicken sandwich in a couple of months. BUT... still love Chik-fil-a. We haven't broken up. Closed on Sunday - Truett Cathy's commitment to his faith costs Chik-fil-a 1.2 billion in revenue each year. But he said, "I believe God honors our decisions and sets before us unexpected opportunities to do greater work for Him because of our loyalty."
- What about you? Do you honor the Sabbath? Or, for most of us, what does it even mean to honor the Sabbath day?
- Most of us are restless. Overly busy - work long hours, study for exams, kids in sports, theatre, etc. We often don't realize how being overly busy with life robs us of spiritual vitality. We're always in a hurry, and in our hurry, we fail to make time for what's most important: our relationship with God. Dallas Willard wrote: "Hurry is the great enemy of spiritual life in our day. You must ruthlessly eliminate hurry from your life." (ON SCREEN)
- We need rest, and we feel it. However, we need more than a day off where we can catch up on our sleep. We need rest for our souls. We need a regular rhythm in life where we pull away and let our souls rest and be refreshed in the Lord.
- Embedded in God's Law is an invitation for God's people to rest in Him - to take to refocus and realign our lives around God's Will.
- Three reasons why you need a Sabbath Day:

## You need to remember who owns time.

- Five times in the Book of Exodus the Hebrews are given instruction about a Sabbath day. [Exodus 16:23](#) - told to gather enough manna so they won't have to gather on the Sabbath. Fourth command in [Exodus 20:8-11](#). [Exodus 23:12-19](#). [Exodus 31:2-18](#), and [Exodus 35:1-3](#). The Sabbath day was obviously a big deal to God.
- Sabbath looked back to creation and redemption.
- OT scholar Walter Brueggemann described the Sabbath Day as an act of resistance - an act of rebellion against Pharaoh and his empire. "We're not going to give in to a life of work like you forced on us in Egypt."
- vs. 12 - One day a week where everything rests - you rest, your animals rest, your servants rest, the foreigner among you rests, the land rests - in order to be refreshed.
- Sabbath rest established in [Genesis 1](#). God creates for six days and on the seventh God rests - He rests from His creative work and delights in Himself and what He has created. Adam and Eve live in the rest of God in the garden, but they sin. Exiled from the garden to a life of hard work. Sabbath day is God graciously inviting Israel to participate in a weekly reminder that God is restoring His presence with His people. The Sabbath is a reminder that God wants His people to live in His presence and enjoy Him.
- Sabbath = to stop. A radical idea - take a day each week and stop your work. Especially radical idea an agrarian society. There are animals to take care of and land to work. Imagine the preparation that had to take place during the week just so could have one day when your worked ceased.

- A radical idea in our modern culture - take a day to rest? It seems like we need a day to catch up on the work we haven't gotten done during the week - housework, yard work, errands, etc.
- Sabbath is NOT simply a day off, but a day of ceasing that reminds you that ultimately time doesn't belong to you and you can trust God with your time. We've historically celebrated Sunday as our "sabbath" or "The Lord's Day." A day to remember the work of Christ.
- We think things like, "How am I going to spend my time this week?" Or, "How am I going to spend my time off?" The Sabbath is a reminder that the Creator of all, and even created time. Time belongs to Him. Any time you have is ultimately a gift from God. In His wisdom, He has determined that He wants you to spend focused time enjoying Him one day a week.
- Understanding that time is a gift from God helps us remember:
- **Time is not yours to waste.** Hard to enjoy time with God when you've wasted time in other areas - when you've been lazy instead of diligent to get done what needs to be done so you don't have to stress about what needs to be done on the Lord's Day. We're the most entertained generation to ever live - some of us waste too much time on social media, television, etc. Enjoy those things, but are they the best use of your time?
- **Time is not yours to use for your profit.** Some of us are not time wasters but time hoarders. We use every spare moment to work so we can make more so we can have what our heart desires - bigger house, bigger car, longer vacations - thinking those things we're working for will give our hearts rest only to find out that they don't. Work hard, but God did not give you the gift of time just so you can work endless hours to build your bank account.
- **Time belongs to God and is given to you to give away.** Just like God calls you to give away your financial resources, He also calls you to give

away your time. Give away your time for your relationship with God - one day a week focus on enjoying God and becoming who God wants you to be. And, according to this text, give time away to others.

- How are you using the time that God has given you? The Sabbath is a weekly reminder that your life is lived on God's time.

## You need to remember the limitations of God's creation.

- You live in a very needy world. You are needy - you need rest. You need nourishment for your physical body. You need nourishment for your soul.
- So do people you know. In ancient Israel, the Sabbath wasn't only a day of the week. There was also a Sabbath year for your land. Every seventh year, the Hebrews were to let their land rest and let it go uncultivated. This wasn't so that land could have a break so the nutrients of the ground could somehow become richer. It was done for the sake of the poor and wild animals. It was a way of caring for God's created beings - both people and animals.
- Remember, compassion embedded in the Law of God. Whatever grew on the land in the seventh year was for the poor to eat. The poor didn't eat once every seven years. It was probably staggered throughout Israel. Not everyone rested their land during the same year, but every year someone's land was resting and providing food for the poor.
- To let your land rest on the seventh year meant a lot of hard work so that you stored up enough for your own family so that your land could rest.
- Every 50th year a year of Jubilee ([Leviticus 25](#)) - after seven cycles of seven. All slaves set free, all land returned to original family owners, all land rested, and all debts forgiven. A year where everything was

restored pointing to the day that God would ultimately restore everything.

- What does this have to do with Sabbath? God wants all people to find rest in Him, and God wants you to point people to the rest they can have in Him.
- You live in a very needy world, how does God want to use you to meet the needs of others?
- **You need to make time to meet physical needs.** Most of us think of Sabbath as a day for me - “I need downtime. I need to unplug.” OR, you’re selfish with time in general. “My time belongs to me.” But... How can you give time to others? The OT Law is filled with commands to be a blessing to the poor and needy. That’s compassion. Instead of judging those who are suffering, how are we making time to bless the poor and suffering? How are you volunteering time intentionally to help so that through your helping people meet their physical needs you might point them to the One who is the hope for their greatest need?
- **You need to make time to meet spiritual needs.** Sharing the Gospel, making disciples, praying with people, helping people to grow in their faith are all ways to help people find rest for their souls.
- **You need to ask God to help you be aware of divine interruptions.** In God’s sovereignty, He will put opportunities before you so you can be a blessing to others. Are you sensitive to His work around you? “God, help me to not be so consumed with spending time on me that I miss the opportunity to bless others with the time you have given me.”
- Yes, you need a Sabbath, but you also need to help others find Sabbath rest in a relationship with God.

## You need to remember the rhythm of worship.

- God not only set aside a day for the Hebrews to remember Him, He also set aside festivals for the people to remember His work.
- If you were an ancient Hebrews your year was regularly interrupted by festivals that called you to remember what God had done for you and worship Him because of it.
- Festival of Unleavened bread - connected to the Passover - reminder of how they left Egypt in haste and how God had delivered them.
- Festival of Harvest - Early summer, a month or two after the Festival of Unleavened Bread (also known as firstfruits). When grain was ready to harvest, take the first sheaf of wheat and wave it before the Lord ([Leviticus 23:9-11](#)). A way of acknowledging God's provision - the harvest came from God and trusting God would provide full harvest. Also called Feast of Weeks because on the fiftieth day after the festival of harvest people would bring an offering to God.
- Festival of Ingathering - End of the year - took place after final harvest. Connected to feast of tabernacles where people would live in tents for a week made of leaves and branches. ([Lev. 23:41-43](#)). Looked back on God's saving work in history - reminded them of their story of salvation - their exodus experience in the wilderness and how God provided for them.
- The life of the Hebrews centered around rhythms of worship - a day a week to set aside to worship, and festivals that regularly reminded them of God's provision and redemptive work.
- All three festivals point to Jesus. Jesus is the Passover Lamb who forgives us of our sin (leaven a metaphor for sin in NT). Jesus is the firstfruits of our resurrection ([1 Cor. 15:22-23](#)). In Acts, great harvest of souls on Pentecost ([Acts 2](#)) - Feast of weeks! Feast of Ingathering - Reminder of God with His people in the wilderness providing - God with

us in Christ - providing us with salvation. At the end of time, a final ingathering of God's people into His eternal presence.

- The OT Law has continual reminders that God wants His people to be consumed with worship of Him. For you this morning:
- **See the Sabbath as a promise you're invited into rather than a command to obey.** We're new covenant people. Jesus is our sabbath. We don't find rest in a day of the week but in a person ([Matthew 11:28-30](#)). [Colossians 2:16-17](#) - Sabbath a shadow - the substance is Christ. He is restoring all things.
- Find rest in Him today for your weary soul by turning from your sin and turning to Him believing that He died and rose again to restore you to the Father. Your soul will never find rest until you give your life to Him. The OT Sabbath laws a reminder that you were created for a relationship with God.
- Someday, we will enjoy uninterrupted Sabbath. When Jesus returns and sin and death are completely done away with, and we are in the presence of God - we will finally be at perfect rest with God enjoying Him forever.
- **Prepare for a Sabbath rest each week.** In the meantime, get a taste of what's coming by every week taking a Sabbath day. Plan it. Prepare for it. Set it aside on your calendar. Work hard six days so you can rest on the seventh. Do not give in to the lie of the world that says that every day is yours, do what you want with it. Every day belongs to God, give Him a day to let Him refresh your soul. Acknowledge that you need rest.
- **As you take a weekly Sabbath, do what fills your soul with real, deep joy.**
  - Pray that God will help you rest.
  - Be with God's people. Beware of what takes you away from God's people.

- Limit the screens or turn them off.
- Enjoy your family. Reconnect. Talk about the Lord.
- Enjoy creation. Take a walk, go to the beach. Rest in the good world that God has given you to enjoy.
- Read a book to help you think about the character of God.