

October 2023 Bible Study- "God's Given Gift of Rest"

Bible Study for Sabbath

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Scripture Reference: Hebrew 4:1, 9-11

Introduction

I'm not sure if you have trouble observing Sabbath in your daily lives? According to research based on Lifeway Research, seven in 10 churchgoers take their Sabbath on Sunday. Few take it on Saturday (5 percent), Friday (1 percent) or Monday (1 percent). For 23 percent, they don't take a day of rest. I can testify that I am one of the 23% that typically do not take the time to have a sabbath day of rest. If I do take a day off from the business of the Corps, I will find something else that needs to be done. Anything from housework to shopping. I am good at finding something to do to keep me busy. In this Bible study we are going to explore what "Sabbath" really means and by reading scripture we will find out why God says it is so important to practice it in our daily weekly routine.

Take a moment to read Hebrews 4: 1,9-11 (NIV)

A Sabbath-Rest for the People of God

4 Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it.

⁹There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; ¹⁰for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their works,^[a] just as God did from his. ¹¹Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience.

According to Britannica.com the Sabbath is defined as

"The Sabbath. The Jewish Sabbath (from Hebrew shavat, "to rest") is observed throughout the year on the seventh day of the week—Saturday. According to biblical tradition, it commemorates the original seventh day on which God rested after completing the creation."

Sabbath was introduced to us from the very beginning when God created the Earth. We read in the book of Genesis that God created the heavens and the earth in six periods of time, which He called days: "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it" (Genesis 2:2–3).

The factor, or the thing that the Sabbath was pointing to, is Jesus Christ. He is our rest. It doesn't matter whether you go to corporate worship on Saturday or on Sunday, or your choice of a day during the week, because that's not what really matters. What really matters is that you find your rest in Christ!

We take sabbath to acknowledge that we need God, we need time dedicated to him. A time to rest. This doesn't mean that all we are to do on a sabbath are pray and sleep, though prayer and rest are central and needed. It can also be time with family or hobbies. So many times,

we're burning the candle at both ends. So busy with work that we don't stop to really appreciate God's presence in our lives.

Let's Read Luke 10:28-42 NIV

At the Home of Martha and Mary

³⁸ As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. ³⁹ She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"

⁴¹ "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, ⁴² but few things are needed—or indeed only one.^[a] Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

In these we read that account of Mary and Martha. Martha just going and going on her own trying to make things just right to the point frustration. For most of that have a servant heart that is very easy to get caught up in. Keeping ourselves bust serving others and making sure everything is done in all our power to help and please others. Jesus reminds Martha that Mary had chosen what was right, to rest at Jesus' feet, to bask in his presence and his love.

Sabbath is an act of humility before the Lord.

Matthew 5:3 (NIV) says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

"Being poor in spirit", we are like paupers, relying on God and only God to fill us. It is a sin to think we can just keep going and going without acknowledging God and our need for his help. It's silly for us to think that we are too busy for God, the one who gives us all of our provisions in the first place. Sabbath goes beyond just one day as well. We need dedicated time daily to rest in Him.

Even Jesus needed time with his father, who are we to act as though we don't. Make a plan today, put it on your calendar, in your day timer. Schedule time for God, be intentional about it. Start learning also to say no to others if that is your crutch to not taking time to rest in God. This is of central importance to our spiritual health. Make a date with God, pray to Him, take in his word and grow in him daily. May God bless you as we all go through this great adventure, we call life with a great Savior who never fails us.

Questions to reflect on:

1. Are you taking a weekly sabbath?
2. Are you taking time daily for the Lord?
3. What can you do differently in your daily/weekly schedule that will allow you to take a Sabbath?
4. What does God have for me in my day of Sabbath, through this day of rest?
5. What do I have for Him in my Sabbath day, through this day of rest?
6. How will this be lived out with others in gratitude, joy and celebration?