

Deeply Rooted in the Discipline of Sabbath

Enjoying the Sabbath

Everyday as part of my ensemble, I wear a Fitbit, to monitor how many steps I take, my active minutes, reminders to move every hour, my heart rate, and even how much I sleep.

My Fitbit runs on battery and every once in a while I need to remove it from my wrist, lock it into the charger, and allow it to rest, refill and recharge. Although I check my Fitbit often throughout the day, I have a tendency to not check how much battery is left. I've learned the lesson the hard way that it cannot run forever without recharging the battery. It probably can go longer than a week, but I have developed the habit to not wear it to bed one night a week. Every Saturday night, I have developed the rhythm of not wearing it to bed, so it too can have a Sabbath—a chance to rest, and recharge.

For me personally, I can go 21 days. Three weeks is how long I can go without taking a day off, before my body completely shuts down and forces me to rest. How do I know this? I have pushed myself too many times (especially during the busy holiday season) and not taken the Lord's invitation to set aside one day as a Sabbath. After three weeks my body rebels—usually with a cold, migraine or I literally drop and have to sleep.

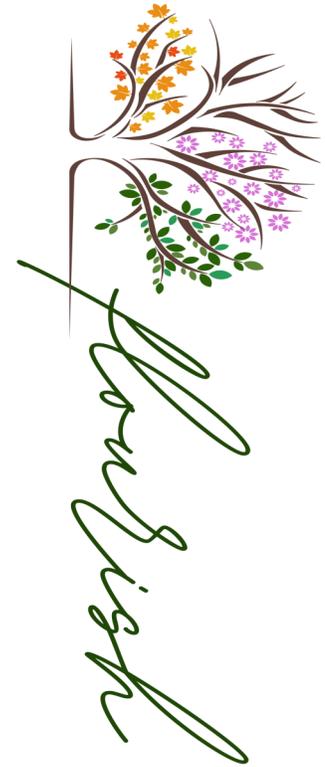
It has taken me a long time to realize that the Sabbath isn't merely a command to be obeyed, but it is truly a gift to enjoy. When God created the heavens and the earth in six days, He finished the week by resting on the seventh day; it was not because He was tired and needed a nap. He did this to set as an example for us, to establish a healthy rhythm. He's God—and despite holding the Universe together He could take a day and rest. You can't tell me that you are busier than God?

Sabbath is God's gift to us—one day a week, to set aside the daily routines, tasks and responsibilities and to reconnect to Him and to others.

We all know work can become all-consuming, and God is giving us one day to stop, and let work be (it will still be there tomorrow). Sabbath is a day to rest, to go at a slower pace, to spend extra time in worship, prayer and the Word, connecting with God and His people.

Jesus offers a beautiful invitation in Matthew 11:28, ***"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."*** For so many years, I fought this invitation and resisted the idea of the Sabbath. But now, I realize what a beautiful invitation and gift it is—to enjoy a day with God, resting in Him.

Just like my Fitbit, I have to choose once a week to stop my daily routines and patterns, and choose to plug in, to reconnect with my heavenly Father.



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Flourishing in Relationships: Conversation Starters

Use these questions to guide your conversations with friends as you talk about Sabbath and rest.

- ◆ What are activities that you find restful and relaxing? Do you find time to enjoy them on a regular basis?
- ◆ Are you good at resting?
- ◆ Why do you think it is so hard for us to slow down and rest?
- ◆ Did you go to church as a child? If so, What is one of your favorite memories of attending church?
- ◆ When you hear the word Sabbath, what comes to mind? Does Sabbath have a good or bad meaning to you?
- ◆ What is your favorite thing about corporate worship?
- ◆ If you don't observe Sabbath, what are your reasons for not observing it?
- ◆ If you have developed a rhythm of observing Sabbath, what advice would you give to someone who is wanting to begin?

“Rest is a weapon given to us by God. The enemy hates it because he wants us to be stressed and occupied.” Elisabeth Elliott

Additional Resources

Check out our website for more resources to help you flourish in the discipline of Sabbath Rest: <https://usw-womensministries.org/>

Bible Study: *God's Given Gift of Rest* by Major Karen Schmig

Craft Idea: *Sabbath Smash Book* by Captain Amber Ohl

Devotional: *Take a Sabbath Rest*, by Captain Ryan Boyd.

Check out this great worship song that reminds us to be still in His love:

Still by Rend Collective:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WqiVqsUlc4I>

A Prayer for Sabbath

God has built into the rhythm of our week a day called Sabbath, a day of intentional rest, reflection, and worship. Sabbath is good for our bodies and our souls.

- It reminds us of Eden: we rest because God rested, to enjoy what He made.
- It reminds us of Egypt: we rest to remember how God liberates us from slavery.
- It reminds us of Eternity: we rest to look forward to the eternal rest we will enjoy with God.

A prayer for you to pray on the Sabbath:

God of rest, today **I make the active choice**, to enter into your rest, and to join with you in delighting in this good world you have made, and dreaming of the perfect world you will remake. **I choose to tune out**, of demands and deadlines, of performance pressures, or flickering screens, of that which robs my soul of joy, and the ways in which the world seeks to define and shape my identity. **I choose to tune in**, to your affirmation and love, to the celebration of freedom, to worship and your word, to the enjoyment of that which fills my soul with joy, and reminds me of my identity in Christ, as a deeply loved child of God.

<https://christchurchlondon.org/2021/05/a-prayer-for-sabbath/>



Spend time reading God's Word as a way to celebrate the Sabbath.

Flourishing in the Word

This month's Bible readings will focus on what the Bible says about the Sabbath. As you read each passage, note what you learn about the Sabbath.

Oct 1	Genesis 1:1-2:3	Oct 17	Ezekiel 20:1-26
Oct 2	Exodus 16:1-36	Oct 18	Matthew 11:25-12:8
Oct 3	Exodus 20:1-26	Oct 19	Matthew 12:9-14
Oct 4	Exodus 31:12-17	Oct 20	Mark 1:21-28
Oct 5	Exodus 35:1-3	Oct 21	Mark 1:29-39
Oct 6	Leviticus 23:1-3	Oct 22	Mark 2:23-3:6
Oct 7	Leviticus 25:1-7, 20-22	Oct 23	Luke 4:14-30
Oct 8	Numbers 28:1-10	Oct 24	Luke 6:1-11
Oct 9	Deuteronomy 5:1-21	Oct 25	Luke 13:10-17
Oct 10	Deuteronomy 15:1-18	Oct 26	Luke 14:1-23
Oct 11	Nehemiah 13:15-22	Oct 27	John 5:1-24
Oct 12	Psalms 92:1-15	Oct 28	John 7:14-24
Oct 13	Psalms 95:1-11	Oct 29	John 9:1-16
Oct 14	Isaiah 56:1-8	Oct 30	Hebrews 3:1-19
Oct 15	Isaiah 58:1-14	Oct 31	Hebrews 4:1-11
Oct 16	Jeremiah 17:19-27		

Flourishing Ideas from the Territory

Ideas for Fall Fun

Ogden, UT had a pick a pumpkin meeting. Everyone picked a pumpkin and painted it with all the things we wanted to do to help others and ways they can show how thankful they are. They were painted at the beginning of the month and displayed each meeting and shared stories of meeting their goals.

Santa Fe, NM had a "Friendsgiving Dinner."

Turlock, CA enjoyed a "Great Pumpkin" presentation.

Tustin Ranch, CA ladies decorated pumpkins for the corps Thanksgiving luncheon.

Ideas for the Christmas Season

Hemet, CA had a charcuterie Christmas Contest. The ladies brought their versions of a charcuterie board to shared with the group. Some of the ladies teamed up and the creativity was off the charts.

Petersburg, AK watched the New Year Celebration from around the world on TV.

Ridgecrest, CA had a "12 feet of Christmas Charcuterie Table."

San Luis Obispo, CA had an end of the year celebration with a Pajama Party!

Seattle Temple, WA made vision boards. The ladies set new goals for the year and found pictures, verses or songs to help represent their goals. At the end everyone shared their vision boards.

Sitka, AK women "Rang and Sang" at a kettle site.

Washougal, WA had a bell ringing competition against the youth group. The women won!

Step Off the Hamster Wheel

Recently on The (IN) Courage Podcast (8/29/23) an article by Dorina Lazo Gilmore-Young was read. She had some great insight into rest and Sabbath. She pointed out that on the 6th day God created humans, and then on the 7th day, God rested from all the work He had done. “That means the first day on earth for humans was a day of rest not work. God created us to rest. Full stop.” She goes on to say, “In rest, we are invited to delight in the Garden, to create in community, to cook up feasts and dare to dream. Our work then flows out of that rest.” She point out the following things about rest:



“Rest helps us untether our souls from the hamster wheel pace our culture glorifies. Rest helps us change our speed from stiving and sprinting to slowing and noticing. Rest highlights our idols and distractions and brings us back to the peace found only in our Creator’s arms. Rest gives time to abide in Christ, rather than chase after the affirmation of others.”

She then asks some challenging questions, that each of us should consider:

- When is the last time you fully rested?
- Do you give your soul space to breathe?
- When have you granted yourself permission to take time away from the treadmill of productivity?

Check out the podcast: <https://theincouragepodcast.buzzsprout.com/1753166/13466013-dorina-lazo-gilmore-young-step-off-the-hamster-wheel?t=0>

“By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work.” Genesis 2:2



10 Ways to Celebrate Sabbath

1. Be creative in some way today: draw, write, work on a hobby.
2. Don’t check your work e-mails on Sunday; they will still be there on Monday. Also, hold off of household chores for the day.
3. Enjoy nature. Take a walk. Simply sit outside. Connect with God as you enjoy His creation.
4. Go at a slower pace. No need to rush.
5. Listen to your favorite Christian songs. Sing loudly and if moved, even dance.
6. Make attending a church worship service every week a priority.
7. Plan meals the day before. Do any preparation ahead of time, so that Sabbath meal prep is quick and easy.
8. Play board games as a family. Enjoy time together.
9. Read a book for fun.
10. Take a Sunday afternoon nap.