

## **PRACTICING FAITH: 4 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO CHANGE YOUR LIFE #4**

### **Tonight: "Finding REST in a Hurried World (Sabbath-keeping)"**

#### **Introduction**

**Some Questions for Reflection:** How many of you are tired? How many of you find your life is "busy"? Do you feel like you are always on the run and in a hurry? How or what do you do to "rest"?

**Introducing Sabbath (Shabbath-stop, cease, desist, rest):** When you hear the word, what comes to mind? How has the Church talked about and practiced Sabbath throughout its history?

**Sabbath is about the stewardship of our time...**how we honor God and live well with the time we are given.

#### **I. Biblical Background (Old and New Testaments)**

**A. Genesis 1 & 2 Creation:** "God saw all that he had made and it was very good. It was the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. On the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. God blessed the seventh day and made it holy because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done." (Note: that days were not marked from midnight to midnight, but from sundown to sundown or 6pm to 6pm. Also Sabbath was the last day of the week not the first day of the week)

**B. The Old Testament Law (The 10 Commandments Exodus 20):** "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six Days you shall labor and do your work but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord. On it you shall not do any work...because in six days the Lord made the heavens, the earth, the sea and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy." (Also see Exodus 31:13)

**C. The Old Testament Practice/Pattern:** Exodus 16 (The Giving of Manna and The Sabbath); Exodus 35 (The Tabernacle and The Sabbath) and Numbers 15:32ff (Sabbath Breaking)...The Old Testament prophets speak to Israel's failure to keep Sabbath and thus dishonoring YHWH (GOD) as one of the reasons they were in exile and no longer inhabiting the Promised Land.

**D. Sabbath Rhythm of Time:** (Leviticus 25) A Sabbath year (the seventh year) and Jubilee (the fiftieth year)

**E. Jesus and The Sabbath:** Jesus practiced it as did his disciples (Luke 14:6); Jesus affirms that the Sabbath is for human beings and that He is the Lord of the Sabbath (Mark 2:23-27). Jesus and his followers are also often criticized by the Pharisees for breaking or refining the Sabbath (Matthew 12:1-14, Mark 2:23-28, 3:1-6, Luke 6:1-11, 13:10-17, 14:1-6, John 5:1-18)

**F. The Early Church and The Sabbath:** Those Christians who were Jews continued to practice Sabbath (Acts 13:14, 17:1-2, 18:1-4) and also met together for Christian worship on Sundays (Acts 20:7, 1 Corinthians 16:2), but Gentile Christians, after some clarifications and teachings by the Apostle Paul (Romans 14:5-6, Colossians 2:16) and The Jerusalem Council (Acts 15) were not held to follow strict Sabbath laws but were to continue to follow Sabbath practice as the Lord's Day...Saturday vs Sunday vs no day

**G. The Sabbath and Eternity (the end of time):** Hebrews 4:1-13 and Hebrews 10:19-25)...time in the Bible (chronos and Kairos)...History (forward movement towards a finality with seasons and rhythms of time).

**II. If God Himself practiced Sabbath, The Old Testament People of God practiced Sabbath, The Early Church and even the Church up until the middle-later 20<sup>th</sup> century practiced Sabbath, WHAT HAPPENED AND WHY?**

**III. An Invitation to Practice Sabbath Today...Sabbath-Keeping vs. Sabbatarianism**

A. A Weekly Day of Rest, Re-creation and Worship...Times of Rest, Re-creation and worship.

B. Freedom from the tyranny of time...a time to remember and a time to observe/practice

C. Loved for who we are and not just for what we do...

D. A Reorientation of Your Rhythms of Life...What do you need to stop doing?

E. Some Ideas...

\*\*\*Cease from what is your work. From multi-tasking. From technology or machines. From media. From shopping. From competition. From talking. From anxiety.

\*\*\*Do/Be that which is worship of God AND re-creative...Worship with The People of God. Focus on God and God's Story [Creation, Salvation, Final Redemption] Rest/Sleep. Engage the Senses. Play. Acts of mercy and healing.

\*\*\*Good Questions: Does it promote rest and relaxation? Does it bring joy and delight to you and/or others? Does it give you a deeper sense of God's love, care and holiness?

**Don Postema:** What happens in Sabbath-Keeping? Rest. Refreshment. Receptivity. Release. Refocus.

**Isaiah 58:13-14:** God's Invitation to "Sabbath Delight"

**Matthew 11:28-12:14:** Jesus' Invitation to "find rest" in him.

**James 1:25:** "Look (listen and do) into the Perfect Law (Sabbath) that gives freedom and continue in it and you will be blessed in all you do."

\***Sabbath Keeping: Finding Freedom in The Rhythms of Rest** by Lynne Baab

\***Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal, and Delight in Our Busy Lives** by Wayne Muller

\***Sabbath by** Rabbi Abraham Heschel

\***Sabbath as Resistance: Saying No to the Culture of Now** by Walter Brueggemann

\***The Rest of God: Restoring Your Soul by Restoring Sabbath** by Mark Buchanan

\***Keeping the Sabbath Wholly-Ceasing, Resting, Embracing, Feasting** by Marva Dawn

\***Mudhouse Sabbath-An Invitation to a Life of Discipline** by Lauren Winner