



"The Sabbath" - February 1, 2026
Sermon by Pastor Tom VanAntwerp

Group Leader Notes

In a world that celebrates constant productivity and relentless busyness, many of us find ourselves exhausted, distracted, and spiritually depleted. We don't stop working because we hate the destination—we stop because we've run out of fuel. In this message, Pastor Tom VanAntwerp invites us to rediscover one of God's most overlooked and life-giving gifts: the Sabbath. From the opening pages of Scripture, we see that rest is not an afterthought—it is woven into creation itself. God works, and then God rests. Not because He is tired, but because rest completes good work. And as people made in God's image, we are invited to live into that same rhythm. This sermon explores how Sabbath is far more than taking a day off or catching up on sleep. True Sabbath is an intentional entering into the rest of God—a rest that restores our souls, realigns our priorities, and reshapes our understanding of who we are. In this message, you'll reflect on: Why rest is essential to faithful and sustainable work The biblical rhythm of work and rest (the 6–1 pattern) Why stopping work doesn't always mean we are truly rested How Sabbath helps us rediscover delight, trust "enough," and remember God's story over the world's stories How Jesus Himself modeled rhythms of prayerful rest in the midst of demanding ministry Sabbath reminds us that we are not defined by productivity, success, or output. We are image-bearers before we are workers. Loved before, we are useful. Rested before we are sent. If you feel burned out... If life feels hurried and noisy... If your work has started shaping your identity more than God's grace... This message is an invitation to slow down, trust God more deeply, and live your life—and your work—out of a place of rest.

Main Scripture Reading: Genesis 2:2–3

Group Discussion

Begin in prayer before reading and discussing the text.

- **What makes Sabbath rest difficult for you personally?** Pastor Tom talks about how we often resist rest because of productivity, distraction, or discomfort with slowing down. Which of these resonates most with you, and why?
- **Jesus withdrew to pray even when everyone was looking for Him.** What does this reveal about priorities, and how might following Jesus' example reshape the way you respond to constant demands and expectations?
- **How does Sabbath help reframe your identity beyond your job or productivity?** The sermon emphasizes that our primary calling is to bear and restore God's image, not just

fulfill our “contingent calling” (our job). How could regular rhythms of rest help you live out that deeper calling?

Let's Pray

<https://youtu.be/OLdBA3z5yR8?si=BjMe5ddPBPwGgENp>

