

Sabbath
Psalm 65
November 26, 2017

The 10 Commandments is found in Exodus 20:2-17 and again in Deuteronomy 5:6-21.
Let's name the 10 Commandments...

(2) Here, let me help you...

You shall have no other gods before Me.
You shall not make idols.
You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.
Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
Honor your father and your mother.
You shall not murder.
You shall not commit adultery.
You shall not steal.
You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
You shall not covet.

If we could get rid of one... which one of God's rules would we do away with?

Every rule... every commandment was given by God. They are all important!

So how many of you have disregarded the commandment of "Thou Shalt Not Murder?" any one? How about "Thou Shalt Not Steal?" Anyone? How about "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."

(3) If it is important not to murder and steal, don't you think it is also important to keep the Sabbath?

(4) Shabbat involves two interrelated commandments: to remember (zakhor) Shabbat, and to observe (shamor) Shabbat. It comes from the declaration in Exodus.

“For six days you may perform work, but the seventh day is a complete Sabbath, holy to the LORD ... it is an eternal sign that in six days, the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.” -Exodus 31:15-17

(5) In modern America, we take the five-day work-week so much for granted that we forget what a radical concept a day of rest was in ancient times. The weekly day of rest has no parallel in any other ancient civilization. In ancient times, leisure was for the wealthy and the ruling classes only, never for the serving or laboring classes. In addition, the very idea of rest each week was unimaginable. The Greeks thought Jews were lazy because they insisted on having a "holiday" every seventh day.

Most professing Christians accept Sunday as the New Testament Lord's Day. Muslims observe Friday. Jews observe Saturday.

(6) Even growing up in a Christian home, I noticed that Sundays were clearly different than the rest of the week. The day was slower, quieter, calmer. The day was sacred, with a cadence and rhythm all its own.

Yet somewhere and somehow, things changed. Weekends became about chores and errands, laundry and grocery shopping, emails and work projects. Sunday became just another workday, exacerbated by an addiction to technology and social media. Sundays—and by extension, the entire week—seemed to lose their serenity and healing quality. As a result, society has lost a sense of connection to family, to self, and to God.

Christine Organ writes, “Unlike the traditional Christian Sabbath or Jewish Shabbat, there are no hard and fast rules. Rather, the modern-day Sabbath is more personal and intentional. The modern Sabbath is about delegating a time to focus on what I have instead of searching for something new, a time to disconnect from work and technology in order to reconnect with family and friends, self, and God. It is a time to quiet the external noise so I can hear my own powerful internal voice.

(7) The modern Sabbath is an intentional effort to “turn off and tune in.” As a result, the modern-day Sabbath is also more personal than the traditional Sabbath.

So how is this sounding? Does this sound like something we all could do??

(8) STEPS

Day off? What is that?

I take a day off... is that the same?

I’m learning to take a Sabbath day with God.

I take a Sabbath day seriously.

So first of all, a day off is different than a Sabbath day.

(9) What do you do on your day off?? What did you do yesterday?

Chores

Errands

Laundry

Grocery shopping

Emails

Movie/TV

Packers

Work projects

How many found your weekend to be restful?

(10) What if, when God rested on the seventh day (and when He invited us to do the same), He had a good reason? What if there’s more to “observing the Sabbath” than checking in at church in the morning?

The Sabbath is a time of rest and intentional time with God. Sabbath is a time to “turn off and tune in”.

So what could you do during a day of Sabbath?

Tim Keller talks about these elements in terms of avocational activity:

(11) You need some contemplative rest. Prayer and worship are a critical part of Sabbath rest, from any perspective. Regular time for devotion, prayer, Scripture reading, and allowing God to speak to you and refresh your heart is what makes up the core of Sabbath.

(12) You need some recreational rest. The Puritans and others were rightly skeptical of recreations that required spending a great deal of money and time and exertion, because those types of recreations exhaust people. Be careful that recreation really refreshes. For example, I know some people who love to mow the lawn. They find the time to be relaxing and quiet to talk to God. Now when I am forced to mow the lawn, I am swearing the whole time. For me, mowing the lawn is not a Sabbath activity, for others, it is.

(13) You need to include aesthetic rest. Expose yourself to works of God's creation that refresh and energize you, and that you find beautiful. This may mean outdoor things. It may mean art—music, drama, and visual art. God looked around at the world He made and said "it was good", so aesthetic rest is necessary for participating in God's Sabbath fully.

So how do you implement a Sabbath with a house to run, people to feed, and activities to do?

(14) Plan ahead. Do the things you need to have done before your day of Sabbath. Block it out on the calendar so you can be intentional with that time.

I encourage you- set the tone for your family. Bring this idea up if you are not already setting aside a day for the Lord each week.

(15) By separating one day from the frenzied blur of the remaining six, by disconnecting from the frenetic pace of technology to reconnect with the sacredly simple, the modern-day Sabbath allows us to slow time and savor God's goodness. Find time this week to "turn off and tune in." Amen.