

Discussion Questions: Living in Freedom
4th Commandment: Keep the Sabbath Day Holy
Genesis 2:2-3 & Exodus 20:8

Drawn from the January 26, 2025 sermon by Dr. Jeff Chandler

Opener: Describe a typical Sunday in the home in which you grew up. What (if anything) set that day apart for the other days of the week?

Read Genesis 2:2-3 NIV

By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

Read Exodus 20:8-11 NIV

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. ¹¹ For in six days the Lord made the heavens and 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.

1. What do you think it means to keep the Sabbath Holy?

Read Mark 2:27 (New Living Translation)

Jesus said to them, "The Sabbath was made to meet the needs of people, and not people to meet the requirements of the Sabbath."

Some of the needs of people:

- a. To rest once a week
- b. To restore our souls
- c. To have time with family
- d. To have time with other believers

2. Which of these needs do you especially need met right now?

Read Hebrews 4:6-11 which describes the “rest” that God has provided for us

God’s rest is there for people to enter, but those who first heard this good news failed to enter because they disobeyed God. ⁷ So God set another time for entering his rest, and that time is today. God announced this through David much later in the words already quoted: “Today when you hear his voice, don’t harden your hearts.” ⁸ Now if Joshua had succeeded in giving them this rest, God would not have spoken about another day of rest still to come. ⁹ So there is a special rest still waiting for the people of God. ¹⁰ For all who have entered into God’s rest have rested from their labors, just as God did after creating the world. ¹¹ So let us do our best to enter that rest.

3. How do you best find a place of rest in God?

4. Why does faith play a part in entering that rest? Where do you need to trust most right now in what God has already done for you and give up control?

Practicing Sabbath – Here are some practical tips

- A. Begin by connecting with God. The Hebrew people called this “sanctifying the day,” setting it aside from the other six days. You could light two candles, or pray a Psalm or share a meal or begin with Sunday worship at your church. But have a clear ritual or moment with God that *begins* and *ends* your Sabbath time.
- B. If you can, spend part of the day with your family or friends who follow Jesus. You could throw a Sabbath meal or just spend unhurried time in conversation.
- C. Do whatever makes you come alive in God. Nap, read poetry, play basketball with your kids. Pursue whatever activities make you feel joyful, rested, and alive to God; whatever it is you do that makes heart spontaneously burst into gratitude and worship.
- D. Keep at it. Integrating Sabbath keeping into your life usually takes months or years, not weeks. Just start small and aim at joy.

5. How do you currently practice Sabbath or a day of rest? What new ideas or suggestions impressed you?

6. Where are you most tired? Physically? Mentally? Emotionally? Spiritually? What is the greatest drain on your energies?

7. What are the obstacles that get in the way of your practicing Sabbath? Either practically or emotionally? How might you eliminate some of these obstacles?

Group Prayer Time: Pray for one another that you will continue to go deeper with God, by taking time to rest in Him. Pray also for any needs people are facing in this time.

Here's a short guide to planning out your next Sabbath:

- When will you sabbath? (Include your start and end time)

- How will you mark the beginning and end of your sabbath time? (A ritual or liturgy or prayerful moment)

- What will you do with your devices?
- What do you need to do to prepare? (Grocery shopping, emails, errands, work tasks, phone calls, etc.)
- How will you include friends and family?
- What will you do to fill your heart with joy and peace?
- How can you create sabbath for those who have none?

Next week, February 2, pastor Jeff will cover “Honor your father and mother” and there will be discussion questions available in “Downloads” on the SCC website.