

Mar 26, 2016 (Easter Weekend)

Genesis 2:1-3

How To Rest: Sabbath & Simplicity

God Creates Rest

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Pre-Introduction:

- Today we're launching a brand new series... **How to Rest: Sabbath & Simplicity**
- *The Rest of God: Restoring Your Soul by Restoring Sabbath* by Mark Buchanan

Introduction: **(S#1)**

1. What's the first thing that pops into your head when I say "weekend"?
2. Do you think of... yard work, chores, groceries, emails, balancing your checkbook?
3. Or maybe you think of fun stuff... the beach, the pool, football, a hike, going to the movies, family?
4. Today we're talking about "Sabbath"—In the OT God gave Saturday to his people Israel for their rest.
5. Today many Christians and churches set aside Sunday as a day of rest.
6. I want you to think of Sabbath as one day in seven God gives you to rest, worship him, and play.
7. I have a confession—I've never been good at taking one whole day to rest, worship, and play.
8. The Sabbath is like getting into a hammock; I know it's supposed to feel great, but it just feels awkward.
9. For the Sabbath to work in our lives, we need to understand what God intended with this day of rest.

I. Finding rest begins with understanding God's greatness. **(Read v. 1) (S#2)**

A. All of creation shows God's power.

1. The first chapter of the Bible says God created everything out of nothing. (Gen 1:1)
2. The author of Genesis, Moses, explains the creation account to us in a 7-day format.
3. On the first day God calls light into being and separates it from the darkness.
4. On the second day God separates the sky and waters into two separate realms.
5. On the third day God brings forth dry land and vegetation.
6. On the fourth day God creates the sun, moon, and stars in the sky.
7. On the fifth day God creates fish and birds and on the sixth day land animals and humans.
8. This account shows God's absolute power (upcoming Genesis series in May will explain more).
9. God finishes creating "the heavens and the earth" which means he creates everything.
10. The phrase "their vast array" is "hosts" which means "angel armies" or "military troops".
11. Genesis 2:1 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts. (NASB) **(S#3)**
12. The Bible is saying that everything created in Genesis chapter one is under God's command.

B. This slide shows the "Top 5 Largest Armies" in the world. **(S#4)**

1. China - 2,285,000 | USA - 1,361,755 | India - 1,325,450 | N. Korea - 1,190,000 | Russia - 766,055
2. The nation with the biggest army get's to sleep the best at night.
3. Now I want to show you a picture of the size of God's army, the heavens and the earth. **(S#5)**
4. There are 10 billion observable galaxies in the universe with 100 billion stars in each.
5. Riders on chariots was a sign of military power in the Old Testament (Psalm 20:7). **(S#6)**
6. This is a picture of four galaxies clustering called the Auriga (The Charioteer).
7. We can rest in the knowledge that our God has the biggest army—one billion trillion stars.

(You would think that since God created everything to show his power, none of it needs rest.) (S#7)

C. God created everything to need rest.

1. This passage comes before the fall when all of humanity chose not to trust God.
2. Both the perfect heavenly sphere and the perfect earthly sphere need divine rest.
3. Application #1: Pride is at the heart of un-rest; we think of ourselves as bigger than God.
4. If you struggle with not being able to rest, humble yourself before God (you're not the creator).
5. Application #2: When we don't rest, we live unnaturally and not the way God intends.
6. When we take the time to rest, we're recapturing a little bit of Eden and God's original plan.

D. In 2010 I moved from Virginia to Hamilton MA to go to seminary to become a Pastor.

1. You would think that since I wanted to become a pastor I would have a weekly day of rest down.
2. For the first two years of school I didn't take day off; I joked I'd rest after seminary.
3. But my third year of the program I got so tired that my body started going crazy.
4. That's when I was forced to take a weekly rest but it took about another two years to heal.
5. I had to humble myself and recognize God created me to need a weekly day of rest.

(Finding rest begins with understanding God's greatness.)

(God is not only powerful, but he's loving, and a day of rest expresses that too.)

II. God gives us a day to rest as a gift (Read v. 2). (S#8)

A. God gives us a day of rest.

1. The Hebrew word for "to rest" or "to cease" is sha-bat, which is the root of "Sabbath".
2. So "to sha-bat" is "to keep the Sabbath"—already God is setting apart a day to rest.
3. God's seventh day has never ended, so when we rest it's like we join him in his eternal rest.
4. The prophet Moses wrote Genesis and he's revealing God wrote a Sabbath into how things work.
5. God gives us a day of rest as a gift.

B. Our weeks are on the Gregorian calendar (1582), which is refinement of Julian calendar (46 BC).

1. That calendar was a reformed the Roman Calendar, which was from the Greek lunar calendars.
2. A seven day week is not based on the moon or stars but on God's law—weeks shaped by God.
3. God calls Christians to set aside a day of rest for our rest and the worship of him.
4. There is freedom in choosing which day works best, one in seven—Sat or Sun (Rom 14:5-6a).
5. I invite you to view Cornerstone as your kick-off to a weekend of rest—try to take tomorrow off.

(How is he able to do this? I always feel busy.)

C. God finished his work so we can finish ours.

1. Like poetry, our passage repeats the ideas of completion and rest. (S#9)
 - a. God **completes** heaven and earth (v. 1)—creation.
 - a. God **completes** His work (v. 2)—"finish" is same Hebrew word for "completion."
 - a. God **rests** from His work (v. 2).
 - a. God **rests** from creating (v. 3)—he finished heaven and earth.
 - b. **Conclusion:** Completion of work leads to rest from work.
 - c. This does not mean God sleeps—he is still sustains and nurtures all of creation.

2. If God rests when he finishes his work, we should too.
 1. Application 1: You should finish your work so you can rest (no procrastinate school/project).
 2. Application 2: Even if you haven't finished your work (neg), you should stop and rest (pos).

D. I had a friend in seminary who told me he wasn't going to work on Sundays. **(S#10)**

1. His plan was to get all his homework done beforehand or I think get up early on Monday.
2. He graduated, got married, and now has twins—good things happened to him, life didn't end.
3. God finished his work so we can finish ours.

E. False gods tell us not to rest and always work.

1. The ancient culture of the Babylonians had a creation myth called the Enuma Elish.
2. Their gods created people so that they could relax and humans would do their work. **(S#11)**

Out of his blood they fashioned mankind.

He imposed on him the service and let free the gods.

After Ea, the wise, had created mankind,

Had imposed upon them the service of the gods— (Tablet VI. 33-36)

3. When you over-work yourself, and don't rest, you're worshipping false gods.
4. God is honored by hard work, but not constant hard work. **(S#12)**

'I never took a day off in my twenties. Not one. And I'm still fanatical, but now I'm a little less fanatical. — Bill Gates

(When we overwork we worship things like success and money, but God wants our worship.) **(S#13)**

III. God invites us to come and find our rest in Him (**Read v. 3**).

A. God invites us to come and find our rest in Him.

1. We understand how God "blesses" the Sabbath by looking earlier in Genesis. **(S#14)**

Genesis 1:28a God **blessed** them and said to them, "**Be fruitful and increase** in number; fill the earth and subdue it... (NIV®)

2. For Adam and Eve this was God's call to multiply and rule the whole world.
3. They need to rest in order to achieve their God-given mission of multiplying and ruling.
4. Application: If you want to excel and be productive, you need to take a weekly rest. **(S#15)**

B. When I was at seminary, my professor Dr. Parrett told us of a time he attended a conference.

1. It was a Christian conference but the Jewish film critic Michael Medved gave a talk.
2. A Christian pastor asked him how he could watch so many movies filled with junk and stay sane.
3. #1 I watch 26 hours of movies every week while the average american watches 27 hours of TV.
4. #2 I'm married to a psychotherapist.
5. #3 Today is Friday morning. After I'm done speaking with you I'm going to get on a plane and go back home to Seattle and I'll be home in time to welcome in the Sabbath with my family. I keep my sanity because I keep my Sabbath. (EM502, 3b, 1:09 GCTS)

(God invites us to come and find our rest in Him.)

(The reason why it's so hard to find rest is sin—sin is disobedience to God.)

C. We ruined our ability to find true rest.

1. God made all of heaven and earth as a cosmic temple to live with humans forever.
2. God commanded Adam and Eve not to eat fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
3. God intended for us to enjoy a pattern of work and rest in his garden but we rebelled.
4. The consequence is being banished from the garden to work without God's help (Gen 3:23).

(When we try to take care of this world and do our jobs without God's help, we blow it.)

(I want to give you a glimpse of how we find true rest—it's through a man named Jesus.)

D. We find rest in God through Jesus Christ.

1. All throughout Jesus' life he maintained the right balance of rest, worship, and play.
2. His ultimate work was to carry the burden of your sin and my sin to the cross.
3. Jesus' work was to pay for your overwork and my overwork with his life.
4. But the good news of Easter is that three days later he rose again from the grave.
5. When Jesus rose from the grave, he defeated sin, death, restlessness, and overwork.
6. You no longer need to feel exhausted and tired like a dead man, because Christ is risen. **(S#16)**

Matthew 11:28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. (NIV®)

7. God invites us to come and find our rest in Him

The Lord bless you and keep you;

the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;

the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

Numbers 6:24-26 (ESV)