

# Remember the Sabbath



**Bro. Kory Cunningham**  
**Exodus 20:8-11**

I am really excited to get to preach over the fourth command. I think the reason I am so excited about preaching it is because I do not know that I have truly valued it like I should my whole life. So, this week, getting to preach this sermon and put it together, I got to study a lot about this idea of the Sabbath, this idea of taking a day of rest, setting it apart, and making it holy to the Lord and just how important it is for me in my own life and how God is glorified by the way that I Sabbath. So, for me, it has been one of those weeks that I have learned a lot and I have a renewed vision and passion for the Sabbath for me and my family. And, what I hope is, as we talk about it this morning that you would feel that as well and that you would have a new passion for setting a day aside that is different, unique, and holy to the Lord.

So, as we look at the 10 Commandments, and for me, as I look at the 10 Commandments, I can see some of them seem to be very important like "You shall have no other gods before me." That seems very important! Or, "You shall not murder." That sounds important. "You shall not commit adultery." My wife thinks that's REALLY important for me to abide by. So, there are rules that seem like they are really, really important. It is like... *make sure you do these, Kory...* And, the fourth one is take a day off. It is

kind of like... *is that really as important and not murdering somebody? Is it as important as not committing adultery? I mean, it seems like if you are going to not do any of these commandments, this one would be the one not to do. It seems like it is not as big of a deal whether or not you take a day off. This might be personal preference...* But, what we are going to see is the reason it is in the 10 Commandments is because it is VERY, VERY important for YOU and for your relationship with the Lord. So, I think that is why he gives it in the commands to remember the Sabbath.

Here is the big truth that I came away with this week- God is a loving father who gives us rest. Just think about that for a moment! Think about the character of God. God is not Pharaoh. God is not a slave driver. God does not want your value and worth to be in how many bricks you make- that is Pharaoh. God is not wrapping your identity in how productive you are or how big you build your kingdom, business, work, or production. God is a God who says... *I love you as a father and I desire for you to rest. So much so that I command you to rest. Why? Because you need rest. You need a day to stop and just enjoy me...*

See, if you are a parent, you know how much your kids need rest. If you have little kids you know how important nap times. If you don't have kids then you have probably seen this out in public. One of the best places to witness this is at Disney World. At Disney World at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon there are only two groups of two-year-olds. There are the ones that are screaming at the top of their lungs in a stroller and the ones that are passed out- that's the only two groups! There is not a third group of two-year-olds that are on the "It's a Small World" ride being happy. Those don't exist at 2:00 pm. Why? Because at 2:00 pm little two-year-olds need to be asleep. They need a nap; their bodies are not built to tackle a 24-hour day. Their bodies are designed to stop and rest so they can be refreshed and take on the rest of the day. So, you see, the kid in a stroller who is crying as loud as he can is because he needs a nap but he doesn't know that. He knows the last thing he wants to do is shut his eyes because everything is going on. So, it is that toddler who pushes against a nap because they want to push through but that is actually to their harm and

they don't get to enjoy everything around them. Then you see that second group. Usually the second group is not always in strollers. A lot of times they are on Daddy's shoulder. Have you ever noticed that? Have you ever noticed Dad walking with the toddler on his shoulder and the toddler is just passed out.

I think this is what God is doing. As a good father he is wrapping his up, putting us on his shoulder, and he is saying... *look, it is a busy week and you have a lot going on. You need to just stop. You need to pause and take 24 hours to rest on my shoulder and enjoy ME because you weren't created to be on 24/7. You were created that in your week you need a day to stop and to rest and refresh...* So, I think this God, who is a good father, giving his kids much needed rest. So, you can either get in the stroller, kick against this, and scream, but it is not going to go well with you. Or, you can just accept it and say... *ok, Dad, you know more than I do. I am going to climb on your shoulder, rest my head on you, and I am going to enjoy this one day and let you take on the world. I am just going to enjoy you.* I think that is the heartbeat behind this fourth command- this command to take a Sabbath, to take a break, to take a rest, to take a nap as little toddlers living in our father's world.

### **Scripture:**

**Exodus 20:8-11 Remember the Sabbath day, to keep 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, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. 11 For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.**

So, as we think about the 10 Commandments, as we look at this one, it is a little different. It starts out a little differently. Eight out of the ten commandments are "thou shall not." They are saying, "do not do this," but, this commandment is different. The first word is "remember." So, it is

not “do not,” it is “don’t forget to.” It is a different type of commandment. It is not a commandment NOT to do something; it is a commandment TO DO something. What is the command? Remember the Sabbath day. What is Sabbath? It means to seize. It means to stop, to quit doing, to have a break, to rest, to relax. So, it is a day of stopping. That is the idea of a Sabbath- have a day that you stop your normal six days of work. That thing that you do, those things that you do that you have to do, that if you don’t do your world will go crazy, stop those things once a week. And, here is the command, it is to remember this day. So, the idea is you are probably going to forget it. It is going to be easy to forget it so you are going to have to remind yourself, you are going to have to put yourself around a people that is remembering to make this day different, unique, and set apart. So, remember this and make it holy.

So, what does it mean to be holy? The scripture says that God is holy. It means he is distinct, he is other, and he is different. Right? That is holiness- it is set apart. Make this different, set apart; make it sacred. This day, your Sabbath day, should not look like the other six days of the week. It should be different. One of the ways that you can answer the question “Are you taking a Sabbath every week?” is do you have one day a week that looks different than all of the others? Do you have one day that is set apart, one day that is reserved, one day that you do different things on this day? And, there are some things that you don’t do. Why? Because it is set apart. It is different, it is special, and you look forward to this day because this day you rest and enjoy God. It is this command to remember the set apart day in your week to rest and enjoy God.

So, what exactly is the Sabbath? We covered it a little bit, but a six-day work week is what God is setting up here. You work six days and you do all of those things that you have to do- you produce, you go, and you work. God loves work. God created you to work. He loves those things. So, if you are able, then you should be working six days. That is what God has set up in whatever capacity you have.

So, find your work and do that well, but then there is a seventh day in a week. There is one day a week that you stop doing your work. You take 24 hours and you don't do those things you normally do. You don't do those things that would be put in the category of your work or your labor- those things that you MUST do and have to do, you stop those for a whole day. For 24 hours you take a break. You stop and you rest. It is a holy day to the Lord. So, what is a Sabbath? It is a 24-hour break of your week. You don't do the normal things that you do like your normal work. You take a break, you set it aside, and you do something different.

So, we have this work balance, a work/rest balance. You labor six and you rest one. So, for some of you, it is going to be hard to take a Sabbath day, it is going to be hard to rest well because you are not working well. Some of you are like... *man, I have the Sabbath down! I have a Sabbath about four times a week. I sleep in most mornings and I hang out. I don't really do a whole lot. I work more like one or two days. I sometimes get up and do something, but I have the Sabbath down!...* That is not God's plan either. It is not about being lazy or not doing anything. No, it is about working hard and then having a day where you rest really hard, too. You intentionally set this one apart, use it as a Sabbath, and rest well as this refreshment to your body, soul, and spirit so you are ready to take on the rest of your week.

Why should you take a Sabbath? I am just going to give two reasons from this text and then also from Deuteronomy. First, because it is a reflection of God's work in creation. So, why does God say, "Remember the Sabbath?" Verse 11 says, "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day." This is how God did things. This is how God worked. God worked six days. He created the whole world in six days and then on the seventh day he rested. He was refreshed, he took a break, he set it apart, and he made it holy. So, God set up our work week and here is how the week goes- you work six and rest one. That is what God set up in our rhythm of creation. So, there is a creation rhythm to how God works. He worked six and took one off. He was doing that because that is how he built us. As image bearers of

God, we have been made to have a certain work rhythm. It is to work six and take one Sabbath. Take a break, stop, don't do, simply be. That is how God has set up creation. And, as we do that, when we work six and rest one really well, when we truly Sabbath, what we are doing is reflecting how God labors. We are being creative and we are doing in the way God is creative and in the way God is doing. We reflect God's goodness in creating the world by the way we create the world around us by laboring six and then resting, taking a Sabbath for one whole day to say this is how God created the universe and this is how I am creating things around me. It is this rhythm, this work/rest relationship that God has built into creation and he has built into you.

And, in studying this, I found there were several times in history where people have tried to redefine this seven-day week. They tried to rearrange a calendar. For instance, one example is the French Revolutionary calendar in the late 1700s. The French government wanted to completely get rid of all Christianity from the calendar. So, one of the things they wanted to remove was the idea of seven days because it comes right out of the Bible. They actually went to a ten-day week with three weeks in a month. So, you had ten days; you would labor nine and rest one. It last twelve years and then they had to completely do away with it because they people could not handle it. It didn't go well. Their country wasn't doing well. Why was that? Because in the very fabric of creation, in the very fabric of your being, this seven-day period has been built in. You were designed to work six and then rest well on a seventh. You were designed to rest and enjoy God on the seventh and if you tamper with that then you are tampering with the way God has built you and created you and you are kicking against the goads. It's not going to work well.

So, I think you can take a voluntary Sabbath once a week or you can take an involuntary Sabbath at some point. At some point, if you never rest and you are always on the go you will eventually crash. Something will happen. Your health will fail, something will go wrong, and you will take a involuntary Sabbath break because you can't handle it. Because you aren't God, God is. He has built this rhythm into your life and he wants you to

embrace that to show his glory in creation. This is how he did it, this work/rest rhythm and he has built you for that. So, you must accept that good gift, live in it, and say... this is what God does and this is how he has made me.

The second one is to show God's redemptive work. So, not just creation work, but also redemptive work. I love this passage in Deuteronomy. Deuteronomy 5:15 says, "You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day." So, the Sabbath is not just about God's creation work; it is also about his redemptive work. What does the Sabbath tell Israel? You're no longer a slave! You've been redeemed and now you get rest. See, as slaves they had no rest. They had a Pharaoh that ruled over them and said work, work, work seven days a week making bricks. Your identity is in brick making. All you are is a brick laborer. You're a machine that produces. God says no, I've redeemed you. You're a son and a daughter. Your identity is not in producing; your identity is in me. I've redeemed you so you can stop. You can rest! It is not in how many bricks you build that tells you how great you are. It is that you are MINE! THAT is what tells you who you are. Your identity is in me!

See, only free people can Sabbath. Slaves can't Sabbath. Slaves have to work all of the time and some of you are a slave this morning, not to a foe like Pharaoh, but to a job, to a career, to this idea of success, to this idea of having to be on all of the time, to this idea of having to be needed all of the time, to this idea of having to post all of the time, or to having to know what's going on all the time. You can't ever disconnect or shut it down and it is a slave master over you and you can't Sabbath. What God is saying is if you rest well one day a week it shows that you are no longer in slavery to your sin and your own identity, but you are a child of God and all that God is, is enough for all that you are. That is what God is saying to us as we Sabbath well.

I was listening to a sermon over this and one pastor reminded me that I am a human being, not a human doing. And, that is such a good little line. I am human BEING, not a human DOING. See, we sometimes think we are human doings and it is what we do and produce that gives us value and worth and we can't stop because if we stop then we aren't who we are. God says no, you are a human BEING. I created you in my image for my glory and you can just stop and enjoy me and that is perfectly fine. You don't have to always be producing, doing, and be on to have value. Your value comes from me.

So as you Sabbath once a week, you are pointed to God's creation work, but you are also pointed to his redemptive work. And, the Sabbath in the Old Testament was a shadow of something greater, a substance that was coming and that substance is ultimately Christ. The Sabbath day was pointing to a greater rest that would come in Christ. That is why Jesus, when he came, in Matthew 11:28 says, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." It is this idea that, yes, you're laboring, you're working, and you're trying so hard to please God, please yourself, and please others. Jesus says if you're tired of all of that, just come to me because I've already pleased my Father. My work has already been done for you. You can come to me and you will cease from trying to build your own identity through your hard work and you will find your identity in me and you will find rest. You can have rest in me- true Sabbath rest.

That is why Hebrews would go on to say the Sabbath was a pointer to the land. In the land of Canaan there would be rest with God, but Hebrews chapter 4 starting in verse 8 says, "For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. 9 So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, 10 for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his." What is the writer talking about? Joshua didn't give them final rest in the land. The rest was always pointing to Jesus. It's resting in the final salvation that Christ has done for us. And, that is what the gospel gives us- true, lasting, deep, salvation rest. You don't have to work to earn a relationship with God; you



have Jesus who has done it for you and you can rest in him. That is salvation! But, I think that even though we have salvation rest in Jesus, I think God still wants us to take a physical Sabbath rest, a stopping once a week, not as a way to earn his relationship, but as a way to remind us that we have rest in Christ and a way to point others to that rest that Christ has given to us.

So, to give a little illustration I heard this week, the illustration was that of a dad with his kids. It's this idea of why does God give us a Sabbath? Why is a Sabbath important? Why can't we just go, never stop, and only do? And the person that I was listening to said, "Just think about a dad who has kids. Just imagine if the kids were always doing for the father." I have three boys and a girl. Imagine if my boys who are old enough to do chores and stuff like that were doing chores 24/7. They were always going and always doing and I'm constantly like, "Hey, Crider, let's just come hang out for a moment." Crider, "No, Dad, I have to go wash your Jeep... no, Dad, I have to go pick up my room... no, Dad, I have to go make my bed... Sorry, Dad, I don't have time I have to go do this." Now, in a sense I'm going to be proud that he is washing my Jeep. That's a great idea, Crider, write that down! Or, that he's doing stuff, right? I'm proud of him! That's great! But, then if that's all that happens I'm going to be a sad Dad because if Crider doesn't have time to come and crawl up in my lap, sit with me, and talk with me, then we don't have a relationship and that is why God is saying... *hey, once a week stop your busyness and come sit in my lap and enjoy me. Stop doing everything!* We are like kids running around, taking out the trash and doing the chores for our father and never sitting in his lap and saying... *hey, Dad, I love you!...* because are just going! So, God says... *you need to stop once a week and remember that I'm your dad, you're my kid, and what I want most is for you to sit in my lap and give me a kiss and enjoy me. Stop doing! I don't want you to take out the trash. I don't want you to do ANYTHING! I just want you to stop and just be my child. Let's just have some time together, you and me.* I think that is the heart behind the Sabbath- a good dad who doesn't just want us to do for him, but a good dad who wants us to be WITH him. The Sabbath is a great weekly reminder of why we are supposed to do that.

So, there is a huge theological debate that I read about all week. A lot of people that I highly respect have very different opinions on this. And, here is the question: Is the Sabbath still binding on Christians today? Do we still need to keep the Sabbath? I'm not going to go into the whole debate because, honestly, I think it's sort of a silly debate. And, here is my beef with the debate- God in the 10 Commandments tells us to have a day off once a week to rest and enjoy him, and then we get together and we think as Christians do we really need to do that or can we just work all the time, never stop, and never enjoy God? Why can't we just take it? If it's still valid or not, let's just take it. Let's just say...*ok, God. We aren't even going to squabble about. We aren't going to talk about it. We aren't even going to debate it! We are just going to take the day off.* That seems like the proper response. Why argue over whether or not God still wants us to stop, rest, recharge, and enjoy him? I think he's for it! So, I'm just going to do it and if I get to Heaven and he says I really didn't want you to Sabbath, then I think it's going to be ok. I think God still wants us to have one day that we stop, rest, and enjoy him.

And, here is what I think the reason is, I think under the new covenant we're no longer required to keep the Sabbath in the same way Israel was. If Israel didn't keep the Sabbath, they died! That's a big deal! We aren't under law; we're under grace. And, I think under the new covenant, instead of "we have to" it's "we get to" for our good and for God's glory. So, don't ask the question, "Do I have to keep the Sabbath?" Ask the question, "How can I maximize the gift for my good and God's glory because it seems like God set up the whole creation world for this rhythm and I want to enjoy it and I want to enjoy him?"

So, think about the New Testament. What does the New Testament do with the Sabbath? Probably one of the reasons we haven't thought really deeply about the Sabbath is because it seemed like the Pharisees were all about the Sabbath and Jesus seemed to break it. It seemed like they were all troubled with Jesus about the Sabbath, so I was like well, I guess the Sabbath isn't all that important. But I think after really looking at it, no, Jesus had the right view of the Sabbath and the Pharisees didn't. The

Pharisees thought Sabbath was about burdens, rules, and a lot of “do not thing.” They made all these rules up about the Sabbath and I can imagine God in heaven saying this is a day off! This is rest! This is about enjoying me and you are making rules about it! You’re over complicating the Sabbath. Then here Jesus comes and he truly lives out the Sabbath. He loves people on the Sabbath, he gives life on the Sabbath, he enjoys the fellowship of the body of Christ on the Sabbath, and he goes into worship on the Sabbath. That is what the day is supposed to be about- enjoying God and doing things that give life to people and those around you. It is a FULL day; it is not a do-nothing day. No, it is a day where you get to enjoy the fullness of God and enjoy him in a way that is bigger than perhaps the rest of the week. It’s a day they should have longed for and been excited about like...*the Sabbath is coming tomorrow! I CAN’T WAIT FOR IT!* No, in the New Testament the kids were like...*great, Sabbath tomorrow. This is going to be a terrible day. We just have to get through it.* That was never the intention. The intention was the best day of the week was the Sabbath where you crawled into the lap of your heavenly father and you just enjoyed him. You didn’t do the things you HAD to do; you did the things that you wanted to do in the presence of the Lord. It’s the good heartbeat behind the Sabbath and that is why Jesus, when he got in trouble so much for the Sabbath, would say this to the Pharisees, “Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.” What is he saying? The Sabbath is a gift to you. It’s not a burden; it’s not a duty or obligation, it’s a gift to cause flourishing in your life. It’s a gift of a break, of a nap so that you can be with God and enjoy him in his fullness.

So, there are a lot of questions around the Sabbath like “what day do you take Sabbath?” and “what day was the Sabbath?” Well, in the Old Testament it was Saturday, but in the New Testament something happens. Jesus rose from the dead on a Sunday and we see the early church started moving the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday and it became known as the Lord’s day. So, the Sabbath is for the Lord, right? In the Old Testament that is Yahweh. Well, in the early church they said now it’s the Lord’s day like John would say in Revelation 1:10. On the Lord’s day, the first day of the week, he had a vision. So, it became the Lord’s day or Sunday where

people would gather, set it apart, make it holy, and make it distinct. So, I think for most of us, the most logical Sabbath day in our week is today. It's Sunday. It's the day we get up and we got to church- that's different, that's distinct, that's other. On Monday morning you aren't going to come to church, right? It's different. It's unique. So, for most of you, if you have today off, the most logical Sabbath would be today. For most of us it's going to be a Sunday every week, but for some of us, you have to work this afternoon and your day off is not today. It might be Tuesday or it might be Saturday. So, I think there is grace here. I think the principle is you work six and you take one to rest, recharge, and remember the Lord, Jesus Christ. So, if Sunday is your work day then I think you can take a Sabbath another day. So, we aren't going to make a bunch of rules about it because that's not the point. It's not about rules. It's about refreshing, joy, and enjoying the Lord. And, so, I just want to show you really practically how to take a Sabbath and then nine reasons for why you need a Sabbath once a week.

Here are the four practical ways to take a Sabbath.

### **1. Pick a day**

You need a day. You need a 24-hour period where you are off and you disconnect. Just pick a day. So, if Sunday doesn't work for you pick a different day. Sabbath on Sunday is not very good for me because it's usually a pretty big work day for me. For example, this morning started early, I have to preach three times, I have a meeting this afternoon, and a meeting tonight. It's a full day of work and labor for me in my normal week. So, today is not good. Yesterday is a great Sabbath for me.

So, for me and my family it's going to be Saturday rather than Sunday. You can adjust this, I think, but the principle is work six, take one off, remember the Lord, and enjoy him. So, pick a day. What is your day going to be? It can change around depending on your schedule, but a pick a 24-hour period of taking a break.

## **2. Stop**

So, what do you do? You stop. On that day it is a day about stopping. See, the other six are about producing, about doing, about going, about connecting, and about all of these other things. But, this is a day about stopping. You're not turned on; you're turned off. The power button is on off. You're in airplane mode. Nothing can get to you- it's just you, the Lord, your family, your friends, and those who give life to you. It's a day to STOP doing and it's a day to just be with the Lord.

## **3. Remember**

So, then what do you do? Then you remember. You remember the Lord. It's a day about him. So, if you just take a day off, you don't think about the Lord, and you don't spend time with him then it's not a Sabbath. A Sabbath is with the Lord. A Sabbath is TO the Lord. So, if you take a day off that's great. I'm not against days off, but that's not a Sabbath. A Sabbath is about not just needing physical rest, but you need your soul to be filled up with God. It's a day to be with him and to enjoy him. So, on the Sabbath you are doing things that connect you deeper with him. You're reading your Bible probably a little bit longer on a Sabbath day. You're spending some more time in prayer. You're taking a walk out in nature and enjoying the beauty of creation while you're singing a song about the marvelous creation that he's made in your heart. You're doing things that connect you to the Lord. It's about remembering the Lord on that day. It's different, it's unique, and it's set apart. You do things that you can't do the other days of the week because you're so busy. This is not a busy day. This is a day off. This is a day of rest and relaxation. It's a day when you don't have to turn the alarm clock on. You can just be!

## **4. Refresh**

So, you do things that refresh you. It's not a day to be productive. It's a way to be poured into. It's a way to refresh, to recharge, and to plug yourself in and recharge up so that on Monday morning you're ready to go.

Just imagine if all of us as Christians took Sunday to maximize the Sabbath. Imagine how different our Monday mornings would be. When everyone else walks in absolutely drained and tired because all weekend long they were doing emails, checking stuff, posting, worrying about what everyone else was doing, go-go-go, and trying to get everything done, but you walk in Monday morning absolutely full with life, energy, and the Lord! You would be different. Everyone would be thinking man, what is in your coffee? You would say...*It's not my coffee, it's the Holy Spirit and it's a GOOD DAY TODAY! Have you ever thought about a Sabbath? Maybe you should take one! Let me show you how. Come to my church! Let's Sabbath together.* It could be this awesome opportunity to witness about God's good design even for the created world and for you.

So, three reasons it's hard to Sabbath because it is hard! It's really hard to take 24 hours off.

## **1. Culture**

I think the first one is our culture. We live in a culture of busyness. We pride ourselves on being busy.

*...Hey, how have you been?*

*... Man, I've been busy!*

*... Ah! That's awesome!*

If you're busy then you're good and you're valuable. Have you ever talked to someone and said, "Hey, man, how are you doing?" And they said, "Man, I've just been napping a lot. It's been great! I set my hammock up about every day and it's just rest and relaxation." You would think... *WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU?!* We don't value rest. We don't value the idea of being off; we value busyness, work-work-work, accomplish-accomplish, and go-go-go. So it is a culture of busyness and it's hard to take 24 hours and say you're not going to be busy, you're not going to add to your value

or work today. You're just going to stop, rest, relax, recharge, and be with God today. That is hard to do! You will have pushback. You will feel guilt over this...*I can't stop! I have to...*No. Are you a slave? Is Pharaoh over you? No, you don't have to do that. God is over you, he's a good God, and he wants you to rest! So, fight that guilt. Fight that temptation to think that your dad won't be proud of you. No, your dad is proud of you! He's really proud of you. He's proud of you in Jesus and he wants you to rest. So, you can take one day and rest and enjoy him.

## **2. Technology**

Secondly, it's technology. We live in a world where we are all the time being connected to everything and everyone. We don't leave our work; our work comes home with us. Our work is always with us. And, I think one of the reasons you can't Sabbath is probably that thing in your back pocket. That is a constant invasion into your life that says you can't ever have moments to yourself and to God because somebody might need you. It's constantly vibrating, it's constantly ringing, and it constantly needs checking of whatever feed you're on or whatever you need to post to because maybe if you don't post that then somebody won't see it and your value won't be raised up. So, technology can be one of the cripples in really taking a Sabbath and saying... you know what, I'm going to take a Sabbath and the world isn't going to be able to reach me and that is going to be okay because God's got the world under control not me.

## **3. You**

So, it's technology but I also think it's just you. You're probably your biggest enemy when it comes to the Sabbath because we kick against it. We are the toddler in the stroller who says I can't stop! There is too much to see and do! We are crying and we are whining because we aren't refreshed because we don't trust God to get all of our to-dos done. We have to do them for ourselves our own way rather than his way.

I think if you have six days that are fully on and one day that is fully off then in those six days you will get way more done than trying to spread it out over seven days as the months roll on and you never have a break. You'll be less productive in the long haul. These are going to be very hard reasons why it's going to be hard for you to take a Sabbath. You have to make sure you know that! You will have to fight against these things, but it's a fight worth fighting because I think there are nine reasons why you need a weekly Sabbath. I think there is a lot more, but here are the big nine.

### **1. To enjoy God**

You need a weekly Sabbath to enjoy God. You need ONE DAY every week that is unique, different, and set apart where your whole mission and your whole goal is to enjoy God. Think about if today your only to-do list was to enjoy God. That's it. If you enjoy God today you check it off. That's a pretty good day, right? Just imagine if that was the only thing you had on the agenda today- to enjoy God and do things that connect you to him. You can love him more today in a bigger way. You'll enjoy God all week, but today it will be a full day where that is the mission- to enjoy God, to crawl into your father's lap, to rest your head on his shoulders, and take a nap in the presence of his goodness and just enjoy him. So, the first reason you need a weekly Sabbath is to enjoy God, read his word, reflect on him deeply, sing, pray, be with his people, be with your family, and those kinds of things because those kinds of things are deeply enjoying God.

### **2. To refresh and recharge**

You are not a human doing; you're a human being. You weren't made to be on all the time. You need a break. You need to recharge. You need to refresh. Think about that word. That word "refresh" sounds so good! How many of you in your soul can right now say you need refreshed? *I need to be refreshed. I need refreshment. Man, when is it ever going to come? When is that vacation going to come once a year where I can refresh?*



That's not God's design! God's design is every single week having something to look forward to- a refresh and a recharge- because you need it! The little two-year-old that takes a nap on his daddy's shoulder wakes up recharged and ready to see the rest of the day. That is what you need during your week. You need a rest and a recharge, a stopping!

### **3. To declare you are no longer a slave, but you're free**

If you can take 24 hours off, hit pause, hit stop, just enjoy God, make it holy, set it apart to him, and do the things you want to rather than the things you have to do then you know you're free and you're not a slave. If you can't do that then you know you're still a slave. Something is ruling over you that is a slave master that is cracking the whip and saying you can't NOT check your email. You can't NOT be available. You can't NOT finish that. You can't NOT do this because if you do then I'm coming after you... then you are a slave and you're not free. But, if you can take 24 hours and say you know what, I'm just going to be with my Lord and Savior, then you know you're free. So, it's a weekly reminder, a declaration that you are free, no longer a slave, and God rules over you, not Pharaoh.

### **4. Your identity is found in God, not success**

This is one of the biggest reasons we don't Sabbath because we find identity in success. It's about doing, building, producing, and everybody applauding. So, we do to become and then our identity is in our work, success, or how great our kids are raised. Our identity is in those things rather than it just being the Lord. So, God says if you take a Sabbath once a week what you are saying is your identity is not in doing; your identity is in being his son or daughter. That is our deepest identity and we can stop one day a week and just enjoy him.

### **5. To remember God is God and you are not**

See, one of the biggest reasons we don't Sabbath is because we think we're God. We rule the world, our world revolves around us, if we aren't on

24/7, if we aren't producing, or if someone can't get ahold of us then the whole world crumbles especially in the age of cellphones. If somebody can't get us immediately then everyone is in big trouble. You kind of think what did they do 50 years ago? We can't even fathom that people would be unreachable. That's not even a concept to us because we think we are God and everyone will not survive if we take a Sabbath. But the Sabbath says no God, you are God, I'm not. So I can take a Sabbath and the world will be okay because you're controlling and sustaining the world not me. The less people who absolutely need me the better off it is because they absolutely need you. That is who they really need. So, your Sabbath points people to God not just yourself.

## **6. To remember whose Kingdom you're really building**

If you don't take a Sabbath it's really easy to continually build your kingdom, do what you want, and live your life. It's all about you, it will just keep going, and you will get further into it. But, if you take a weekly Sabbath, a stopping and remembering God, what he has done, and your real mission in this world which is to make disciples of all nations, all of a sudden the kingdoms won't be so blurry and you'll remember oh, yeah, my six days are really about you, God. I'm going to remember that every seventh day. So, these next six days I'll be about your kingdom, not just my own kingdom. So, it's about remembering the mission that God has given you when you take a Sabbath.

## **7. To worship the true God**

You know, I find it interesting that this commandment is the fourth commandment. The first ones are don't have any other gods, don't make an idol, and remember my great name basically. Then, the fourth one is take a Sabbath. What's the order there? I think God puts the Sabbath fourth because the most likely idol that you're going to put in front of God is YOU. You're the most likely god that you're going to worship besides the one true God. A Sabbath says I'm not worshiping me, my success, what I do, or my identity out there, but I'm putting myself off of the throne and

I'm worshipping you, God. It's a weekly reminder that you worship God, not yourself.

## **8. To remind yourself what matters most in life**

A Sabbath is a great reminder of what matters most, that people are more important than things. And, how many times do we put things over people? How many times do we rush, rush, rush and don't have a conversation? How many times do we rush, rush, rush and don't eat a meal together? We rush, rush, rush because we have to do, do, do and then we don't ever just stop and be with the people that matter most to us. A Sabbath says stop the things and let's just enjoy one another. Let's enjoy people because people are what truly matter in this life and Jesus has sent me to be on mission for people.

## **9. Because you trust God**

See, to have a Sabbath you have to trust God because when Sabbath day comes you'll have a million things still to do. Your desk will be piled with things you still need to do. Your house will be filled with things you still need to do. And, do you know what a Sabbath says? It says I trust you God that I don't have to accomplish all of my work. I can leave my work undone and you are going to continue to work it all out even when I'm resting in you. I don't have to fix everything. When I rest you're actually still going to be fixing some of the problems in my life. Sometimes after a Sabbath, you realize a problem has been resolved because you took a Sabbath and God worked it out FOR you. It's about trusting the Lord and saying God, one day it's completely left up to you and I'm just going to be in your presence.

You know, this week after studying this and really repenting in my own life for not intentionally making the Sabbath that valuable in my life, I decided I was going to do this. So, on Friday I was about to leave the office and I walked in to the girls in the office and I said, "I'm getting ready to take my Sabbath." See, for me, Sunday doesn't really work very well as I've already

said so I decided to do Saturday. In the Jewish thought, Sabbath begins at sundown and ends at sundown. So, Friday at sundown to Saturday at sundown would be a whole Sabbath. So, I said, "hey, girls, I'm going to take a Sabbath and here is what that means. I'm actually going to turn my phone off tonight and I'm not going to turn it back on until tomorrow night." They went, "AHHHHHH!" Both of them! They said, "But what if..." and then listed a ton of what ifs. There was an entire list of what ifs.

Just imagine the thought of today turning off your phone and not turning it on until the sun goes down. *But what if...* Right? It's like this anxious feeling... *but what if... I can't because I'm so...* What? Important? Needed? God? Valuable? What is it? What is the reason you can't do that? What is the reason we can't just stop and take a break on the Sabbath? What is your what if reason? So, here is my conclusion, here is what I've wrestled in my own mind this week: I could die today. It's a reality. I could die today. Today might be my last day on planet earth. And, do you know what would happen if I died today? Hopefully you guys would cry, be sad, and come to my funeral that would be in two or three days. And I'm really hoping this next week at Hardin would be kind of crazy with people like... *What do we do? How do we replace this? How do we figure this out?* Do you know what I'm convinced of? By next Sunday everything would go back to complete normal. It would just rock and roll. You all could survive my death. And, here is the reality that I went to, if people can survive my death, if the world can survive my death, the world would keep spinning, everything would keep going, and hopefully you guys would miss me, but all of those things that I had to be urgently notified of, you would go to someone else. If the world can survive my death, it can surely survive my Sabbath once a week. That's my new conclusion- if it can survive my death, it can survive my one day with the Lord and my family to recharge and reconnect and reenergize so that today I can hit the ground running for six more days of passionate labor for the Lord.

See, we need a Sabbath and all of those reasons for why you can't need to be repented of and we need to just enjoy this good gift. This week in my life and in my family's life we did some repenting because we didn't

intentionally safeguard our Sabbath like we should have. So, there has been some repenting in the Cunningham household. I think for some of us there needs to be some repenting as well. Are you truly Sabbathing once a week? Are you truly taking 24 hours just to stop, refresh, enjoy the Lord, and do the things you WANT to do, not the things you HAVE to do? Does that mark your week or is every day the same?

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