

Icebreaker:

What is your favorite day of the week and why?

Read this week's scripture and discuss:

1. Since we believe God is omnipotent, all-powerful, why did God rest? If we were created in the image of God, what does that suggest about our resting?
2. Is Sabbath a rule to be followed or a gift to be received? Why?
3. Read Exodus 20:8-11 and Deuteronomy 5:12-15. What differences do you see in these two passages? Why is it important to notice the differences?
4. Sabbath means literally taking a break. Do you or someone you know wrestle with taking a break from work? Why do you think this is so?
5. David Lomas said, "Sabbath reminds us that we are loved for who we are, not for what we can produce...Sabbath does not exist for what it gives us, nor how it helps us, but for the way it equips us to live out our truest identity. We are not human doings, but human beings." What stands out to you in this quote? What do you like or not like?
6. N.T. Wright said, "For the Jews, taking a Sabbath identified them as different from the pagan neighbors." What would it look like today to be counter-cultural if we practice the Sabbath?
7. What is one Sabbath practice you committed to in worship? Or if you weren't in worship, what is one Sabbath practice you can commit to now?

Prayer:

As you pray for one another, please pray for the following needs in our church family:

- > Prayers of healing for Robert Neal, Regina Franks, and Carol Strickland.
- > Prayers of comfort for the family and friends of Barbara Sloop in her passing and for Jim and Heather Lehr in the death of Jim's mom.

[The following are from ZPC's prayer calendar, which is available at the Welcome Center or at zpc.org/prayer.]

- > Pray for Dan Mc Nerney and others with Frontier Fellowship. May they continue to reach people around the world with the word of the Gospel and be protected as they serve in this role.
- > Pray that God will bless, strengthen, and guide ZPC's corporation officers and other leaders at ZPC.

Keeping the Sabbath is one of the Ten Commandments. In today's world, it is nearly a foreign concept, even to Christians. We live in a busy world, where we often measure ourselves (or others measure us) by what we produce or how much we work. Today in your group, encourage group members to wrestle with taking on at least one practice for Sabbath. May God's Word and these questions challenge us to rest as God rested after his work was done.

1. God did not have to rest, but God did rest. He saw that his work was "good" and it was "finished." His resting is an example for us to rest. If we are made in God's image, and God's command is to rest on Sabbath, then it will be good for us to be obedient in doing so.
2. Honoring the Sabbath is a rule. It is important enough to be one the Ten Commandments handed down from God to Moses to the people on Mount Sinai. Yet, it can also be a gift. If we can turn off our desire to be productive and work for one day, then we can begin to rest, and be present with God and others – which is a great gift.
3. They are very similar with one big exception. The Exodus passage focuses on resting because God rested on the seventh day. The Deuteronomy passage focuses on the idea that the people had just recently been slaves in Egypt and God rescued them, so they should honor God. The Exodus passage aligns more with being shaped like God/Jesus, while the Deuteronomy passage aligns more with building for God's kingdom.
4. Taking a break from work might be more difficult than ever before. We have our smart phones and email which can connect us to work wherever we are. Our clients or bosses may expect us to be constantly available. Yet, unplugging from work (and our devices on Sabbath?) may allow us to "be still and know that I am God" as God says in Psalm 46:10.
5. God cares more about who we are than what we do. He can get someone else to do our work if he needs to. We belong to God, we are his children, our identity is wrapped up in being saved and changed by Jesus to be shaped more like him. It is important that we obey God's commands and be active, but our identity is in our being, not our doing.
6. We will look different if we practice the Sabbath. This may look like taking Sunday off from any work, or another day of the week to be with God, and to be present with others in a different way. Others will notice if we do this not to be lazy, but to be intentional and obedient to God, to honor God, and to focus some of our time on God.
7. Jerry may have given some examples in worship. Some ideas are: taking a nap, reading, praying, taking a walk in nature, exercising, watching a relaxing movie, doing something that gives you energy and purpose but it is not frantic or overly busy.