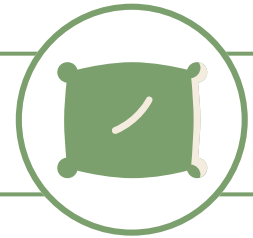


# TOOL: Cease from Labor

Sabbath • Weekly



We may have heard or thought of rest and the Sabbath as a time to cease work, cease labor. That's typically how we think of rest. We are stopping work. And that is what God commands when God introduces Sabbath to God's people. God sets apart a day where they cease from working.

What does it mean to cease our labor? Jesus shows us with his life that it doesn't necessarily mean we stop serving or doing tasks. We see Jesus heal and do tasks on the Sabbath. But there is a freedom in his behavior. He is not trying to earn anything. He is not enslaved to anything.

What if we consider "labor" as the things we do that drive us by a need to earn or secure something. It is the work we **have** to do - driven by anxiety, or a longing to secure something, rather than an overflow of knowing that we are provided for fully.

What if our Sabbath is a day to do the things we want - as an overflow of knowing that we are provided for - and cease from the labor that is an attempt to earn something or keep ourselves safe.

This week, we'll take some time each day to notice the emotional, physical, spiritual, and mental labor that we do. And then we'll practice trying to rest from this on our Sabbath!

## Practice

Each day this week - as you sit down at the end of the day - try to notice the "labor" that you do in your life.

Use the table below to help you identify the labor and make some connections.

|  | Emotional and Mental Labor  | Physical Labor   | Spiritual Labor  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <b>Definition</b>  | What are the ways you are regulating your emotions in order to earn something in relationships or in order to feel safe? E.g. I'm replaying a fight with my spouse or rehearsing a conversation. I stayed up late getting through my emails so I could relax. | What are the physical tasks you are doing in order to try to earn something or secure something? E.g. I have to clean because I have people coming over and I don't want them to think I'm disorganized. | What are the ways you are working to earn approval or a sense of closeness from God? E.g. I didn't have a quiet time today and I feel worried God's going to make me have a bad day. |
| <b>Symptoms</b>  | Repressing emotion, feeling exhausted, detaching, ruminating, distracting through technology or other escapes   | Stress, anxiety, feeling rushed, panicked, hurried while performing tasks, feeling fear of failure or safe in success  | Guilt or shame when not performing spiritually, or a sense of pride when you feel "good" about your spirituality   |
| Where did you see this today?  |   |  |  |
| Where did you see this today?  |   |  |  |
| Where did you see this today?  |   |  |  |
| Where did you see this today?  |   |  |  |
| Where did you see this today?  |   |  |  |
| Where did you see this today?  |   |  |  |
| <b>SABBATH - what did it look like to try to rest from this today?</b> |   |  |  |

## Debrief your experience

After practicing with this tool, debrief your experience with your Praxis Group. Below are some questions to process together:

- Check in on life. (Where are you experiencing Christ's presence this week? What burdens are you carrying?)
- What did you learn from this practice?
- Describe your experience with this practice. (What feelings came up, what went well, what got in the way? How has it impacted your relationship with God?)
- What is the next step for you?