

TOOL: Finding Joy in Sabbath

Sabbath • Weekly



Sabbath wasn't originally modeled in the scripture as a cure for burn out or because our busy pace of life is too much (although that is often the case). The first time we see Sabbath practiced in the scripture it's modeled by someone who never grows weary, who has no weakness within them. The first time we see it is in Genesis 1.

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.

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.

In the beginning, when everything was perfect, without any weariness, God built into God's rhythm a day to enjoy, pay attention, notice, and reflect - not because God's burnt out, not because God's exhausted.

Sabbath is an invitation to embrace our natural design and rhythm. It's an invitation to pause and notice what has been created. What would it look like to rest because - like sleep - it's just part of your rhythm? And what would it look like to use that space to truly see and notice and celebrate what God has given you and done?

Practice

As you consider your Sabbath practice this week, think through the questions below.

STEP ONE: STOPPING

What labor do you need to stop in order to make space for restoration? If you're not sure what labor is distracting you, consider starting with the tool "Cease from Labor".

STEP TWO: NOTICING GOD'S WORK

Consider the following areas of your being and spend a few minutes with God asking God to reveal places where God has moved this week. God's work doesn't always look like "blessing" as our American culture defines, so maybe look for the places where you have seen God's Spirit at work, using the fruit of the Spirit to help you identify those areas.

- **Consider your relationships.** Where have you seen love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control spring up this past week?
- **Consider yourself.** Where have you seen love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control spring up this past week?
- **Consider creation and your work.** Where have you seen love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control spring up this past week?
- **Consider your relationship with God.** Where have you seen love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control spring up this past week?

STEP THREE: CELEBRATE

What would it look like to celebrate and enjoy those things today?

- **Enjoy your relationships.** Pick one or two that you can enjoy today. Plan an activity with those people. Perhaps have a meal together and talk about what you want to celebrate in each other.
- **Enjoy yourself.** What is something you can do with yourself today that would feel like intentional enjoyment of yourself? An art project? A walk? A bath? A nap? A delicious latte?
- **Enjoy creation.** As you rest from your work, engage with the world that God has given you dominion over. Take a walk, or buy some flowers, or watch the clouds. Enjoy the world God has given you.
- **Enjoy God.** Sadly, the thing that's often hardest for us on this list is enjoying God. We can "get in a rut" when it comes to connecting with God - relying only on certain methods like Bible study or corporate worship - and that can feel like a responsibility or duty. What would it look like to be creative about how you enjoy God today? What would it look like to play with God? Some ideas:

- Have a dance party in the kitchen with God!
- Put on one of your favorite songs and draw a picture for God (even if it's terrible).
- Add a chair to your table to help you remember and notice the presence of God.
- Tell Jesus a story about your day as you're driving – that has no point or principal, but is just chatting with a friend. Tell him something you noticed that was funny or silly this week.

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?