



SABBATH

PRACTICING Jesus

SERMON
STUDY

11.17.2024

Leader Corner

Practicing Jesus

Sabbath

Genesis 2:1-3, Exodus 20:8-11,
Mark 2:27--28, Hebrews 4:9-11

We live in a 24/7/365 rat race. Even when we sit down to eat, we often are distracted and try to find ways accomplish the task of eating quickly. Doesn't it often feel like we are "farming the margins?" We try to squeeze out more and more from the same amount of time without ever changing or letting go of other things. The results? . . . we are so entangled in the machine of "busy" and "more" that we deplete our beings from an essential God given gift; holy rest. Taking time to create a sabbath rhythm is crucial to the livelihood of an apprentice of Jesus. It is enough to say, "Jesus did it . . . So should we."

Main Idea: Doing less is actually more

Main Practice: Experience one Sabbath. Set aside time for rest and worship and an intentional change of pace.

Main Teaching: Genesis 2:1-3, Exodus 20:8-11, Mark 2:27-28, Hebrews 4:9-11

A few more housekeeping items for this week:

- *Pro Tip:* Ask a group member to lead each section of this community guide experience.
- As always, be sure to leave ample time to do the "with Practice" section.

As You Begin Your Group Time:

How did last week's practice go? What did you learn or enjoy? How will you continue this practice?

Connect with Prayer

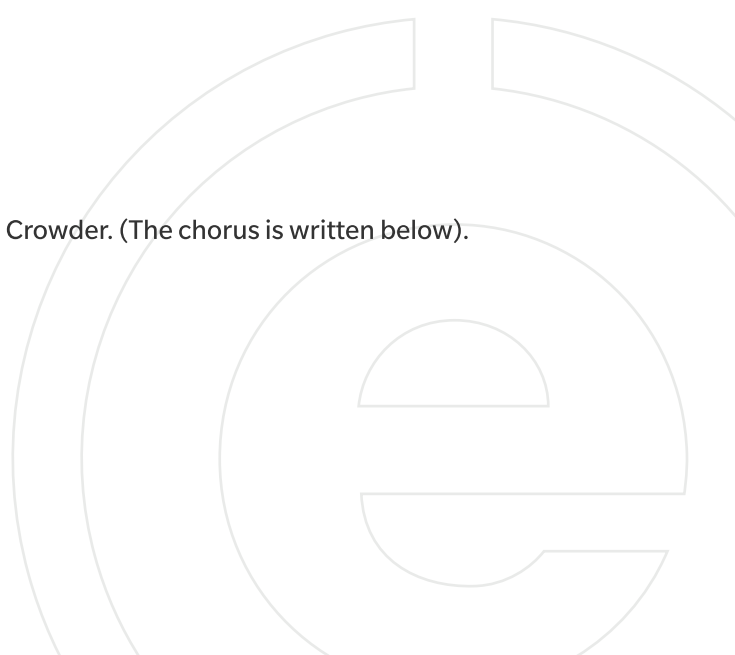
Have someone pray the following over the group:

O God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed; Give unto your servants that peace which the world cannot give; that our hearts may be set to obey your commandments, and also that by you we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may pass our time in rest and quietness; through the merits of Jesus our Savior. Amen (adapted from The Book of Worship)

with Praise

As a group watch, sing, or read the lyrics of "Come As You Are" by David Crowder. (The chorus is written below).

So lay down your burdens
 Lay down your shame
 All who are broken
 Lift up your face
 Oh, wanderer come home
 You're not too far
 So lay down your hurt
 Lay down your heart
 Come as you are



with Principle

"Our spiritual journey begins with rest. . . It is essential to following Jesus . . . Because chronically exhausted, sleep-deprived, overbusy people are not loving, peaceful and full of joy." (Practicing the Way, page 182)

1. When was the last time you felt truly rested? What contributed to that? What keeps you from doing that again?
2. What moments (key phrases, scripture, stories, etc) stood out to you from Sunday's service?
3. Read together the following passages: Genesis 2:1-3, Exodus 20:8-11, Mark 2:27-28, Hebrews 4:9-11.
 - a. What do these passages teach us about Sabbath and rest?
 - b. What can we glean about Jesus' character and priorities?
 - c. Why do you think a regular rhythm of rest is so important to our physical, emotional, and spiritual health?
4. Read Matthew 11:28-30.
 - a. What do we learn about Jesus' desires for us?
 - b. Where do you need "rest for your soul?"
 - c. What might need to change in your life for you to practice a regular rhythm of Sabbath?
5. Take a few moments individually and list out what obstacles keep you from practicing a sabbath one day a week. Then share these with the group. Pray together over these distractions and obstacles and ask the Holy Spirit to remove them.

with Practice

To recap, taking time to create a sabbath rhythm of rest helps us rejuvenate and connect with God. It allows us to experience real rest. As God said in Genesis, "It (rest) is good." While the specifics may vary, the principles of rest, worship, and community remain central. By setting aside regular time each week to observe the Sabbath, you can cultivate a sense of peace, balance, and spiritual renewal in your life.

It's time to personalize the idea of a Sabbath. Remember, this week's main practice is to experience one Sabbath.

1. Take some time during your group gathering to journal and determine when, how long, and in what ways you will practice Sabbath this week.
2. Share this with your community and ask for prayerful accountability to do this practice.

To help you, here are five different ways to practice a Sabbath:

Rest from Work: Cease all forms of work and labor. This includes both professional and household chores. The focus is on physical rest and mental relaxation.

Worship and Spiritual Activities: Attend church, engage in personal or family devotions, prayer, and reading of scripture.

Family and Community Time: Spend quality time with family and loved ones. Share meals, engage in meaningful conversations, and strengthen relationships.

Disconnect from Technology: Take a break from digital devices, social media, and other distractions. Use this time to reflect, meditate, and connect with nature.

Engage in Joyful Activities: Participate in activities that bring joy and relaxation, such as reading, walking, or enjoying nature. The Sabbath is not just about refraining from work but also about delighting in restful and rejuvenating activities.

Pro Tip: In order to fully rest on the Sabbath, prepare meals, complete chores, and plan activities ahead of time. This helps us avoid unnecessary work during the Sabbath.

**(Practice adapted from the "Practicing the Way Course Guide," John Mark Comer)*

For Further Study

Explore Isaiah 56:1-8. How does sabbath play a role in God's overall plan?

Consider the following as you craft an ongoing rhythm:

Weekly: What weekly rhythms will help you sustain rest?

Quarterly: How could you rest for an entire weekend?

Yearly: How could you experience a week of Sabbath?

Other Sabbath Resources:

- *The Rest of God* - Mark Buchanan
- *Practicing the Way 4 week study on Sabbath*