

October 11,2020

4 REMEMBER THE SABBATH

8 Remember the sabbath day, and 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; you shall not do any work--you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns.

11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

What is a sabbath day? What does it mean to keep it holy? What does holy mean?

Why would the Lord make a law emphasizing rest and a special day? I mean – adultery and murder I understand. Lying and stealing are bad – but why a day of rest?

Don't forget; God worked 6 days. Did he need rest? Did he want to set an example?

Ron Mehl – “ if you consistently dishonor the Sabbath principle in your life, somewhere along the line the bills will come due. Things will begin to break down in your life. The breakdown may be physical, emotional, spiritual, financial or marital. There is no way to tell what direction it will take but God loves us too much to let our self destructive tendencies to go unchallenged.

These are not the 10 suggestions.

God wants time with us, he wants to walk with us, he wants to share his heart with us, he wants a relationship.

He didn't build us to work seven days.- Jesus said to his disciples: (Mark 6:31 NRSV) He said to them, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat.

Remember David said
(Psa 23:1 NRSV) The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.

(Psa 23:2 NRSV) He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters;

(Psa 23:3 NRSV) he restores my soul.

He makes us lie down! If we don't lie down and rest he may make you. He loves us so much. If we are not going to slow down he will slow us.

Note that the phrase – he makes me lie down comes before the words he restores my soul. It is as we enter into his rest that we experience his healing touch on our life.

The Lord may want to use the sabbath – as an interval of rest. It may be a break from the pressure of the week, - a time to sit down, be quiet and ask some questions;

Lord are you really first in my life? Lord is there anything between you and me? When I'm in trouble facing hardships and difficulties, do I turn to You? When I'm lonely and bored and feeling empty, are you the one I seek? Lord how could it be that I've created some other gods and images that somehow satisfy and fulfill my needs? Have I dishonored your name this week, or spoken lightly of You? Do I love You less today than I did a week ago - Search my heart.....

Peter said: (1 Pet 1:18 NRSV) You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold,

(1 Pet 1:19 NRSV) but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish.

Perhaps the sabbath is the day when we stop and remind ourselves of who God is, the price he had to pay to buy us back from Satan's kingdom, of what He has promised to do in us and through us of what He wants to accomplish in our hearts and lives and of the place He is preparing for us when all our frantic scurrying across the face of this planet will be the dimmest of memories and we will be caught up in him alone.

STORY OF SHOES/BOWLING PINS from THE TENDER COMMANDMENTS
pg 108

Ron Mel tells a couple of stories to show us that it's not a strange thing to need a day of rest .he said his wife is always telling him she needs two pairs of shoes because one pair of shoes will last six months but two pair of shoes if you alternate them will last two years as it gives the leather a chance to rest. The other story he talks about is a friend of his who owns a bowling alley. The friend told him that every week they removed all their bowling pins from service and put them on a shelf, alternating them with another full set of bowling pins out of storage. This was so the bowling pins could rest. His friend swore it was true. They discovered that if the wooden pins don't rest, they lose their vitality and won't bounce around as much. They won't be alive. All that flipping and knocking around works a hardship on the pins and eventually takes its toll but if you give them a week off and set them in a corner they come back with more life than ever

Dirt needs to rest. Farmers know that crops take certain nutrients out of the soil – others restore them. Land that lies fallow benefits from rest – it will yield a more bountiful crop.

Exodus 20:11 says that the For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

Do you think possibly that he has some insights into his creation that we tend to forget????

He knows we need to rest, lie down, reflect and reconnect with the author of life – he built this need within us.

A wealthy American entrepreneur was on a hunting safari in Africa. He chose a seasoned guide and hired local natives to carry the necessary gear. From day one he wanted to go faster than the guide. He pushed and drove his safari team from morning til night until they could hardly stand. Finally they sat down and would go no farther. They would not stir from where. They sullenly reclined in the shade. The American tycoon, used to instant obedience, bellowed and yelled but they just sat they. He stormed and the guide replied they must stay here all day. They won't move no matter how

much you shout and bully. We have been going too hard and fast. We must let our souls catch up with our bodies.

I am not trying to push some legalistic version of sunrise-sunset day of rest. For Christians, every day is a sabbath day of rest. He is our Sabbath rest. - But even the principle of one day for God – honored by our country since colonial days has been completely trampled by today's pleasure mad, material obsessed culture.

We have very little time for God. Our lives are so full, yet so empty. We have no room for him in our thoughts or schedules.

What shall we do about it?

(Psa 127:1 KJV) A Song of degrees for Solomon. Except the LORD build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.

(Psa 127:2 KJV) It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep.

An interpretation I read for this passage says " you work night and day. When you're not working you're playing so hard you exhaust yourself. You're busy, busy, busy, with no time for God, no time to evaluate your heart and life. You think that by running at that pace, you'll get ahead. You think that if you don't cram every excess hour with work or entertainment you will somehow miss out on life and be the loser" but the sabbath principle is the opposite. Time set aside for the Lord is never lost time. He tells us – when you stop working I'll do my greatest work..

When you spend time with God you suddenly understand things about your activities and your priorities and your relationships that you had not understood before. He wants us to realize that those times are strategic investments in both time and eternity.

God intended the Sabbath as a day to consider the very stuff of life itself. God intended that we spend time with him and ask questions like – are all these things I'm involved in GOOD in your sight? Are they the best I could do with what you've given me? Am I doing these things in my own

strength or are you truly with me? Am I hearing your voice, following your lead?

Where is it that you spend time with the Lord? Perhaps a special chair, room or even walking. It can be anyplace – Do you remember Brother Lawrence – I’ve spoken of him before. He felt closest to the Lord in the kitchen. In fact, when the bells rang for chapel, he found it an interruption – not in his schedule but in his conversation with God.

Maybe you need to practice walking and talking to him while doing other activities in the house – If you are folding the laundry – pray for that person. If you are cleaning a room, pray for the one who occupies it, but also pray for his wisdom, insight and strength. At the store you might remember those who don’t have enough to eat and ask that God might somehow use you to minister to them.

It may be a conscious effort to just be mindful of God all day – or during the part you designate as the Sabbath.

Sabbath times are when we get to concentrate on God, open our hearts to him, and worship him. We need to commit to it – put it on our schedules. We know that most of us, with our hectic days time gets swallowed up. Before we know it, the time is lost.

No matter who you are, the work of life will never be done. There will always be another form to fill out, errand to run, project to finish or drawer to organize.

Ps 46:10 says be still and know that I am God.

The Sabbath is a time to take inventory – a time for God to look along with us at our lives and see where we are. We may be low on mercy or compassion. Our endurance may be down. Maybe our love has been given away until little remains, and our heart feels empty.

Christ is the one who can provide for whatever we need. –
The real question is “Who is in charge of our life?”. Is he really Lord? Do we let him evaluate where we are and let him make changes?

Because he loves us, he told us Remember the Sabbath Day and keep it holy. When we do, we can look at our lives with not sense of regret or wasted time.