

# A New Invitation to Sabbath



## QUICK BACKDROP

The idea of Sabbath was not supposed to drop off our spiritual radar. In fact, Jesus’ words regarding the Sabbath actually represent a re-gifting of the Sabbath, not an abandoning. And the writings of the Apostle Paul point to Sabbath observance as an invitation, not an act that establishes righteousness (and thus should be discarded). The emphasis on the Sabbath throughout Scripture vividly shows us that rest and reflection are vital to an invigorating relationship with God. It’s been said that if the Devil can’t get you to be bad, he’ll get you to be busy. Without regular rest and reflection, the Devil has us right where he wants us: forgetting our position in Christ, distracted from the peace God provides, relying on our own strength instead of God’s.

## DIGGING IN

Take a moment to re-discover the Sabbath invitation for yourself. In the right-hand column below you’ll see key passages pertaining to the Sabbath. In the left-hand column you’ll see prompts for exploring those Sabbath passages. Take a few moments to touch the key moments in Scripture that brought the idea of Sabbath to life. Grab a Bible (online or physical) and write down your thoughts from the prompts and questions. Yes, this may look like a lot of passages. But it’s an important subject and it will be worth your time.

Prompts	Verses
This is the first mention of Sabbath. What do you observe? In what ways does God elevate the Sabbath? Of note: you are looking at the first thing that God made holy.	<b>Genesis 2:1-3</b>
The Sabbath is introduced to God’s people (It’s not yet a part of The Law). What does the way God introduces Israel to the Sabbath tell you about the Sabbath? If you have time you may want to dig into the entire chapter of Exodus 16 (pro tip: track references to rotten and wormy food).	<b>Exodus 16:4-5, 22-30</b>
Makes it into the Ten Commandments.	<b>Exodus 20:8-11</b>

If the Sabbath can do this for God, think what it can do for us!	<b>Exodus 31:17</b>
The Ten Commandments are reviewed in Deuteronomy and a little more nuance is added to the Sabbath.	<b>Deuteronomy 5:12-15</b>
What rewards do you see for keeping the Sabbath?	<b>Isaiah 58:13-14</b>
What connection do you see between observing the Sabbath and Israel's relationship with God?	<b>Jeremiah 17:19-27</b>  <b>Ezekiel 20:21-26</b>
Something happened to the Sabbath between the Old and New Testaments. What gives you a clue the religious leadership turned the Sabbath into a checklist spreadsheet of what not to do?	<b>Mark 2:23-24</b>
How does Jesus regift the Sabbath?	<b>Mark 2:27-28</b>
What EXACTLY is being said about the Sabbath?	<b>Romans 14:5-6</b>  <b>Colossians 2:16-17</b>

### **The Journey of The Sabbath**

What observations can you make about the idea of the Sabbath? Of the passages you just explored, what resonates with you about the idea of Sabbath?

## TAKING IT INWARD

“Stop!” That’s the literal meaning of the Hebrew word for Sabbath. But it’s not an invitation to laziness. It’s an invitation to stop and rest, to reflect on the things of God, and to remember His works of redemption. References to the Sabbath and Sabbath rest throughout Scripture help us paint a Sabbath equation that looks something like this:

Stop working  
Stop gathering  
Stop striving

### So that you can:

Ponder and remember things of God  
Rest and restore  
Worship

There is an attitude of Sabbath, or “Sabbitude” if we may, that is to permeate our daily lives. As we enjoy the fruit of Sabbath rest, we become the non-anxious presence in all of our circles of interaction: our families, our friends, our co-workers, our classmates.

## PUTTING INTO PRACTICE

Is your heart being invited to the Sabbath?

1. **Dedicate** a chunk of time (an hour, an evening, a half-day, a day) to cease producing, striving, and accomplishing. Occupy your mind with rest. Think about it this way: How can I go waste time with God?
2. **Give** yourself permission to disengage your mind from:
  - a. anxiety and worry.
  - b. living up to unhealthy expectations.
  - c. the need to get ahead (in grades, in athletics, in art/music, in your job).
3. **Reflect** on ways to trust:
  - a. God’s provision for your life.
  - b. God’s presence in your life.
  - c. God’s promises about your life.

### And, Finally...

Here are some verses you may want to ponder during your next Sabbath experience, verses that will help you create “Sabbitude.”

**Exodus 14:14 | Psalm 46:10 | Zephaniah 3: 17**