



Navigating Your *Sabbatical* **Purpose ■ Plan ■ Support**

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***The Sabbath was made for man,
Not man for the Sabbath.***

- Mark 2:27

***It is a sign between Me
and the children of Israel forever;
for on six days the LORD made
the heavens and the earth,
and on the seventh day He rested and was
refreshed.***

- Exodus 31:17



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www.ChristCenteredLeaders.com

ISBN: 978-0-9855895-0-9

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Section One

The Sabbath Rest

(Review of Hebrews Chapter Four)

What is *Sabbath*?

*And He said to them,
The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.*
– Mark 2:27

*Thus the heavens and the earth,
and all the host of them, were finished.
And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had
done,
and He rested on the seventh day from all His work
which He had done.
Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it,
because in it He rested from all His work
which God had created and made.*
– Genesis 2:1-3

God created us with a need for consistent times of rest. By His own example, He worked for six days to generate the universe and then on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed. And so He ordained the *Sabbath* for man (Hebrew: *shabbat*); periods to “abstain from work” between tasks—whether daily, weekly, monthly, annually, and so forth. He commanded a weekly rhythm of labor and rest for our optimum benefit and glory to Him.

More than merely a time to substitute leisure activities for work, keeping the Sabbath provides

opportunity to focus on Christ and Him alone, *for of Him and through Him and to Him are all things* (Romans 11:36). As we abstain from work, we remind ourselves of our constant need for God, our accountability to Him for labor and time, and of the surety of His truth and strength in our lives.

Though we can and should set aside times of rest and refreshing, **God also desires His people to constantly and consistently function out of a place of Sabbath rest every moment of our lives.** Hebrews chapter four helps us understand Sabbath in light of the Israelites' sojourn in the wilderness to the Promise Land:

. . . let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience . . .

Opportunity to enter His rest is limited. . .

By time:

*again He designates a certain day, saying in David, **Today,** after such a long time, as it has been said: **Today,** if you will hear His voice,*

Do not harden your hearts . . .



By lack of faith:

*For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, **not being mixed with faith** in those who heard it . . .*

By disobedience:

*Since therefore it remains that some must enter it,
and those to whom it was first preached
did not enter **because of disobedience** . . .*

Today, if you will hear His voice:

Do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion,

As in the day of trial in the wilderness,

When your fathers tested Me;

They tried Me, though they saw My work.

For forty years I was grieved with that generation,

And said, It is a people who go astray in their hearts,

And they do not know My ways. So I swore in My wrath,

They shall not enter My rest . . .

But today—now—has no limits! Today is the best day to enter into God’s will;

. . . for if Joshua had given them rest,

then He would not afterward have spoken of another day.

There remains therefore a rest for the people of God.

For he who has entered His rest

***has himself also ceased from his works as God did
from His.***¹

God calls us to add our faith to—or to “rest in”—what we hear Him confirming in our hearts, which means we cease striving for our own will, and seek to step in alignment with God’s will.

What Does it Mean to *Enter His Rest*?

To rest is not as much a *defined inactivity* as it is *ceasing from previous activity*. Did God rest on the seventh day because He was so exhausted from exertion that He

¹ Hebrews 4:11-12; Psalm 95:8-11; Hebrews 4: 7, 2, 6, 8-10.

needed a day off? No. He simply ceased creating because He had finished. He simply engaged in an intentional rest from His previous activity.

The Sabbath rest also means more than a legalistic “don’t work.” How did Jesus answer the Pharisees when they attempted to enforce a “Sabbath” doctrine that was built upon “do-and-don’t-do” rules and regulations?

*And the Pharisees said
to Him,*

*"Look, why do they do
what is not lawful on the Sab-
bath?"*



But He said to them,

*"Have you never read what David did when he was
in need and hungry, he and those with him: how he went
into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest,
and ate the showbread, which is not lawful to eat, except
for the priests, and also gave some to those who were with
him?"*

And He said to them,

***"The Sabbath was made for man,
and not man for the Sabbath.
Therefore the Son of Man
is also Lord of the Sabbath."***²

God did not design the Sabbath as a list of “do’s and don’ts,” but rather as a *benefit* and blessing to humankind. Therefore, who are we to . . .

judge another's servant?

. . . One person esteems one day above another;

² Mark 2:24-28