

SABBATH¹

Introduction

1. We have desires we never seem to be able to satisfy.

- a. “That towering intellect of the thirteenth century, Thomas Aquinas, once asked the question, What would satisfy our desire? What would it take to feel satisfied? The answer he came up with was this: everything. We would have to experience everything and everybody and be experienced by everything and everybody to feel satisfied. Eat at every restaurant; travel to every country, every city, every exotic locale; experience every natural wonder; make love to every partner we could possibly desire; win every award; climb to the top of every field; own every item in the world; etc. We would have to experience it all to ever feel...okay, that’s enough. Sadly, even if we had access to unlimited funds, time and space still have a pesky way of getting in the way.”²
- b. How do we solve the problem of our insatiable desire?

2. We are emotionally exhausted, psychologically overworked, and spiritually malnourished.

- a. “[The Sabbath] has largely been forgotten by the church, which has uncritically mimicked the rhythms of the industrial and success-obsessed West. The result? Our road-weary, exhausted churches have largely failed to integrate Sabbath into their lives as vital elements of Christian discipleship. It is not as though we do not love God—we love God deeply. We just do not know how to sit with God anymore. He continued: We have become perhaps the most emotionally exhausted, psychologically overworked, spiritually malnourished people in history.”³

3. With COVID-19, many are experiencing a Shabbat and actually enjoying it.



¹ See also *Jewish Feasts, Rest, and Time Management*.

² J. M. Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, 144-145.

³ A. J. Swoboda, quoted in J. M. Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, 152.

Biblical Worldview

1. At the beginning of human history, God blessed the seventh day and set it apart.

- a. God himself rested on the seventh day.
 - (1) **Ge 2:2-3** 2 ...On the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done.
 - (2) **Ex 20:11** 11 ...In six days Yahweh made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day.
- b. God blessed the seventh day and made it holy.
 - (1) **Ge 2:3** 3 ...God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.
 - (2) **Ex 20:11** 11 ...Yahweh blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.
- c. Quotes.
 - (1) "...[God] built a rhythm into the DNA of creation. A tempo, a syncopated beat. God worked for six, rested for one. When we fight this work-six-days, Sabbath-one-day rhythm, we go against the grain of the universe. And to quote the philosopher H. H. Farmer, 'If you go against the grain of the universe, you get splinters.'"⁴

2. God's Sabbaths are related to the number seven.

- a. Time periods of seven:
 - (1) Seven days.
 - (a) **Ge 2:2-3** 2 ...On the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. 3 So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy....
 - (b) **Ex 20:9-11** 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to Yahweh your God. On it you shall not do any work.... 11 For in six days Yahweh made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore Yahweh blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.
 - (2) Seven weeks.
 - (a) **Lev 23:15** 15 You shall count seven full weeks from the day after the Sabbath [the Feast of First Fruits], from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering.
 - (3) Seven months.
 - (a) **Lev 23:24** 24 ...In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall observe a day of solemn rest, a memorial proclaimed with blast of trumpets, a holy convocation [the Feast of Trumpets].
 - (4) Seven years.
 - (a) **Ex 21:2** 2 When you buy a Hebrew slave, he shall serve six years, and in the seventh he shall go out free, for nothing.
 - (b) **Ex 23:10-11** 10 For six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield, 11 but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your

⁴ J. M. Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, 153-54.

people may eat. And what they leave the beasts of the field may eat. You shall do likewise with your vineyard and with your olive orchard.

- (c) **Lev 25:2-7** 2 Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When you come into the land that I give you, the land shall keep a Sabbath to Yahweh. 3 For six years you shall sow your field, and for six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather in its fruits, 4 but in the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a Sabbath to Yahweh. You shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard. 5 You shall not reap what grows of itself in your harvest, or gather the grapes of your undressed vine. It shall be a year of solemn rest for the land.
- (5) Seven weeks of years.
 - (a) **Lev 25:8-10** 8 You shall count seven weeks of years, seven times seven years, so that the time of the seven weeks of years shall give you forty-nine years. 9 Then you shall sound the loud trumpet on the tenth day of the seventh month. On the Day of Atonement you shall sound the trumpet throughout all your land. 10 And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you, when each of you shall return to his property and each of you shall return to his clan.
 - (b) **Da 9:25** 25 Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks.
- (6) Seven decades.
 - (a) **Jer 25:11-12** 11 This whole land [Israel] shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 12 Then after seventy years are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, declares Yahweh, making the land an everlasting waste.
 - (b) **Jer 29:10** 10 ...When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I [Yahweh] will visit you [Israel], and I will fulfil to you my promise and bring you back to this place [Jerusalem].
 - (c) **2 Ch 36:20-21** 20 [Nebuchadnezzar] took into exile in Babylon those who had escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and to his sons until the establishment of the kingdom of Persia, 21 to fulfil the word of Yahweh by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its Sabbaths. All the days that it lay desolate it kept Sabbath, to fulfil seventy years.
 - (d) **Da 9:2** 2 ...In the first year of [Darius's] reign, I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years that, according to the word of Yahweh to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.
- (7) Seventy weeks of years.
 - (a) **Da 9:24** 24 Seventy weeks are decreed about your people [Israel] and your holy city [Jerusalem], to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place.
- (8) Seven millenniums.

- (a) **Ps 90:4** 4 ...A thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it is past, or as a watch in the night.
 - (b) **2 Pe 3:8** 8 ...Do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.
 - (c) **Re 20:2-6** 2 ...[The angel] seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, 3 and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. ...4 I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Messiah for a thousand years. 5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Messiah, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.
- b. Seven annual feasts.
 - (1) Passover.
 - (2) Unleavened Bread.
 - (3) Firstfruits.
 - (4) Pentecost.
 - (5) Trumpets.
 - (6) Day of Atonement.
 - (7) Booths.
 - c. Principles.
 - (1) Periods of seven are very important in God's timetable of history.
 - (2) God likes to work in sevens.
 - (3) We may want to work in sevens, too (*i.e.*, the attempt to change the work week to ten days during the French revolution failed miserably).

3. Officially, the weekly Sabbath is for Israel only.

- a. Sabbaths are a permanent sign between God and Israel.
 - (1) **Ex 31:13** 13 ...Above all you shall keep my Sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, Yahweh, sanctify you.
 - (2) **Ex 31:16-17** 16 ...The people of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout their generations, as a covenant forever. 17 It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days Yahweh made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.
 - (3) **Eze 20:12-13** 12 ...I [Yahweh] gave them [Israel] my Sabbaths, as a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am Yahweh who sanctifies them. 13 But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness. They did not walk in my statutes but rejected my rules, by which, if a person does them, he shall live. And my Sabbaths they greatly profaned.
- b. Sabbaths are a holy convocation for Israel.

- (1) **Lev 23:3** 3 Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation.
- c. Sabbaths are specifically for Israel.
 - (1) **Ne 9:14** 14 ... You [Yahweh] made known to [Israel] your holy Sabbath and commanded them commandments, statutes, and a law by Moses your servant.
- d. The Sabbaths include all people and animals associated with Israel.
 - (1) **Lev 25:6-7** 6 The Sabbath of the land shall provide food for you, for yourself, for your male and female slaves, for your hired worker and the sojourner who lives with you, 7 for your cattle, and for the wild animals that are in your land. All its yield shall be for food.
 - (2) **Dt 5:14** 14 On [the Sabbath] you shall not do any work—you, your son, your daughter, your male servant, your female servant, your ox, your donkey, any of your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates—that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you.
- e. God commands Israel to:
 - (1) Remember the Sabbath day.
 - (a) **Ex 20:8** 8 Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
 - (2) Keep the Sabbath.
 - (a) **Ex 31:14** 14 You [Israel] shall keep the Sabbath, because it is holy for you.
 - (b) **Lev 19:3** 3 ... You [Israel] shall keep my Sabbaths. I am Yahweh your God.
 - (3) Keep the Sabbath day holy.
 - (a) **Ne 13:22** 22 ... I [Nehemiah] commanded the Levites that they should purify themselves, come, and guard the [Jerusalem] gates, to keep the Sabbath day holy. Remember this also in my favour, my God, and spare me according to the greatness of your loyal love.
 - (4) Do no work on the Sabbath.
 - (a) **Ex 20:10** 10 ... The seventh day is a Sabbath to Yahweh your God. On it you [Israel] shall not do any work—you, your son, your daughter, your male servant, your female servant, your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates.
 - (b) **Dt 5:14-15** 14 ... The seventh day is a Sabbath to Yahweh your God. On it you shall not do any work—you, your son, your daughter, your male servant, your female servant, your ox, your donkey, any of your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates—that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you.
- f. Profaning the Sabbath resulted in individual punishment or national discipline.
 - (1) Individual punishment.
 - (a) **Ex 31:14-15** 14 Whoever does any work on [the Sabbath], that soul shall be cut off from among his people. 15 ... Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day shall be put to death.
 - (b) **Ex 35:2** 2 Whoever does any work on [the Sabbath] shall be put to death.
 - (c) **Nu 15:32-36** 32 While the people of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man gathering sticks on the Sabbath day. 33 And those who found him gathering sticks brought him to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation. 34 They put him in custody, because it had not been made clear what should be done to him. 35 And Yahweh said to Moses, The man shall be put to death.

All the congregation shall stone him with stones outside the camp. 36 And all the congregation brought him outside the camp and stoned him to death with stones, as Yahweh commanded Moses.

- (2) National discipline.
 - (a) **Lev 26:33-35** 33 I will scatter you among the nations, I will unsheathe the sword after you, your land shall be a desolation, and your cities shall be a waste. 34 Then the land shall enjoy its Sabbaths as long as it lies desolate, while you are in your enemies' land. Then the land shall rest, and enjoy its Sabbaths. 35 As long as it lies desolate it shall have rest, the rest that it did not have on your Sabbaths when you were dwelling in it.
 - (b) **Lev 26:43** 43 ...The land [of Israel] shall be abandoned by [Israel] and enjoy its Sabbaths while it lies desolate without them....
 - (c) **2 Ch 36:20-21** 20 [Nebuchadnezzar] took into exile in Babylon those who had escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and to his sons until the establishment of the kingdom of Persia, 21 to fulfil the word of Yahweh by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its Sabbaths. All the days that it lay desolate it kept Sabbath, to fulfil seventy years.
 - (d) **Jer 17:24-27** 27 ...If you [Israel] do not listen to me, to keep the Sabbath day holy, and not to bear a burden and enter by the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, then I will kindle a fire in its gates, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem and shall not be quenched.
 - (e) **Eze 20:12-13** 12 ...I [Yahweh] gave them [Israel] my Sabbaths, as a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am Yahweh who sanctifies them. 13 But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness. They did not walk in my statutes but rejected my rules, by which, if a person does them, he shall live. And my Sabbaths they greatly profaned.
 - (f) **Eze 22:26** 26...[Israel's priests] have disregarded my Sabbaths, so that I [Yahweh] am profaned among them.
- g. God remembers and rewards individual Jews who keep the Sabbath day holy.
 - (1) **Ne 13:19-22** 19 As soon as it began to grow dark at the gates of Jerusalem before the Sabbath, I [Nehemiah] commanded that the doors should be shut and gave orders that they should not be opened until after the Sabbath. And I stationed some of my servants at the gates, that no load might be brought in on the Sabbath day. 20 Then the merchants and sellers of all kinds of wares lodged outside Jerusalem once or twice. 21 But I warned them and said to them, Why do you lodge outside the wall? If you do so again, I will lay hands on you. From that time on they did not come on the Sabbath. 22 Then I commanded the Levites that they should purify themselves and come and guard the gates, to keep the Sabbath day holy. Remember this also in my favour, my God, and spare me according to the greatness of your loyal love.

4. By Jesus' time, the Sabbath had become a huge burden to the Jewish people.

- a. God instituted some simple Sabbath rules for Israel.
 - (1) Don't bake, boil, or gather food on the Sabbath.
 - (a) **Ex 16:26-29** 26 Six days you shall gather [manna], but on the seventh day, which is a Sabbath, there will be none. 27 On the seventh day some of the

people went out to gather, but they found none. 28 And Yahweh said to Moses, How long will you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws? 29 See! Yahweh has given you the Sabbath. Therefore on the sixth day he gives you bread for two days. Remain each of you in his place. Let no one go out of his place on the seventh day.

- (2) Don't kindle a fire on the Sabbath.
 - (a) **Ex 35:3** 3 You shall kindle no fire in all your dwelling places on the Sabbath day.
- b. Over time, Jewish leaders added dozens of Sabbath regulations.
 - (1) Don't pluck heads of grain and eat them.
 - (a) **Mt 12:1-2** 1 At that time Jesus went through the grain fields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. 2 But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.
- c. Again and again, Jesus exposed the ridiculousness of these regulations.
 - (1) David ate the bread of the Presence when he was hungry, and that was okay.
 - (a) **Mt 12:3-4** 3 [Jesus] said to [the Pharisees], Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, and those who were with him, 4 how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests?
 - (2) The priests in the temple "profane" the Sabbath, and that's okay.
 - (a) **Mt 12:5** 5 Or have you not read in the Torah how on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are guiltless? ... 7 If you had known what this means, I desire mercy, and not sacrifice, you would not have condemned the guiltless.
 - (3) One lifts a sheep out of a pit on the Sabbath, and that's okay.
 - (a) **Mt 12:10-12** 10 ...[The Pharisees] asked [Jesus], Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?—so that they might accuse him. 11 He said to them, Which one of you who has a sheep, if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not take hold of it and lift it out? 12 Of how much more value is a man than a sheep! So it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.
 - (4) One unties his ox or donkey to water it on the Sabbath, and that's okay.
 - (a) **Lk 13:15-16** 15 ...The Lord answered [the ruler of the synagogue], You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it away to water it? 16 And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?
 - (5) One pulls out his son or ox that has fallen into a well on the Sabbath, and that's okay.
 - (a) **Lk 14:1-6** 1 One Sabbath, when [Jesus] went to dine at the house of a ruler of the Pharisees, they were watching him carefully. 2 And behold, there was a man before him who had dropsy. 3 And Jesus responded to the lawyers and Pharisees saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not? 4 But they remained silent. Then he took him, healed him, and sent him away. 5 And he said to them, Which of you, having a son or an ox that has fallen into a well on

a Sabbath day, will not immediately pull him out? 6 And they could not reply to these things.

- (6) Eight-day old sons are circumcised on the Sabbath, and that's okay.
 - (a) **Jn 7:21-24** 21 Jesus answered [the crowd], I did one work, and you all marvel at it. 22 Moses gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. 23 If on the Sabbath a man receives circumcision, so that the Torah of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with me because on the Sabbath I made a man's whole body well? 24 Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment.
- d. The Jewish leaders persecuted Jesus because of his Sabbath activity.
 - (a) **Jn 5:16-18** 16 ... This was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these [miraculous signs] on the Sabbath.
- e. Principles.
 - (1) Always apply the intention/rationale/spirit of God's commands.

5. The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.

- a. The Sabbath was made for man.
 - (1) **Mk 2:27** 27 The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.
- b. Jesus, the Son of Man, is lord of the Sabbath.
 - (1) **Mt 12:8** 8 For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath.
- c. The Father and the Son work on the Sabbath for us.
 - (1) **Jn 5:17-18** 17 But Jesus answered them, My Father is working until now, and I am working. 18 This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.
- d. The Sabbath is to be a day of delight and honour.
 - (1) **Is 58:13-14** 13 If you [Israel] turn back your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of Yahweh honourable, if you honour it, not going your own ways, seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly, 14 then you shall take delight in Yahweh, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth. I will feed you with the inheritance of Jacob your father, for the mouth of Yahweh has spoken.
- e. Principles.
 - (1) The intent of the Sabbath was always Israel's blessing.
 - (2) Sabbath reminds us the world does not revolve around us.
 - (a) On the Sabbath we embrace our limits. We stop during the Sabbath because God is on the throne, assuring us the world will not fall apart if we cease our activities.⁵
- f. Quotes.
 - (1) The Sabbath "was especially meant to be a day of liberation, not of slavery; especially a day to show compassion, not to put off mercy for another time. ... The Sabbath addresses human needs at all levels—physical, emotional and spiritual. It was made for humanity."⁶

⁵ J. Scazzero, "The Emotionally Healthy Planter," 34.

⁶ Rich Robinson, "A Roadmap to Christ in the Seven Feasts," 17.

6. Church age believers are to practice the principle of Sabbath.

- a. God never commands Gentiles or Church age believers to keep the Sabbath day.
 - (1) Of the ten commandments, only the fourth is never required of Church age believers.
 - (a) **Ex 20:8-10** 8 Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days you [Israel] shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to Yahweh your God.
 - (2) After Acts 13, the term Sabbath is used only in Colossians. This indicates the apostles never required Gentile believers to keep the Sabbath.
 - (a) **Col 2:16-17** 16 ...Let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival, a new moon, or a Sabbath. 17 These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Messiah.
- b. Church age believers, however, should practice the principle of Sabbath.
 - (1) **Ge 2:2-3** 2 ...On the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. 3 So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.
 - (2) Sabbath is a little slice of heaven, now on earth. It's experiencing God's kingdom before God's kingdom really comes.
- c. Be fully convinced in your own mind how to observe the principle of Sabbath.
 - (1) **Ro 14:5-6** 5 One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. 6 The one who observes the day, observes it in honour of the Lord [Jesus]. The one who eats, eats in honour of the Lord, because he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honour of the Lord and gives thanks to God.
- d. Don't pass judgment on others regarding observance of the Sabbath principle.
 - (1) **Col 2:16-17** 16 ...Let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival, a new moon, or a Sabbath. 17 These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Messiah.
- e. Principles.
 - (1) Don't observe the Sabbath, observe the principle of Sabbath.
 - (2) Allow yourself and others freedom in how to observe Sabbath.
 - (3) Our individual Sabbath will depend on our life stage, our work commitments, and our personality.
 - (4) Avoid all hint of legalism.
- f. Quotes.
 - (1) "[W]e don't have to keep the Sabbath; we get to keep the Sabbath."⁷
 - (2) "The Sabbath is an invitation to enter delight. The Sabbath, when experienced as God intended, is the best day of our lives. Without question or thought, it is the best day of the week."⁸

⁷ J. M. Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, [].

⁸ D. Allender, quoted in J. M. Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, 155.

- (3) “I wouldn’t really care if I don’t have to keep the Sabbath anymore. I want to keep the Sabbath. Even if the Sabbath is no longer a binding command, it’s still the grain of the universe. It’s a gift—and one I want to open and enjoy.”⁹

7. Sabbath Recommendations for Today.

a. The Sabbath is for:

- (1) Solemn rest.
 - (a) שָׁבָה: “to cease, stop...to rest, celebrate, with direct or indirect connection with the Sabbath...to observe, or to celebrate the Sabbath” (*HALOT*, 1407).
 - (b) **Ex 16:23** 23 ...This is what Yahweh has commanded: Tomorrow is a day of solemn rest, a holy Sabbath to Yahweh.
 - (c) **Ex 35:2** 2 Six days work shall be done, but on the seventh day you shall have a Sabbath of solemn rest, holy to Yahweh.
 - (d) **Lev 23:3** 3 Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work.
 - (e) **Dt 5:13-15** 13 Six days you [Israel] shall labor and do all your work, 14 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to Yahweh your God. On it you shall not do any work—you, your son, your daughter, your male servant, your female servant, your ox, your donkey, any of your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates—that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you.
- (2) Refreshment.
 - (a) **Ex 23:12** 12 Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall rest, that your ox and your donkey may have rest, and the son of your servant woman, and the alien, may be refreshed.
 - (b) **Ex 31:17** 17 [The Sabbath] is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days Yahweh made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.
- (3) Remembering what God has done for us.
 - (a) **Dt 5:15** 15 You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and Yahweh your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore Yahweh your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.
- (4) Teaching (Lk 4:16, 31; 13:10).
- (5) Caring for people.
 - (a) Mercy (Mt 12:7).
 - (b) Healing (Mt 12:10; Lk 13:14; 14:3).
 - (c) Restoring people’s health (Mt 12:13).
 - (d) Saving life (Mk 3:4).
 - (e) Freeing people from disability (Lk 13:12).
 - (f) Making people straight (Lk 13:13).
 - (g) Loosing people from bonds (Lk 13:16).
 - (h) Pulling out a son or ox that has fallen into a well (Lk 14:5).
 - (i) Making man’s whole body well (Jn 7:23).

⁹ J. M. Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, 173.

- (6) Caring for animals.
 - (a) Lifting a sheep out of a pit (Mt 12:10).
 - (b) Leading away our ox or donkey to water it (Lk 13:15).
 - (c) Pulling out an ox that has fallen into a well (Lk 14:5).
- b. The Sabbath is not for:
 - (1) Working hard.
 - (a) Bearing burdens (Jer 17:21).
 - (b) Carrying burdens out of our houses (Jer 17:21).
 - (c) Doing work (Jer 17:22).
 - (2) Making money.
 - (a) Treading winepresses (Ne 13:15).
 - (b) Bringing in heaps of grain for sale (Ne 13:15).
 - (c) Loading grain, wine, grapes, figs, and all kinds of loads on donkeys (Ne 13:15).
 - (d) Selling food (Ne 13:15).
 - (e) Selling all kinds of goods (Ne 13:16).
 - (f) Bringing in burdens by the gates (Jer 17:22).
 - (3) Indulging ourselves.
 - (a) Doing our pleasure (Is 58:13).
 - (b) Going our own way (Is 58:13).
 - (c) Seeking our own pleasure (Is 58:13).
- c. Principles.
 - (1) Practicing the Sabbath principle can hugely impact our life.
 - (a) "...Sabbath is the primary discipline, or practice, by which we cultivate the spirit of restfulness in our lives as a whole."¹⁰
 - (b) "People who keep sabbath live all seven days differently."¹¹
 - (2) Don't practice Sabbath if you're not abiding in Jesus and walking by the Spirit.
 - (a) **Is 1:13** 13 Bring no more vain offerings. Incense is an abomination to me. New moon and Sabbath and the calling of convocations—I cannot endure iniquity and solemn assembly.
 - (3) Work hard six days per week.
- d. Quotes.
 - (1) "Sabbath is an act of resistance."¹²
 - (2) "[T]he Sabbath isn't the same thing as a day off. What's the difference? Eugene Peterson had a name for a day off; he called it a 'bastard Sabbath.' The illegitimate child of the seventh day and Western culture. On a day off you don't work for your employer (in theory). But you still work. You run errands, catch up around your house or apartment, pay the bills, make an IKEA run (there goes four hours...). And you play! You see a movie, kick the soccer ball with friends, go shopping, cycle through the city. And that's great stuff, all of it. I love my

¹⁰ J. M. Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, 150.

¹¹ W. Brueggemann.

¹² W. Brueggemann.

day off. But those activities don't make a Sabbath. On the Sabbath all we do is rest and worship."¹³

- (3) "The Sabbath is the day I feel most connected to God. Most connected to my wife and family. To my own soul. It's the day I feel most awake and yet most at peace. The day I expect joy. The day that sets the tone for my entire week."¹⁴

8. Psalm 92 is a beautiful song that shows us the heart of the Sabbath.

9. A moment by moment Sabbath rest is available to us.

- a. **Heb 4:9-10** 9 ...There remains a [moment by moment] Sabbath rest for the people of God, 10 for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.
- b. Quotes.
 - (1) "...Sabbath is more than just a day; it's a way of being in the world. It's a spirit of restfulness that comes from abiding, from living in the Father's loving presence all week long."¹⁵
- c. See *Rest*.

10. A permanent Sabbath rest is coming.

- a. Israel's weekly Sabbath was always a shadow of things to come.
 - (1) **Col 2:16-17** 16 ...Let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival, a new moon, or a Sabbath. 17 These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Messiah.
- b. In the Messianic kingdom, Israel will the Sabbath day as intended.
 - (1) **Jer 17:24-27** 24 ...If you listen to me, declares Yahweh, and bring in no burden by the gates of this city on the Sabbath day, but keep the Sabbath day holy and do no work on it, 25 then there shall enter by the gates of this city kings and princes who sit on the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they and their officials, the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And this city shall be inhabited forever.
 - (2) **Eze 44:24** 24 [The Levitical priests] shall keep my laws and my statutes in all my appointed feasts, and they shall keep my Sabbaths holy.
 - (3) **Eze 45:17** 17 It shall be the prince's duty to furnish the burnt offerings, grain offerings, and drink offerings, at the feasts, the new moons, and the Sabbaths, all the appointed feasts of the house of Israel.
 - (4) **Eze 46:1-5** 1 Thus says Lord Yahweh: The gate of the inner court that faces east shall be shut on the six working days, but on the Sabbath day it shall be opened, and on the day of the new moon it shall be opened. 2 The prince shall enter by the vestibule of the gate from outside, and shall take his stand by the post of the gate. The priests shall offer his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate. Then he shall go out, but the gate shall not be shut until evening. 3 The people of the land shall bow down at the

¹³ J. M. Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, 161.

¹⁴ J. M. Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, 173.

¹⁵ J. M. Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, 149.

entrance of that gate before Yahweh on the Sabbaths and on the new moons. 4 The burnt offering that the prince offers to Yahweh on the Sabbath day shall be six lambs without blemish and a ram without blemish. 5 And the grain offering with the ram shall be an ephah, and the grain offering with the lambs shall be as much as he is able, together with a hin of oil to each ephah.

- c. “Many Christians have a Sabbath time each week for spiritual refreshment and worship. It can be helpful to use that time not only as refreshment in the present but also a reminder of our past in Eden and our promised future in the new heavens and new earth.”¹⁶
- d. The Sabbath points forward to a time when God will bring “a perfect and complete cosmos out of chaos.... The weekly rest-experience of the Sabbath [under the Mosaic Law] served to epitomise the future peace and rest of the Messianic age.”¹⁷

¹⁶ Rich Robinson, “A Roadmap to Christ in the Seven Feasts,” 15.

¹⁷ S. Bacchiocchi, “Sabbatical Typologies of Messianic Redemption,” *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 17:2 (December 1986): 155, 165).

Application

1. Stop.

- a. “For me, keeping the Sabbath means stopping from 6:00 p.m. on Friday to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday—even if my sermon is not finished—as if it ever is. I avoid the computer, e-mails, and church-related work. I spend part of the day on Friday doing other unpaid work, such as cleaning the house, repairing the car, cleaning, laundry, and paying bills.”¹⁸
- b. “Don’t buy. Don’t sell. Don’t shop. Don’t surf the web. Don’t read a magazine.... Just put all that away and enjoy.”¹⁹

2. Rest.

- a. “To begin, just set aside a day. Clear your schedule. TURN OFF YOUR PHONE. Say a prayer to invite the Holy Spirit to pastor you into his presence. And then? Rest and worship. In whatever way is life giving for your soul. My family and I do this every week. Just before sunset on Friday, we finish up all our to-do lists and homework and grocery shopping and responsibilities, power down all our devices (we literally put them all in a box and stow it in a closet), and gather around the table as a family. We open a bottle of wine, light some candles, read a psalm, pray. Then we feast, and we basically don’t stop feasting for the next twenty-four hours. ... We sleep in Saturday morning. Drink coffee. Read our Bibles. Pray more. Spend time together. Talk. Laugh. In summer, walk to the park. In winter, make a fire. Get lost in good novels on the couch. Cuddle. Nap. ... Make love.”²⁰

3. Replenish.

- a. Do whatever delights and replenishes you. Avoid church email and your cell phone—and anything that may make you even think about church.²¹
- b. Few of us would give ourselves a “no obligation day” very often. Keeping the Sabbath is like having a heavy snow day every week. You have the gift of a day to do whatever you want. You don’t have any obligations, pressures, or responsibilities. You have permission to play, be with friends, take a nap, or read a good book. Think about it: God gives you over seven weeks (fifty-two days in all) of “snow days” every year!

4. Delight.

- a. “What could I do for twenty-four hours that would fill my soul with a deep, throbbing joy? That would make me spontaneously combust with wonder, awe, gratitude, and praise?”²²

5. Contemplate.

¹⁸ J. Scazzero, “The Emotionally Healthy Planter,” 34.

¹⁹ J. M. Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, 169.

²⁰ J. M. Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, 174-75.

²¹ J. Scazzero, “The Emotionally Healthy Planter,” 34.

²² J. M. Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, 155.

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Podcasts

Fight Hustle End Hurry (<https://podcasts.apple.com/nz/podcast/fight-hustle-end-hurry/id1480300467>).