

# A STUDY IN HEBREWS

week 5: a deeper look at Sabbath

## INTRODUCTION

Have you ever felt like life is just moving way too fast? Ever felt burned out? God actually cares about this aspect of our lives, and seems to have cared for a really long time! This week, we will think back to Hebrews 4, and take a deeper look into the invitation of God's rest. We will take a look at multiple scriptures to gain a larger understanding of the rest God is inviting us to enter into.

Describe what Sabbath looks like. What does it feel like? How is it practical?

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Where do you think these ideas come from? Scripture? Family Tradition?

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## READ: Genesis 1:27-2:3

What do you observe about the nature of the Sabbath?

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*"Adam, we are told, was created on the sixth day. Clearly, then, he had no part in those first six days of work, for he came into being only at their end. God's seventh day was, in fact, Adam's first. Whereas God worked six days and then enjoyed His sabbath rest, Adam began his life with sabbath..."*  
—Watchman Nee

Have you ever thought about the way God designed sabbath as part of our human experience from the beginning? Why does this matter?

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## READ: Deuteronomy 5:12-15

What do you observe about the length of this commandment as compared to the others?  
Do any phrases stick out to you?

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**God chooses to remind the people that the purpose of the sabbath is partly for them to remember that they are no longer slaves, that it is an expression of their freedom in God.**

If you have attempted to observe sabbath in the past, has it felt like freedom to you?  
Why or why not?

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**Read Mark 2:23-27**

What sticks out to you from this passage?

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What does Jesus force the Pharisees to deal with here? Why does it matter?

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Do you view the sabbath as a gift from God for you? Why does it matter?

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### **Read Hebrews 4:6-11**

What sticks out to you? Why do you think that is grabbing your attention today?

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What does it feel like God is inviting you into in regards to sabbath?

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How can you put this into practice?

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**Final thought:** Author and pastor Pete Scazzero said "I have been teaching pastors and leaders about Sabbath-keeping for over a decade. Why is it then that so few actually stop to receive this wonderful gift (Mark 2:27)? **The root answer lies, I believe, in the place from which we have our sense of self.** If our sense of self comes from our work, accomplishments, or ministry, then stopping our work to rest can be quite terrifying. It touches our deep anxieties about our own deaths. Many of us come carrying a great deal of shame, an intensely painful feeling or experience of being flawed. It may come from a background of abuse (as was my history), or a deep well of pain and regret. We feel unworthy of the rich delights and love God offers us in Sabbath. It is easier to just keep working –even if our lives are spinning out of control. Sabbath is about letting ourselves be seen by God. Sabbath is about being deeply loved. Sabbath is about emotional exposure to grace. **Sabbath is about grounding our sense of self in our relationship with Him, not our work.** This very act of stopping our work helps shape the foundation of our identity in Christ apart from what we do. Pharaoh, the slave driver, remains inside too many of us. Let us throw off his yoke and remember the Sabbath (Deut. 5:12-15)."

**Take a moment in prayer and reflection, and ask God to show you what He wants to give you freedom from as you begin to receive this gift of rest. Write any reflections below:**

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