

# Week 1: The Purpose of the Sabbath

A Sabbath Family Bible Study

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## Introduction: Reclaiming the Rhythm of God

In a world that tramples sacred things and exalts busyness, the Sabbath is a divine protest. It is God's weekly claim over time, over the household, and over man. When the Lord sanctified the seventh day, He established a permanent boundary against the tyranny of endless labor and selfish indulgence. The Sabbath is not man's invention, nor is it to be remolded by modern churches into Sunday amusement and soft spirituality.

Rather, the Sabbath is a holy convocation, a family altar, a dominion reset. In *The Great Order*, the Sabbath is the weekly crown of the household. Let us now open the Scriptures and see what the Lord has spoken.

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## Scripture Reading (KJV)

(Genesis 2:1-3, Exodus 20:8-11, Isaiah 58:13-14, Psalm 92:1-5)

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### Genesis 2:1–3 - God Rests and Sanctifies the Seventh Day

**1** Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

**2** And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.

**3** And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

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### Commentary:

The very first Sabbath was not about catching one's breath. God does not tire, His rest was royal, He paused to enjoy, declare finished, and bless what He made. The seventh day was set apart as holy before sin ever entered the world. The Sabbath is not a later Jewish invention, but a Creation ordinance, universal and perpetual.

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## Exodus 20:8–11 - The Fourth Commandment

**8** Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

**9** Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:

**10** But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

**11** For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

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### Commentary:

This is a command from the Decalogue. Note the structure: six days of labor, one day of rest. But this rest isn't merely from physical labor, it is unto the Lord. The Sabbath is about remembrance, reverence, and realignment. Notice the household order: fathers are charged with ensuring that no one under their roof labors, even servants and animals. Everything pauses before the throne of God.

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## Isaiah 58:13–14 - The Delight of the Sabbath

**13** If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:

**14** Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

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### Commentary:

The Sabbath is not a burden but a delight, for those who know God. It is not a day for pursuing your own pleasures or business, but a day of sacred focus. In exchange, the Lord promises joy, elevation, and inheritance. The Sabbath reveals whether a household serves itself or serves the King.

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## Discussion Questions for All Ages

## Young Children

- Why did God create the Sabbath?
- What are some ways we can honor God's Sabbath?
- Why is resting in God's way a good thing?

## Older Children & Teens

- Why did God make the Sabbath for man?
- How is biblical rest different from laziness or entertainment?
- What distractions make it difficult to honor the Sabbath today?

## Adults

- Does our Sabbath reflect God's purpose or our own preferences?
- How can our family better use the Sabbath for worship, learning, fellowship, and restoration?
- What habits help us trust God's provision enough to truly rest?

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## Hymn: “Safely Through Another Week” by John Newton (1774)

1.

Safely through another week,  
God has brought us on our way;  
Let us now a blessing seek,  
Waiting in His courts today:  
Day of all the week the best,  
Emblem of eternal rest.

2.

While we pray for pardoning grace,  
Through the dear Redeemer's name,  
Show Thy reconciling face,  
Take away our sin and shame;  
From our worldly cares set free,  
May we rest this day in Thee.

3.

Here we come Thy name to praise,  
Let us feel Thy presence near;

May Thy glory meet our eyes,  
While we in Thy house appear:  
Here afford us, Lord, a taste  
Of our everlasting feast.

4.

May Thy gospel's joyful sound  
Conquer sinners, comfort saints;  
Make the fruits of grace abound,  
Bring relief for all complaints:  
Thus may all our Sabbaths prove,  
Till we join the church above.

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### Psalm Reading - Psalm 92:1–5 (KJV)

1 It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High:

2 To shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night,

3 Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound.

4 For thou, LORD, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands.

5 O LORD, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep.

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### Commentary

This Psalm is uniquely identified as a Sabbath Psalm and teaches us the purpose of God's holy day. The Sabbath is about redirecting our attention toward God. The psalmist emphasizes thanksgiving, praise, worship, and meditation on God's works. Just as God rested after creation, His people are called to pause from ordinary labor and remember the greatness of their Creator.

Verse 4 connects directly to Genesis, reminding us that the Sabbath is rooted in God's work of creation. We rest because He rested. We worship because He is worthy. The Sabbath provides an opportunity each week to step away from worldly concerns and refocus our hearts, minds, and families on the goodness, faithfulness, and majesty of God. Families are to be reminded that the Sabbath is intended as a gift, a weekly invitation to rejoice in God's provision, reflect on His works, and strengthen their relationship with Him and one another.

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## Family Application Points

### 1. Prepare before the Sabbath.

Just as Israel gathered manna the day before, your family must prepare spiritually and practically to honor the Sabbath.

### 2. Cease from common labor.

Do not shop, work, or conduct business beyond what is absolutely necessary. Let the home come to rest under God's government.

### 3. Sanctify the day.

Structure the day with Scripture, prayer, song, reflection, and family togetherness. Let Christ rule your time.

### 4. Fathers must lead.

The head of the house is the gatekeeper of Sabbath sanctity. Set the tone through joyful leadership and righteous boundaries.

### 5. Children must be trained.

From young ages, they should learn to look forward to the Sabbath as a gift and a joy.

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## A Sabbath Feast - A Foretaste of the Kingdom

The Sabbath is not only a day of rest and worship, but a day of rejoicing. Just as the Lord provided double manna on the sixth day for the Israelites to enjoy on the seventh (Exodus 16:22–30), the Sabbath feast is a holy celebration of God's provision, His covenant, and His coming Kingdom. It is a time to honor the Lord with joy, food, and fellowship within the household.

### Scriptural Foundation (KJV):

- **Exodus 16:23** – *“And he said unto them, This is that which the LORD hath said, To morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the LORD: bake that which ye will bake to day, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.”*
- **Isaiah 58:13-14** – *“...thou shalt call the sabbath a delight... then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD...”*
- **Nehemiah 8:10** – *“...Eat the fat, and drink the sweet... for this day is holy unto our Lord...”*

**A Special Meal Should Be Served:** Prepare something different from the rest of the week. It doesn't need to be elaborate, only intentional.

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### **A Sabbath Feast Prayer (Used later when the Sabbath Meal is Ready)**

*“Heavenly Father, we thank You for Your Sabbath - a holy day of rest, joy, and renewal. As we partake in this meal, may our hearts be lifted in gratitude for Your provision and peace. Let this table reflect the peace of Your Kingdom and the love that binds our household together in Christ. In Jesus' name, Amen.”*

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### **Closing Prayer**

Our Father in heaven, We thank You for this holy day which Thou did sanctify from the foundation of the world. We confess that we often treat it lightly and forget that time belongs to you. Forgive us for our Sabbath neglect.

Teach us to delight in this day, to cease from our works, and to remember that you are our Creator, Sustainer, and Rest. May our home be a place of reverence and joy. May our children grow up to honor your holy time.

Help us to prepare well, worship fully, and rest rightly. And let this Sabbath be a foretaste of the eternal rest that remains for Thy people. In the name of Jesus Christ, Lord of the Sabbath, we pray. Amen.