

We are starting a new series, linking back to this vision that we launched a while back that's setting the course for the next four years of our life together. We are doing some foundational work on how we pursue Jesus together. What does it mean to be a disciple or an apprentice of Jesus? And so we're launching the habit of Sabbath. I'll unpack this at greater length, but we'll get there in due time. I'm excited about what God has to offer us the next four weeks in particular, but even beyond that, the next six months as we try out the practice of the habit of Sabbath. But before we get there, a few things as to how the spiritual disciplines or what we're calling a rule of life, which is ancient old language—not rules of life, but rule of life, and how and why that functions in the life of a disciple.

Well, it's important to contextualize the need for it. To do so, I'm going to draw from a 1985 by author Neil Postman called *Amusing Ourselves to Death*. I don't endorse all of Neil Postman's work, but this one is increasingly prophetic and prescient for our time. In the book, he essentially lays out, in 1985, how the invention and the advent of the TV would lead to the destruction of public discourse. Just let that sink in. I can't imagine what he would think of the world today, but in there, he talks about how information has changed into a commodity and the downstream effect of that.

The tie between information and action has been severed. Information is now a commodity that can be bought and sold or used as a form of entertainment or worn like a garment to enhance one's status. It comes indiscriminately directed at no one in particular, disconnected from usefulness. We are glutted with information, drowning in information, have no control over it, and don't know what to do with it. Neil Postman

Postman was onto something. He's scanning the horizon and realizing that in the modern world we live in, what we call the information age, is saturated, or in his word, glutted with information. But in this information age, with the advent of the internet, take note of the speed at which the world has changed. This information age is part of a much broader cultural and historical shift. One that is more severe than at any point in history as far as the rate of change, and it's happened within one generation. We've gone not just from the information age, but life itself has sped up to a frenetic pace.

We went within one generation from a hyper-local farming economy in which life moved at the pace of animals and their ability to work a field to not being in a material economy at all but much more of an immaterial economy. Companies don't work in the material. They work in the immaterial. It's what economists and sociologists would say is we exist now not in that material economy but in the attention economy. You

have multibillion-dollar organizations all vying for your attentiveness because if they have your attentiveness, then they will make a profit.

This attention economy has also downstreamed to a shift in how we understand authority. Because for all the good that the modern age has done, and it's done incredible good, what's downstream from an attentive economy is a shift in authority. Today's millennials, my generation and younger, are far more focused on experience than they are on expertise. They would rather hear and listen from someone who is living a certain thing rather than an expert in that particular field. Think again of the very nature of social media as participatory. The internet, in all of its good, has flattened our understanding of authority to where participation has this higher place. This is the understanding of how social media interacts.

Younger generations long for an understanding of truth that's rooted in experience. This is a shift. This is not a commentary on one being better than the other. This is simply an observation that this has shifted. In previous generations, authority was conceived somewhat like, particularly in the church, "Win my mind and my heart will follow," in younger generations, it's actually the opposite. It's "Win my heart, and maybe my mind will follow." And so what previous generations understood about truth over experience is that it actually elevated the idea of truth. That was a good thing, but it left open a side door. It created the environment in which truth statements, void of lived practice, could exist. It's here where you can enter any particular cultural scandal of your choosing. The church chief among them. You can think of, more recently, Bill Hybl or Ravi Zacharias, where there was an environment where truth claims could be made, but they're separated from their lived practice. That's a problem. The new move towards experience over truth is really a move out of cynicism and suspicion over truth claims and the hypocrisy that we saw in those various scandals.

But the problem is downstream from that, you can live any way you want with no anchor in truth. And so the negative result of that is you see the rise of identity politics and relativism in which truth means nothing. That's not what we would like either. Experience without truth leads to the incoherence of relativism, yet truth without practice leads to incoherence in hypocrisy.

So how do we live in this malaise in which we try to hold together both truth and practice? Well, the church actually has a long history of this work. The interesting question for me is much more how do we follow Jesus in this environment? If the world is speeding up to a frenetic pace that's pulling apart truth and practice, how do we hold those two things together?

We're going to look at two different passages. We're going to start in John 14, and then we're going to get to Mark 2, where we talk specifically about how Sabbath and the other practices we're talking about interact with this.

I want to begin with John 14. Jesus is walking and teaching his disciples, and, in this scene, he's about to communicate to them that he has to go, that he has to depart from them. He makes the claim that it's actually better for them that he departs, which as it would be for us it is with them, they're like "Jesus, how could that possibly be better that you're gone than with us."

[John 14:1-4](#)

So Jesus says that he is going to his Father. He says that he's created a place for them. He's like, "I'm going to go on ahead and continue working out the kingdom of God in real-time." And he tells them that they know the place where he is going. Well, Thomas, the inquisitive one who has this history of this, pipes up. "*Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?'*" (v. 5). That is an incredibly important question, not just for this inflection point, but for the inflection point that we're living through currently.

Lord, how do we know the way? How do we know how to follow you when you're not around? How do we know how to follow you when everything seems bent in a different direction? God, how do we know the way? Well, Jesus' answer is brilliant, as tends to be the case.

"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me'" (v. 6). See, for the disciples, there was a genuine struggle to say, "Jesus, you are gone. How will we maintain this relationship with you?" Remember, the life of an apprentice to Jesus, a disciple of Jesus was to quite literally follow him, to step behind him, and just begin to absorb his very way of life. And so the disciples are saying, "How are we going to do that if you're not physically present?"

Jesus lays in this brilliant two-line statement. He gives this teaching on how you hold together truth and practice to arrive at the life of Jesus. He says three things. "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Let's take each of those, but let's begin at the end.

I Am the Life.

When Jesus says this statement, he's playing off what Aristotle claimed was the *telos*. I've used this word a few times. Aristotle popularized this idea of *telos*, and he said that humans live leaning forward. They live with something which they hold out as ultimate. And that *telos*, that ultimate thing out on the horizon, in turn, gives shape, and it guards your practices and your daily living.

The example is if you hold career excellence as your *telos*, that will give shape to the way your life plays out. You'll begin to take on practices and habits within your life that will align to bring you toward that end. Maybe that's schooling. Maybe that's getting up early and getting there before the boss and leaving after, all those sorts of things. All those sorts of habits begin to shape your life towards that *telos*.

If your *telos* is a life of adventure and fun, that too will shape your habits. It will shape you in a way where you feel free to travel and experience, where you don't get tied down in a particular job or life. We live leaning forward towards a kind of *telos*.

Jesus over and over communicates in some fashion that he is the *telos*. He is the life. What you long for is life in Christ. This is John 10:10b. "*I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*" Jesus says, "The way to live is to find your life wrapped up in my own—I am your *telos*." And so, therefore, if Jesus or Christ's likeness or union with Christ is our *telos*, our life begins to take shape to bring about that life, all Spirit infused. That's why Jesus said, "It's better for me to go because then you're going to get an advocate. The Holy Spirit will be here. You can't do this on your own. The Spirit will be present to enliven you, to walk along and embolden you in this way."

I Am the Truth

What's brilliant about Jesus' teaching is he doesn't just leave us to say, "I am the life." He actually lays out a formula as to how we do this. He says, "I am the way and the truth." This is the pathway to understanding the life of Jesus. The first is "I am the truth." In theology and throughout church history, we've created this word called orthodoxy, and it's a fancy word. It's made up of two different words—ortho, meaning right, and doxy, meaning teaching. Orthodoxy is right belief or right teaching, right truth. And Jesus says, I am the truth. Orthodoxy rests within him. Truth claims without lived practice do not lead to life.

What's happening here is Jesus is saying that if you want to create the life of Jesus within you, the very life and *telos* that your soul longs for, you have to understand Jesus as the truth. And he says, "Come to me. Listen to me. Learn from me." But he doesn't leave us there alone because truth without practice does not lead to true life. Said differently, truth claims without lived practice do not lead to life. It's the same struggle that we're facing in our world today. He says that you cannot just make truth statements and not have your life align with those things. That doesn't lead to life. That leads to a breakdown.

What's interesting is Jesus saved his harshest critiques for those like the Pharisees who practiced their faith incredibly close to the very life of Jesus but could never believe he was the truth when he said, "I am the Messiah." They, too, were practicing a faith without an anchor in truth claims.

I Am the Way

Jesus is the truth, but that is not sufficient, which is why Jesus says, "I am the way." Now there's another word throughout theology and church history that's similar to orthodoxy; it's the word orthopraxy. Orthopraxy is right practice or right living. Over time we've realized that belief alone is not the solution, but rather belief and right living. Jesus says, "I am the way you find orthopraxy." The way your life aligns with the reality of Jesus' truth.

The way of Jesus, living as a disciple apprentice of Jesus, is holding together our orthodoxy with our orthopraxy. Because right living, without an anchor in truth, leads to all sorts of relativism and just whatever feels

right. You live in a malaise of unknown certainty. Jesus is saying, "I am the way, the truth and the life." The early church, the followers of Jesus throughout the Book of Acts, were known as Followers of The Way. Before they were known for doctrinal statements, they were known for their distinctive way of life. Since that is what actually caused them to be so distinct, this movement took off.

I was reading a book yesterday called *Destroyer of the Gods*, which is the most epic name ever for a book, but it talks about how the distinctiveness of the early church's way of living caused it to field accusations that they were taking down the gods of the Roman empire because they lived so distinctly from the world around them. They were Followers of The Way.

These early Christians took this little two-line teaching of Jesus to say, "I am the way, the truth, and that leads to the life." You could put it in this very simple equation—the truth of Jesus + the way of Jesus = the life of Jesus.

Now, how do we do that in the chaos of the modern world? There are ideologies that swirl around us that are constantly vying for attention. There's a movement of individualism that says you can live however you would like. You are the arbiter of right and wrong. How do we hold truth and practice together? How do we come fresh to Jesus and say, "Jesus, you are the truth? You are the way, and I desire the life of Jesus to be cultivated in me."

Most often, particularly in our discipleship to Jesus, we tend to drift into one of two categories. The first is to only take the lifestyle of Jesus without submitting to his teaching as truth. That is a desire to have the kingdom without the king. The inverse can also be true. We take only the teachings of Jesus and statements of truth without living in the way of Jesus, and that's a desire to have the king without the kingdom. You have to hold both of these things together. They're two sides of the same coin.

If we are going to counter the overwhelming, powerful forces of our world that are vying for our attention, that are discipling us without us knowing, we will have to be intentional about how we overcome that. I would argue that we need a life architecture that's built around presence with Jesus and participating in what he does. It's part and parcel to this vision that we launched around—how do we become a transformed people transforming the peninsula. It will require us to return to the same two goals that every disciple of Jesus before us has done, to be present with Jesus and to participate in what he's doing.

About six months ago, we laid some of this out for you, and I want to revisit that overview video we put together. It succinctly describes where we're headed for the next few years. This past fall, we launched this idea of organizing our life around a shared rule of life. That's a foreign language to most of us, but it's a language that the church has used for thousands of years. It comes from the Latin word *regula*, which means straight.

The idea is how do we organize our life towards a particular goal in which not only just our truth and our understanding of belief but also

our way of living is becoming organized around the *telos* of Jesus as the life. We set these four different practices because we believe these four things help us counter-form against the impulses of the world around us that are shaping us as well.

This idea of a rule of life is similar to a trellis. I spent six years in Napa Valley before moving out here. And I got familiar with wine and vineyards and all those sorts of things. If you were to go there now, what you'd find is every grapevine is a little bit empty, but all of the vines are on a trellis. The purpose of the trellis is the vine will not be as effective unless you put it on the structure of a trellis to allow it to get up off of the ground and have easier access to sunlight and nutrients.

A rule of life functions in the same way for the disciple of Jesus. It is a way in which we understand different habits and practices that help cultivate our life and open ourselves up to the work of the Holy Spirit. The goal is not the practices. They're a means to an end. The goal is communion with Jesus, communion with the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit is the one that does the work within us.

Another metaphor I like is imagine you're on a boat, and the Holy Spirit is the wind that is going to move the sails in the boat. We can't make the wind blow, but we can set the sails and prepare ourselves for the work of the Holy Spirit. This is what these practices are.

Last fall we launched this idea of silence and solitude and asked what it would look like for us to cultivate rhythms in which we retreat away from the world in the quiet, so we can commune and pray with God, read scripture, and meditate on his word?

I hope you've been practicing that. Some of you already had that habit in your life. For others, it was something new, fresh, and challenging. It's something I still, this week, have cultivated in my life. It was a tough, long week, and yet there were moments in which I felt my heart pulling towards that silence because it's been the place in which I've been able to just lift up everything to Jesus. We begin to say that here is how we counteract that distraction and hurry.

The second habit we believe can cut through that is the habit of Sabbath. Sabbath is probably a word you're familiar with, but I'm guessing it might be quite foreign to you. This is one of those practices that we've seen in the life of the church that dates all the way back to Genesis 2. The very beginning of the story is where this idea of Sabbath begins, but we'll talk about that next week.

The idea of Sabbath is a rhythm in which we encounter it once a week as a way of saying, "I'm going to break away and be with God. I'm going to break away from the regular rhythm, the regular habits of distraction and hurry in order to put my flag in the ground and say, "Today is a day to the Lord." We're going to spend a lot of time wrestling with the nuance of what we can and can't do on the Sabbath and all the questions that go with it. But for now, I just want to whet your appetite for Sabbath. I want you to hear one short teaching from Jesus on this practice of Sabbath.

Back in July, I preached a sermon on Mark 2. I encourage you to go back and listen to that. It was called an "Invitation to Sabbath." There I

unpack this particular text in more depth, but now I want to revisit it to help us. My goal is to get you a little excited to try out this Sabbath thing.

[Mark 2:23-24](#)

Now, a few things to note here. Sabbath was part and parcel of the first-century world, and the Pharisees are there watching Jesus and his disciples go through this field. The disciples are simply just snacking a little bit on Sabbath.

Now, the question most of us should ask is why the Pharisees are so distraught about them picking a few heads of corn on the Sabbath. Well, the Sabbath was one of the two distinguishing factors of the people of God. The first was the idea of circumcision. That's another sermon for another day, but it was one of the markers of God's people.

The second distinctive of Israel was this practice of Sabbath, which you see throughout Israel's history. They took this very seriously. Some sects of the Pharisees actually believed that if all of Israel practiced the Sabbath, it would bring in the Lord's return. That was what their thought was, so they took it very seriously.

They make a pretty strong accusation against Jesus. "Why are you doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?" Well, let's revisit what the command of the Sabbath was in Exodus to see if there's any weight to their accusation because that's a big one to levy at Jesus. The 10 Commandments are in Exodus 20. It's the fourth commandment, the hinge commandment between the commandments about our relationship with God, and our relationships with one another. Here's where we have the command of the Sabbath.

[Exodus 20:8-10](#)

Notice the command is essentially boiled down to don't work and do rest. Six days you have to work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath. Another way to translate the Hebrew word Shabbat is rest, stop, or cease. The command is actually rather ambiguous because the question that all of you type-A analytical people have already asked is, "What does it mean to work, and what does it mean to rest?" What constitutes work? What constitutes rest? That's a really good question, which is actually a running dialogue even to this day. What is work?

Is exercise work, is cooking work, is hiking, washing the car, are dishes, is reading work? I would imagine some of you would be like, "Yes, exercise is very much work, and Shabbat shalom, I don't want to exercise on Sabbath." Others of you might not want to cook on Sabbath because it sounds like work. For others, they might enjoy the process of cooking. See, there's some ambiguity as to what exactly is work. The command is simply six days you work and one you don't.

The same question goes for rest. What exactly constitutes rest? Again, we probably have differing opinions even within this room. The intent is, I believe, to be somewhat ambiguous. It accounts for and affords our own personality types and our own stage of life. It opens up the possibility of saying what may be work for one may not be work for the other. There are some more things that we'll unpack in the next couple

of weeks where we see a little more guardrails on it. But what we see is Jesus was not unlawful on the Sabbath.

What the Pharisees had done was they were concerned about accidentally breaking the Sabbath. It was actually a very good, pure motive. They wanted to obey the Lord. They wanted to do everything in their power to obey the Lord. And so what they fenced in the Sabbath; they fenced in the Torah, and they created what would soon be codified as the Mishnah, which was hundreds of laws about what you could and couldn't do on the Sabbath.

Think about it like this. If you had a hole in your backyard, just a massive gaping hole, you would build a fence or some protective barrier around it so that you would never fall in the hole. This is what the Pharisees had done to the Sabbath. They had created out of what was meant to be this life-giving practice, a soul-sucking legalism, because they were so terrified of accidentally breaking the Sabbath. When they accused Jesus of doing what was unlawful on the Sabbath, they're right in one sense, in that Jesus was breaking Mishnah. But Jesus isn't worried about the Mishnah. He's much more worried about the Torah.

He said that wasn't a breaking of God's law or God's command, it was a breaking of human law. This is why all throughout the gospels, you see one of Jesus' favorite things is to go about breaking the Mishnah. He's healing on the Sabbath. He's picking grains of wheat on the Sabbath. He's doing all these things because he understands that the Sabbath fundamentally was a gift that was given to us for our flourishing, for our longing, and that's what you see later on in the story if you go back to Mark 2.

[Mark 2:25-27](#)

Here's this beautiful two-line teaching on the Sabbath. He looked at the Pharisees and said, you've distorted this very gift that God has created for you into something that's this soul-sucking legalism. Jesus told them that they had missed the plot. Sabbath was made for man, which is the Greek word for humankind, mankind. It's Jesus saying Sabbath was made for humanity. See, church, Sabbath is a gift. It is meant to breathe life into our souls. It's meant to create a rhythm in which we connect with God, and it also creates in us resistance against the gods of our age of accumulation and accomplishment.

What Jesus does in this beautiful text is reshapes the Sabbath for the Pharisees. Letting them know that they lost the plot. They've churned it into this thing in which man is made to be forced into the Sabbath. Now here's the problem though. And I'm taking this next section, by the way, from a guy John Mark Comer, who's done a ton of teaching on the Sabbath, and we're using a lot of his stuff for the next section of our own series.

He makes the point that the difference between the cultural moment of the Pharisees and our cultural moment is the Pharisees needed to hear the second half of that command—man was not made for the Sabbath because they had made all these sorts of legalistic rules. The problem, though, is that in our day and age, we have no semblance of rhythm or

laws around the Sabbath. Maybe we did 50 years ago, or if you try to go to Chick-fil-A today, you'll bump into certain laws about the Sabbath.

Realistically, our life is actually much more bent towards work. Taking in more information, take it all in, consume experience, do, do, do. What we need to hear in our day and age is the first half of that command—Sabbath was made for man.

Our next step is not legalism into the Sabbath. We need to take a step in order to say, what if God did give this as a gift for us? Something that dates back to before the world had sin involved with it. Six days God created, and on the seventh, he rested. And by doing that, he weaves into the very fabric of creation a rhythm that once we live in line with the way of the universe, we find ourselves flourishing a little bit more.

Our modern world is built in a way that pushes against the very way God's created the world. And Jesus says that the Sabbath was made for mankind. It is a gift to us. It is something that when we begin to wrestle with and begin to find our life in, we find our life flourishing.

When I taught this a while back, I talked about the two responses that we wrestle with on the Sabbath. The first is the Pharisees' corruption of the Sabbath. The Pharisees had made it constricting and legalistic. It was man made for the Sabbath, and it leads ultimately to the disintegration of your soul because that suffocating legalism will rot you out from the inside.

But on the other side, what we find is our secular life, where we reject the idea of Sabbath. In the secular world we live in, we lack rhythm. You are reduced to what you accomplish and what you accumulate. And that tyranny of accomplishment and accumulation also results in the disintegration of your soul because you are not meant to work unendingly for seven days forever. You were built with a rhythm.

You were built with six days of work. We're not down on work. Work is part and parcel of what it means to be human. You see that also before sin in Genesis 1 and 2. But it's the gift to say there's a rhythm to this. And notice that both the Pharisees' corruption and secularism's rejection of Sabbath leads to the disintegration of the soul because the Sabbath was made for man. It's a gift to us. It's a gift that's been given to us to help reintegrate our souls, to reconnect with God, with ourselves, and with others.

It's meant to be a weekly holy day holiday in which we encounter and break from the incessant demands of the day and just say that today it's enough to just be. Where we don't have to grind out life, but rather we find ways to cultivate rhythm in which we can encounter God. Sabbath is a gift that's been given to us to both connect us to the rhythm of Genesis and also help us to resist the gods of accomplishment and accumulation. Sabbath is a gift.

Here are a few definitions that I found that are helpful. "Sabbath is God's gift of repetitive and regular rest. It is given for our delight and communion with God. Time for being in the midst of a life of doing particularly characterizes the Sabbath" (Adele Calhoun). There's this one from Wayne Mueller, who I don't agree with everything he's written, but he has a good one on Sabbath.

Sabbath is more than the absence of work; it's not just a day off when we catch up on television or errands. It is the presence of something that arises when we consecrate a period of time to listen to what is most deeply beautiful, nourishing, or true.
Wayne Muller

What's deeply beautiful, nourishing, or true is God. It's the gift of saying, "I want the life of Jesus to be formed within me." I would define Sabbath as the gift of regular rest and communion with God. An intentional weekly rhythm set aside to allow your soul to reconnect with God and disconnect from the world of distraction and hurry.

Sabbath is that flag in the ground that says, "I will resist. I will live in a different way because Jesus has ordered the world in a different way." Now the question is how? We're going to spend a lot of time talking about how. Because I imagine there are all sorts of questions around this. What does this look like for someone who's retired and for a single mom? What does this look like for the executive and the college student? All of those questions are there. What I don't want you to miss in those questions is Jesus' teaching when he says the Sabbath was made for you. Many times, we make concessions to a broken world. And this is one of those spaces in which we have to wrestle with how do we live more in line with that rhythm?

But I know it's hard. Lindsay and I have been practicing Sabbath for seven years, and it took probably a year or two before we really felt the rhythm of it. There are many weeks where we break Sabbath or something comes up and it's different than what it looks like. Those are hard. We navigate that and try to work with that. But the Sabbath was made for man. And so what I find is less guilt and shame around that. What I find is that I feel it.

My body has been cultivated in a way where when I don't get to Sabbath, I get a little more tired. I'm going against the grain of the universe. As one author says, when you do that, you get splinters. Many of us feel that. Many of us exist that way. Sabbath is difficult. It's hard, but it's worth it. It is a gift that God has given to us.

We have a [habit card](#), and on one side, at the very top, we have the starting practice. We recognize that this is going to reorient and rearchitect the whole of your week. Walter Brueggemann, an Old Testament scholar, says, "People who Sabbath one day live the other six differently." And he's right, partly because of the preparation it takes, but also because of the way it reorients your soul to life.

So we know this is hard. On one side, we have a starting practice where if this is brand new to you, I encourage you to start here. It looks very similar to the other side that says it's a stretch practice. On the starting side, we are asking, what if you just tried it for part of a day? What if it was like a three or four-hour segment of your week where you set aside to practice?

Now on Sabbath, you don't just do nothing. You don't just sit on the couch and stare at a wall. That's not what it is. We've taken a lot of this from John Mark Comer and Pete Scazzero, with the Emotionally Healthy Spirituality, if you've heard of that work before. But they've

come up with a four-step framework, which is really helpful to understand how to Sabbath.

The first thing is you stop. The word Sabbath, the Hebrew word Shabbat simply means stop. It's a day in which you create a regular rhythm of stopping. For me, one of the most important practices I have around Sabbath is I take my phone on Friday night when our Sabbath begins, and I find the power button, which is tricky to find, but it's on there, and I power it down. In most Sabbaths, not all, but most, I'm able to leave that off for the majority of a 24-hour period. I'll turn it on occasionally because we've got friends and the girls' friends that want to connect, or we're trying to drive somewhere. So again, it's not this rigid, hard thing; rather, it's me accommodating one of the areas of my life that I know I need to pay attention to.

So I power that down. I stop from work; I fold my laptop up, and we put it in what we've called our Sabbath basket. Friday night at dinner, we bring it to the table. We light two candles to remember and observe. The girls go get the Sabbath box, and we put all of our iPads, all of our computers, and all of our phones in that basket.

What I for sure do on every single Sabbath is I don't look at social media. I don't look at email. If you texted me on a Saturday, you probably recognize I don't get back to you very quickly because I've set those boundaries around that and say that this is a day in which I stop. I disconnect. I have six other days for that good, healthy work, but Sabbath is the day that I stop. Again, softball happens, soccer happens, and birthday parties and all those things, and we figure those out as they come. But it's the ideal, the rule which we set, a day that's different. It's not about legalism; it's about practice. The Sabbath is a gift.

Second, once you stop, the second step is to rest. Sabbath is, at its core, meant to be rest, not just for your physical body. You can do that on a vacation or a day off. Rest is this sort of soulful rest. It's saying that throughout your week, you're giving and pouring out of yourself. And Sabbath, at its core, is a day to rest. It's a day to restore your soul, which means it will look different than the day off. Most of us don't feel soulful rested after binge-watching some show.

We still at times will watch a movie as a family on Sabbath. We did that yesterday for our Sabbath. We had a movie night. It was fun, and it was life-giving. There are still ways in which we incorporate that, but the goal is that it looks different. It's how do we rest our soul?

So for me, one of the weird things that's restful for my soul, and it's the most dad thing I do, is I wash my car almost every Saturday. To me, it is life-giving. A lot of my work is sitting at a desk on a computer. I work more with my head than my hands. And so, on Sabbath, I love to do things with my hands. I love to cook. Sabbath is built around food for the most part in our house, and so I cook a good meal. We'll just slow

down in a way where our soul reconnects with God and with each other. We find rest for our souls.

This leads right to delight. Sabbath is an opportunity for us to delight in God's good creation. Whether that's going on a hike and if that's life-giving, you get outside you take in the beauty of God's creation, you experience that.

We delight in one another. We delight in our kids. We delight and do what brings joy to us. Often, for me, that means reading. That's a delight for us. For the girls, maybe it's riding their scooters up and down the street. We find ways to delight in God's good creation because the pace of life restricts us from enjoying the very gifts God has given to us. Sabbath is for delight.

And lastly, maybe first and foremost, Sabbath is a day to worship. It's a day to reconnect your soul. It's a day to the Lord. We'll talk more about that, but delight or Sabbath is a day in which we connect with God.

Now, this doesn't mean you walk around singing songs all day. That might be it. And maybe that's how your soul sings. But it's also just the day to sit slowly with scripture, to go on a prayer walk, to designate unstructured time in which you sit with God. This is what Sabbath does. It helps us reconnect—stop, rest, delight, and worship.

Those are intentionally broad because they'll look different for each of us. They'll look different for us based on one's stage of life and personality type and all of those things. All of those things worthy of us wrestling with. But remember the command was six days you work, one day you don't. Those are a bit ambiguous. There are unknowns. You'll ask questions that I don't know the answer to. What does your soul say? What is your soul speaking to that? It's also not an individual day where it's like a personal yes day, and you just get to do whatever you want. That's not it either. It's a day set aside for God.

So I encourage you this week, to practice Sabbath. At the risk of preacher's hyperbole, I'm going to say it anyway; Sabbath has been more transformative in my discipleship to Jesus than anything outside of scripture and a commitment to listening to the Word of the Lord.

It has radically shaped every corner of the way I follow Jesus because it's caused me to get it on my calendar, and I want to invite you into that. To recognize that the Sabbath was made for us. It is a gift. It'll be bumpy and different, and you won't have it all figured out, and that's okay, but what if we just took one step forward and started?

This manuscript represents the bulk of what was preached at CPC. For further detail, please refer to the audio recording of this sermon.

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