

## The Rest of Your Life

10<sup>th</sup> in a series on The Ten Commandments

### Leaders Guide

1. The concept of a Sabbath started with God at the end of Creation, but was part of the Jewish tradition before the Ten Commandments were given. Read Exodus 16:21-30. Why might God set up this kind of a system of providing food for six days, but not on the seventh?

The people needed to learn to depend on God and develop a faith in which they were convinced they COULD depend on God. By daily providing their food supply and on the sixth day always providing a double portion, they could see God's provision every day. By setting aside a day when they were not preoccupied with work, God allowed them an opportunity to worship Him.

2. Read Exodus 20:8-11 and paraphrase the fourth of the ten commandments.

Observe a special day of rest from work on the seventh day of each week. This day is a special day, set apart from all others.

3. Moses further discusses the Sabbath in Deuteronomy 5:12-15. How is this passage different from the other two?

It adds a reference to commemorating the exodus of the Jews from Egypt. He also adds some specific rules for what the Jews could do on the Sabbath.

4. For those who have grown up in Christian homes, what, if any, rules were imposed by your parents regarding the Sabbath? For those not raised in a Christian home, what rules have you seen or heard about relating to things that could or could not be done on the Sabbath?

This could cover a whole host of things, such as –

- no buying or selling on Sunday (many communities had “blue laws” which forced most stores to remain closed on Sunday)
- no movies or TV or other types of entertainment
- no work (other than fixing meals)
- must go to church twice (morning & evening)
- no playing outdoors

5. These “rules” were an attempt to interpret the fourth commandment on the first level – as “law”. What are the good aspects and possible bad aspects of these rules.

It made the day a special day, very unique from the other six days of the week. It caused the day to be quieter, with fewer distractions. There was time spent as a family. Church attendance was not competing with jobs, organized sports, or other secular activities. God was put front and center, because God had caused all of this to occur.

On the other hand, the whole process seems a bit punitive. There isn't much joy in the implementation of these rules. God got blamed for all the things we wanted to do but weren't allowed to do based on man-made rules.

6. Pastor Steve mentioned four things that we could do on the Sabbath that would be more like positive suggestions than punitive restrictions. What were they?

- a) rest (contemplate Psalm 23 and consider the implications on your life)
- b) ceasing (mentally reflect on the fact that we are mortals and can not control or "fix" every problem we encounter)
- c) feasting (order our priorities – eat foods you like/wear clothes you like/spend time with the people you like)
- d) embrace (remind ourselves we serve an eternal God and this is why I willingly observe the Sabbath to keep it holy.)

7. Pastor Steve suggests that this fourth commandment has a broader application than we see on the surface. When we look at it as a "vow", we look at it as Jesus did when he healed on the Sabbath. Describe how that is different from viewing it as a law.

The idea is to "practice" the Sabbath by bringing the feelings of peace, hope, and joy to others. When Jesus healed their physical bodies, He also touched their spiritual bodies. They went away changed people, not only healed of their infirmities, but praising God.

8. Pastor Steve says that putting the fourth commandment into practice involves treating the Sabbath as a time to look backward toward (?) and leaning forward into (?).

Look backward toward Creation (a time of harmony, peace, & joy) and leaning forward into eternity with God (a day when God will again provide that same environment)

9. There is a third way of looking at the fourth commandment; this time in a way in which it becomes part of our Nature. Read Hebrews 4:1-11.

a) v. 1-2 The "rest" described here is more than a day off from work. How is it different?

This passage is talking about eternal life (salvation).

b) What is the problem encountered in v. 2?

Many hear about this "rest", but just knowing about it is not the same thing as having incorporated it into your life. Many know of Christ, but they have not trusted Him as their savior and given control of their lives over to him.

10. How is this third level of interpreting the fourth commandment different?

Keeping the Sabbath now becomes a matter of the heart. We are not resting from our workday job, we are turning control of our entire lives over to God. We are “resting in the Lord”. We trust him and willingly obey his leading.

Thus, the Sabbath is no longer a single day, but it is a pursuit of God, a habit of seeking God, which allows us to begin experiencing eternity now. We are constantly seeking opportunities to involve God in our lives and let Him do great things through us.