

**Russell Kelfer**

# **The Sabbath Rest of God**

**# 720-B**

**Series: God's Living Legends (Part 1)**

**dtm** DISCIPLESHIP TAPE MINISTRIES, INC.  
INTO HIS LIKENESS RADIO

10602 Mossbank, San Antonio, TX 78230 • (210) 226-0000 / 1-800-375-7778 • [www.dtm.org](http://www.dtm.org) • [dtm@dtm.org](mailto:dtm@dtm.org)



# The Sabbath Rest of God

It's hard to even imagine what it must have been like. We have nothing with which to compare such an awesome experience. His name is Moses, and we are looking at his encounter with God, who happened to also be his best friend, as they met together at the top of Mount Sinai. The children of Israel were frightened out of their wits at the incredible display of God's power that they had just witnessed at the foot of that mountain. They had been assigned the task of waiting for God to reveal His word. Unfortunately they, like us, had not proved to be very good at waiting. Moses, meanwhile, became the world's first secretary. He was taking dictation from God Himself as Jehovah was describing the super-structure of His kingdom and the ten basic foundational principles upon which it was built.

We will continue to look at the passage primarily known as the Ten Commandments. The first three of those commandments were the cornerstones of the Christian life. They were the essence, the image and the expression of our relationship with God. The first commandment spoke of the essence of God, or the supremacy of God. It eloquently spoke of God the Father. The message was simple. Plainly put, it said that there are no other gods; therefore let nothing else ever take the place of God in your life. You should love Him with all of your heart. Do you?

The second commandment spoke of the image of God. It represents God the Son, who is the express image of the Father. He is spirit and His kingdom is spiritual. Therefore, they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth, so they must not make unto themselves any graven images. They were, by faith, to worship the living, invisible God instead.

The third commandment spoke of the expression of God or the attributes of God. This represents God the Holy Spirit who is the complete expression of the name of God. Thus, we are not to take the name of God nor the character of God in vain. We are not to use it lightly or without respect. Instead, we are to love

## The Sabbath Rest of God

Him with all of our minds. In other words, to the believer, God is to be everything. He is to be supreme in His essence, perfect in His image and holy in His expression. When the Christian has appropriated into his or her life the essence, the image and the expression of God in such fullness, he or she ceases to live apart from God. Instead, resting in God's finished life, he or she becomes a body wholly filled and flooded with the nature of God Himself, living now in the rest of God.

This brings us to the fourth and final commandment dealing with man's relationship to God. Listen now as God continues His dictation to Moses. Let's turn to Exodus 20:8

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

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

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:

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.

(Exodus 20:8-11)

So God, having built the cornerstones of the faith by revealing who He was, now lays the center stone, or the foundation if you will, which is to rest its weight on the other three. The foundation is the subject of this lesson which is entitled, "Give It a Rest." The outline is a continuation of the previous lesson and is as follows:

### I- Ten Foundations for Living

#### A- The Cornerstones

#### B- The Foundation: The Sabbath Day of Rest

(Exodus 20:8-11)

##### 1- The Sabbath - its past

- a- The definition
- b- The introduction
- c- The institution
- d- The explanation
- e- The implementation
- f- The desecration
- g- The realization

##### 2- The Sabbath - its principles

## The Sabbath Rest of God

- a- The principle of work
- b- The principle of rest
- c- The principle of priority
- d- The principle of completion
- e- The principle of example
- f- The principle of heaven

### 3- The Sabbath—Its Portrait: Learning to rest in God

The commandment was this: Remember the Sabbath day, keep it holy. God said, “Remember.” The word literally means “keep” the Sabbath. What is the Sabbath? Where did it all begin? Are we to keep the Sabbath? The word Sabbath comes from a root word meaning “to cease or desist or to stop to rest”. The exact word does not exist in the creation story, but the root word meaning “rest” does occur.

Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts.

And by the seventh day God completed His work which He had done; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.

Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made. (Genesis 2:1-3 NAS)

So when God had completed everything He had set out to do, then and only then, did He rest. He rested not because He was tired, God doesn't get tired, but because He wanted to do something special for us. He stopped. He looked at what He had done. Then He rested. In so doing, He set aside one seventh of life as a special time of rest. It was a time He was later to call the Sabbath.

We next see the Sabbath story unfold as God dramatizes the principle in Exodus 16. We looked at this passage a few lessons back. This was done that they might understand why the commandment was given. The incident was the divine provision of manna and the divine distinctive of gathering it only six days a week. On the sixth day God provided twice as much. He instructed Moses to tell the people that the seventh day was to be a Sabbath to the LORD.

See, for that the LORD hath given you the Sabbath...

So the people rested on the seventh day.

(Exodus 16:29a,30)

## The Sabbath Rest of God

Back now to Mount Sinai. Moses, sitting at the feet of God, bathed in the glory of God, now receives the institution of the rest of God for the Jew. “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy” (Exodus 20:8). The people were to work six days. They were to rest for one. Why? Because God did it that way and thus He designed the pattern for Israel. It will be a sign of His covenant with His chosen people. It will always be a sign and a must for Israel. For the Jew it was not temporary. God explained that in Exodus 31:

Then the LORD said to Moses,

“Say to the Israelites, ‘You must observe my Sabbaths. [Here is its importance] This will be a sign between me and you [here is the duration] for the generations to come, [now here is its purpose] so you may know that I am the LORD, who makes you holy.

[Here is the commandment] “‘Observe the Sabbath, because it is holy to you. (Now here is the penalty) Anyone who desecrates it must be put to death; whoever does any work on that day must be cut off from his people.

For six days work is to be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day must be put to death.

The Israelites are to observe the Sabbath, celebrating it for the generations to come as a lasting covenant.

It will be a sign between me and the Israelites forever, for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day he abstained from work and rested.”

(Exodus 31:12-17 NIV)

It was a memorial of God’s creation, but it was also a memorial of His deliverance. How do we know that? Turn to Deuteronomy chapter 5:

Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy, as the LORD your God has commanded you.

Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your ox, your donkey or any of your animals, nor the alien within your gates, so that your manservant and maidservant may rest, as you do.

Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and

## The Sabbath Rest of God

an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.

(Deuteronomy 5:12-15 NIV)

So it was important to God that the Jews keep the Sabbath. It was a testimony that He was the creator. It was a testimony that He was the deliverer. God promised great blessing to the Jew for keeping the Sabbath. Listen to Isaiah 58:13-14. God is speaking of His chosen fast and then He adds:

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: (Isaiah 58:13)

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. (Isaiah 58:14)

God says, "Oh, the blessings that await the Jew who honors the Sabbath. But, oh, the penalty that must be enacted when My chosen people choose not to obey." Read Nehemiah 13:15-22. You will see the agony that came upon Jerusalem when they were violating the Sabbath and when those trying to sell their wares would stand outside the gates. Then we read:

Then I testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye about the wall? If you do so again, I will lay hands on you." [In other words, "You'll regret it." ]

(Nehemiah 13:21)

The rest of the verse continues,

From that time forth, they came no more on the sabbath.

As we read in Exodus 31, the penalty was clear. Whoever defiled the Sabbath must be put to death. So it was ever so important to God. Why? Was it because He was afraid that the Jews were going to die from overwork? I don't think so. I don't think He is worried about us in that regard either. But as we will see shortly, God has always had a deeper purpose. These purposes could not be revealed unless His children kept the commandment itself. For beneath the land of the Sabbath was pure gold: the pure gold of God's rest. Only by possessing the land of obedience could that gold ever surface.

So the years passed and the commandment stood. But as with

## The Sabbath Rest of God

most of the commandments, God's people became so enamored with the law that they missed its meaning. Soon the traditions of men were superimposed upon the law of God until its very purpose became obliterated by man-made interpretations. Pages and pages of laws were enacted defining what was and what was not legal to do on the Sabbath. One treatise alone outlined 39 things prohibited on the Sabbath. You couldn't sow or plow or reap. You couldn't make two cords or weave two threads or separate two threads or make a knot or untie a knot or catch a deer. You could not write two letters or use a hammer. But even these needed further interpretation. They had to define what constituted writing two letters. They added these explanations: He who writes two letters with his right hand or two letters with his left hand whither of one kind or two kinds, or also if they are written with different ink or the same ink, or different languages is guilty.

So much for that. It sounds like a government form, doesn't it? Also, here is a good one: He who writes on two walls which form an angle is guilty. He who writes on His body is guilty. But if one writes with fruit juice or dust, not guilty. But woe if he writes even with the wrong hand or with his foot or with his mouth or with his elbow. Now I had to think about that foot and elbow commandment. But you see it was a catch-all for those who thought if they didn't use their hands they could get by with it.

You may ask how one defines tying a knot. It was fine to tie a knot that you could untie with one hand. A woman could tie up her undergarment with the strings of her cap or her girdle or the straps of her sandals because they wanted the ladies to look okay. She could tie a pail over a well with a girdle but not with a rope. No wonder Jesus said,

And he said, Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye load men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers. (Luke 11:46)

They would strain at a gnat and swallow a camel until, by the time Jesus came to earth, the law of the Sabbath was so perverted that even the Lord of the Sabbath was found guilty by men who didn't even grasp what God had in mind.

Let's look in Mark 2 for more insight to the Sabbath when Jesus was on the earth:



## The Sabbath Rest of God

And it came to pass, that he went through the corn fields on the sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn.

And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful?

And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him?

How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the showbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him?

And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:

Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

In Luke 13 we read that Jesus was teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath.

And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself.

And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.

And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day.

The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering?

And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?

And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him. (Luke 13:11-17)

Let's also look at John 5 which tells us about the diseased man by the pool at Bethsaida for thirty-eight years.

## The Sabbath Rest of God

Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.

The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.

He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.

Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?

And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place.

Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole.

And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.

But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

(John 5:8-18)

So you see the progression of the Sabbath from the illustration to the dramatization to the desecration until at last, in Jesus, to the realization. The realization was that the Sabbath was not to God the assembling of man-made rules that bound men in legalism until they had obscured the spirit of the law, which was rest. Jesus bursts on the scene with all of the freshness and reality of God alive in man and restored the Sabbath to its original level of holiness. This was a day designed by God to give to man the opportunity of setting aside a time and a place to focus his eyes back on God. It wasn't how many letters you wrote or what kind of knots you tied that mattered, it was whether or not God was so central in your life that you could and would stop and set aside at least a day a week to be with Him and His people. Once again, the Sabbath which was made for man was a vehicle to bring praise and honor and glory through man to God.

Then Jesus went to the Cross. He rose again. While the

## The Sabbath Rest of God

unregenerate Jew still clings to the reality of God's Sabbath covenant, now the one who is regenerate born-again into the family of God through faith in Christ, Jew and Gentile alike, have a new day, the Lord's day, the first day of the week. This was the day when God's ultimate triumph over death became complete and the believer at last was freed to enter into the rest of God. For a time, some Jewish believers celebrated both, until finally, the new began to supersede the old and most began to find their complete Sabbath fulfillment in the Lord's day.

So the day has changed, but does not the Sabbath rest of God still have meaning? I propose it has much to say to us both in its principle and in its portrait. I believe that we ought to look carefully at both before we complete our look at the fourth principle of living, that of honoring the Sabbath.

First let's look at the principles. What is a principle? Many scriptural principles found their initial expression in the Sabbath rest. A principle is a concept repeated in scripture again and again until it reveals the mind of God. Thus, it allows us to make choices concerning the will of God without a specific commandment from God.

1- The principle of work. "Six days shalt thou labor." When most of us look at that commandment, we like the other part that says, "on the seventh day thou shalt rest." Six days we are to work. Jesus went on to say, "My Father works and I work." Paul echoed,

...that if any does not work, neither should he eat.

(II Thessalonians 3:10b)

Let him who stole, steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands...

We must works of Him who sent Me, as the long as it is day; night is coming, when no man can work. (John 9:4 NAS)

Perhaps God isn't saying that every man should work six days a week, but He is saying that it may not be a bad idea. He is saying that He ordains work. Since the fall of man, He ordains hard work, by the sweat of your brow. So if you have choices to make, stop looking for Welfare Walkway or Loafers Lane and build your life on hard work. Scripture teaches that hard work develops character. The scripture teaches that hard work destroys the temptations that accompany idleness. It provides the platform for witnessing and teaches us concepts of authority

## The Sabbath Rest of God

necessary to rule the family and the nation and the church. The principle of work is wrapped up in the fourth commandment. Don't miss it.

2- The principle of rest. Now we like that one better. We read that God was refreshed when His work was done and He rested. For us, our mind and body have limits. Satan desires that we go beyond its limits, allowing him to make spiritual inroads that often lead to disaster. So Jesus set aside times to rest and be alone, to refresh the body and renew the mind and rekindle the spirit. It is a principle that had its origin in the Sabbath.

3- The principle of priorities. It demanded that man was to give a seventh of his time to concentrate on God and then later for corporate worship and fellowship. Nothing else was to be important enough to stand in the way. Jesus came and admonished us to forsake not the assembling of ourselves together. Our place was to be in God's place on the Lord's day. We are to do it on every Lord's day, not just Easter or Christmas. Why? To win Brownie points with God? No. Because we are in love with Him. If we love Him with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our mind, wild horses couldn't keep us from His house on His day, could it? This little poem might help a little:

If our God were president  
Or chairman of the board,  
And if He called a meeting,  
We would run to serve the Lord.

But He's so much more, our Savior  
Oh how bountiful His grace,  
He's calling a meeting for Sunday,  
Let's each be in our place.

Priorities. It is a principle grounded in the fourth commandment.

4- The principle of completion. We don't like this one either. How we Christians need it, though. God finished what He started. He set out with a plan. He divided the plan into six equal days' work. He set aside the Sabbath to look at what He had done and to acknowledge that it was finished. He was pleased that it was finished as scheduled, then He rejoiced. That is why He can say,

...that He who has begun a good work in you will complete  
it until the day of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:6 NKJV)

## The Sabbath Rest of God

God always finishes what He starts. You can bank on it. He is not a quitter. He doesn't change His mind. He doesn't change His plan in midstream to everyone's dismay. We know where He is going and what way He is taking. It is a scriptural principle from the Sabbath to the temple to the commandments at work and in marriage to the kingdom's completion. God's principle is constant and it applies to us. Finish what you start. God did; then He rested.

5- The principle of example. God didn't have to rest, He wasn't tired. He did it as an example that we might grasp the principle. Jesus didn't have to wash the disciples' feet. He did it as an example to teach us what real humility was all about. He then reminded us that the servant is no greater than his master. Moses got the picture. Joshua got the picture. Paul got the picture. They each paid a seemingly unnecessary price that those who followed in their footsteps had a straight path to walk. It is the principle of example. You can find its roots in the fourth commandment.

6- The principle of heaven and the ultimate eternal rest. It will be a time when work among sin and work among sinners will be over and the battle will end. The victory will be won. It is something to look forward to and something worth suffering for, for a season. It is the final Sabbath rest of God. It makes life worth living. Its roots are found in the fourth commandment.

So these are all principles and concepts clarified by consistency in scripture. These principles find their beginnings and reinforcement in the fourth commandment. Learn them. They help you to build a Sabbath story.

But is that the final message to be found in the context of the Sabbath? Or is there not still *one more truth*, a still deeper truth? Is there not a portrait painted on the canvas of stone on Mount Sinai whose message transcends both the past and the principles and forms a foundation that rest on the first three commandments and supports the weight of the other six? I believe there is. It is grasping the reality of that portrait that sets us free at last to enter into all that God's Sabbath has in store for us. The principle explodes into fullness in Hebrews 3 and 4.

7- The principle is that of entering into the spiritual rest of God. For just as God finished His physical job of creation and then rested, Jesus finished the work of our re-creation and now

## The Sabbath Rest of God

He is seated in the heavenlies at the right hand of the Father, ever living to make intercession for us. For us, the battle is over. The victory is won. The work is complete. We can do nothing to add to or take away from that finished work.

The question is, why do we struggle so? Why do we superimpose a works-oriented, performance-based system over what God has already done? Why the struggle? Why the scramble? Why the strain? Why not just relax and let Jesus live His life, (*really* live it) in and through us any way He chooses? Simply put, the writer of Hebrews tells us of the children of Israel, who, because they couldn't trust God, couldn't just take Him at His word, missed entering the rest of the land. They missed that which the promised land was a picture of. The writer goes on,

Take heed, brethren, lest you too, have a heart of unbelief.

Then he goes on in chapter 4:

Therefore, let us fear lest, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it.

For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.

For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, "As I swore in My wrath, They shall not enter My rest," although His works were finished from the foundation of the world.

For He has thus said somewhere concerning the seventh day, "And God rested on the seventh day from all His works";

(Hebrews 4:1-4 NAS)

There remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God.

For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His.

Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall through following the same example of disobedience.

For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

(Hebrews 4:9-12 NAS)

This kind of life does exist. It is real. It cries out to each of us, "Why not enter in? Why not cease your laboring in the

## The Sabbath Rest of God

flesh, trying to do what only God can do in the Spirit?” Can’t you just hear Jesus speak your name in Matthew 11 when He says, “Come unto Me, Bob. Come unto Me, Sue. Come unto Me, Joe. Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, all who are tired and weary of carrying your own load, and I will give you rest. I will take the load. I will carry it for you. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly of heart and ye shall find rest for your soul. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

Have you ever done as I have, and cried out with the Psalmist in Psalm 55?

My heart is in anguish within me, Stark fear overpowers me.

Trembling and horror overwhelm me.

Oh, for the wings like a dove, to fly away and rest.

I would fly to the far-off deserts and stay there.

I would flee to some refuge from all this storm.

(Psalm 55:4-8 TLB)

Have you ever cried that way only to have God’s Spirit remind you of Psalm 37:7a?

Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him;

Then you could be reminded from Psalm 23:

The LORD is my shepherd, I have everything I need.

He lets Me rest in the fields of green grass And leads me to quiet pools of fresh water.

He gives me new strength and guides me in the right paths As He has promised.

Even if I go through the deepest darkness, I will not be afraid, LORD You are with me. Your shepherd’s rod and staff protect me. (Psalm 23:1-4 Good New Translation)

The question we need to ask ourselves is, “Why does it always take turmoil and trauma and tribulation before we give up and cast ourselves on Him and rest?” Is there not a Sabbath rest of God where man, having ceased from his efforts, simply begins each day by falling into the arms of Jesus and resting? Not fearing trouble, for it is not our battle to fight. Not fearing failure, for He is in control. How can He fail? Not fearing indecision, for He has a plan than only He can execute. Is there such a life? There is. It is a life so grounded in the word that every thought comes into

## The Sabbath Rest of God

captivity to His. It is a life so yielded to His objectives that the cares of the world become stepping stones, not stumbling blocks. It is not a mirage. There is now a rest for the children of God, a Sabbath rest where man has ceased from his labors and simply allows God to be God. It is a life where a man or a woman can run and not be weary, can walk and not faint. It is a life where, even when the fires of testing burn with an unquenchable flame, you can walk through the fire and not be burned. For underneath, between you and the flames, are the everlasting arms.

Some of you may feel these are worn-out spiritual clichés or an experience-oriented gospel that defies the realities of life. But that is not so. It is the normal Christian life. It is a life we must enter into every morning. It is a life we must consciously acknowledge dozens of times every day. You don't stop working; you work harder, but it isn't you, it is Christ in you. So your absence of power cries out to appropriate His power and suddenly you are free again. You are working, but you are not worrying. You are serving, but you are not striving. Don't take my word for it. Ask Jesus yourself, maybe for the first time, maybe for the hundredth time. Ask Him to take over the reins of your life. Then take a deep breath and relax. And when the conflict or the temptation or the testing comes, as it will, just quietly say, "Thanks, Lord, I'm glad it's not my battle. I'm not upset or afraid. I simply acknowledge I'm resting in You." Should you start worrying or become tense or fearful, quietly say, "Sorry, Lord, I'm leaving Your rest. Take me back into Your arms again. Your yoke is easy and Your burden is light."

Some of you have problems facing you that you are certain you can't handle. The very thought of tomorrow or next week or the future drives you to despair. You can witness to your neighbor about the sufficiency of God, but you are scared to death to face your own life. My friend, you are not alone. We are all in the same boat. But the thing we need to see again is that Jesus is in the boat with us. He is resting, remember? He is not afraid of the storm. He wants us right now to curl up with Him and rest, too. His Father owns the boat and controls the storm. He is quietly calling to us, "Come unto Me and I will give you rest." Tomorrow morning and every morning for the rest of our lives, we need to consciously open our eyes and the first thing we need to say is, "Lord, I can't handle this day, but You can. Take me in Your arms again and I will just rest in You." Try it. Your body will be at



## The Sabbath Rest of God

work, but your spirit will be at rest. You will rejoice in the sheer ecstasy of it, for you will have found the heart of God.

### SABBATH REST

Oh, to fly away and rest,  
Away from life's cruel strain,  
Oh, to flee the tempter's grasp;  
Oh, to flee the pain.

Has not Satan whispered oft':  
"Run away and hide!  
Leave the battleground," he cries.  
(But the storm's inside.)

Has not God a better way  
That His child be blessed?  
Has not He ordained that we  
Should enter into rest?

Standing there, amidst the storm  
Whispering in prayer,  
"How, Lord, can I be afraid  
Knowing You are there?"

Has not God a life of joy  
Even 'midst the storms?  
Has not God a life of peace  
Resting in His arms?

Oh, we need not flee to rest.  
No, we need not hide.  
Jesus is our refuge.  
Jesus is our guide.

So you ask, "How can my life  
Become God's very best?"  
Answer: Crawl up into God  
And enter Sabbath Rest.

Enter all life's fullness.  
Cease your fear and strife.  
Rest, instead, in Jesus,  
And He'll become your life.

The Sabbath Rest of God  
For Focus and Application

1- What is the relationship between the Sabbath and creation? Did God rest because He needed to? Why did He? What does Genesis 2:3 mean when it says that God “set the Sabbath day apart” and “sanctified” it? What is the relationship between being “holy” and “set apart”?

2- According to Exodus 31:13-17, we know *why the Sabbath is important, for how long it is to be kept holy, how important it is to God, and how it is tied to the creation.* Examine those passages carefully. Try to explain in your own words what God meant when He said that the purpose of the Sabbath is that “you may know that I am the LORD who set *you* apart.

3- According to Deuteronomy 5:12-15, the Sabbath was also to be a reminder or a remembrance. What was it to remind them of? Why?

4- What happened through the years to the Sabbath? What kind of legalism began to steal its significance? Can you liken that to how man’s interpretations of Scripture have mistakenly been elevated to equality with Scripture in our day? Give some examples.

5- Jesus seemed to intentionally violate the man-made rules the Jews had superimposed over the Sabbath. Name some examples. What did He mean when He said,

The Son of man is lord therefore of the Sabbath. and The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.

6- See if you can explain the conflict between Jesus and the ruler of the synagogue in Luke 13:11-17. What was the problem? Can you liken it to how Christians approach meeting needs today?

7- In John 5 Jesus risked His safety and His ministry to heal someone on the Sabbath in violation of Jewish tradition. Why would He do that?

8- What is the difference between an absolute and a principle? How can we learn to glean principles from Scripture? What principles can you glean from the story of the Sabbath? Several are listed in the lesson.

9- How do we know it is appropriate to liken the Sabbath rest of God to the rest that a Christian can enter into as he or she

## The Sabbath Rest of God

walks with God? How would you describe that rest? How do we know an unbeliever cannot experience it?

10- Is the Sabbath rest of God a reality in your life? Or do you, through unbelief, constantly drift back under the law and rest on your works? Why is this so devastating? Ask God today to place your heart in His hands and let you live the life of restful obedience. Thank Him as you do.

Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

(I Thessalonians 5:24)

dtm DISCIPLESHIP TAPE MINISTRIES, INC.

10602 Mossbank, San Antonio, TX 78230  
210-226-0000 or 1-800-375-7778  
www.dtm.org • dtm@dtm.org • © Russell Kelfer

(11.04.19)