

TAKE THE DAY OFF!

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Focus God gave us the Sabbath to enjoy. He commands us to rest because He cares about us.

Open Do you have a hobby that makes you forget about stress? What is it?

Read Sabbath is a principle that has very serious consequences if we don't follow it and tremendous blessings if we do. Here are five truths about Sabbath.

Sabbath is a commandment. The fourth of the Ten Commandments says: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8–11). Obeying God in this will not save us, but there are blessings when we do obey.

Sabbath is a witness. As we rest one day a week, we show our dependence on God. It displays our belief in our Creator and our trust that He will provide for us (Exodus 31:14–17). When we work six days and rest on the Sabbath, we're trusting God to provide extra for the day we don't work (Exodus 16:23–30).

God is serious about Sabbath. In the Old Testament, death was the penalty for not observing the Sabbath (Numbers 15:32–36). In today's world, there are consequences when we don't rest: we become tired, our health suffers and we die sooner from stress-related illnesses. Stress from lack of rest also harms our relationships. God is serious about Sabbath because He cares about us.

Unobserved Sabbaths accumulate. God kept track of how many years Israel had ignored honoring the Sabbath for the land. He took the Israelites into captivity in another country so the land could rest (2 Chronicles 36:20–21). In the same way, just because we don't have immediate consequences when we ignore the Sabbath, we aren't "getting away" with anything. We reap what we sow. Ignoring the Sabbath will catch up with us.

God made the Sabbath for our benefit (Mark 2:27). When we rest, our mental, emotional, spiritual and physical tanks get refilled. Sabbath is a gift, not a legalistic requirement.

Talk

1. How did this message change your perspective on Sabbath?
2. What are some of the obstacles that make it difficult to take a day off?
3. What are some of the attitudes that keep us from observing the Sabbath?
4. Do you have a story of how God taught you about the importance of rest?
5. What are the blessings that come from taking a Sabbath? How is your life different when you regularly rest?
6. What does your Sabbath usually look like? Do you sleep in? Spend time with family and friends? Engage in a hobby?

Live

Spend some time praying and ask the Lord what He wants to say to you about Sabbath. Ask for His forgiveness if you have not been obedient to rest regularly. Ask Him to help you grow in developing this habit.

Next, pull out your calendar and mark when you will take your next day off. Be prepared to guard that time! If you already have a regular Sabbath, consider trying something new to enjoy on your next Sabbath.

Pray

Thank You, Lord, for the gift of rest! Thank You for holding us accountable to take a Sabbath because it's for our good. We want to depend on You, Father, to provide for us. Help our lives to be a witness of Your faithfulness as we obey You and rest.