



Sunday Teaching Guide

Sabbath, Week 4

November 5, 2023

Bible Texts

- Psalm 92:1-3
- Amos 5:21-23
- Amos 8:4-6
- Exodus 3:1-5

Important Terms

- Shabbat: The Hebrew word for "rest" that is transliterated into the English word "Sabbath."

Sermon Notes

- In our practice of Sabbath, we join God in sharing peace, serenity, and tranquility with the world, declaring his goodness and love, creating that peace, serenity, and tranquility for a world so much in desperate need of God's peace.
- Amos wrote that while his people were keeping Sabbath, they were in their imaginations, buying, selling, trading, and bargaining. The appearance was one of rest, but the reality was one of restlessness. We have the same temptation. God invites us into Sabbath rest, but our culture of busyness and distraction invites us to multitask.
- Minister Wayne Muller says, "Sabbath invites us to take off our shoes and allow our bodies to touch the earth." In one story, Moses encounters God in a burning while walking on a mountain. These words have often been used to talk about the holy places where we find God, but there is a suggestion that something else is taking place that is relevant to the Sabbath. Rather than the shoes showing a sign of disrespect for the holy ground, the shoes are a barrier to Moses experiencing the holiness of the moment.
- In some Jewish homes, on Friday evening, at the traditional start of the Sabbath, someone stands at the door of the house. As people enter, they place anything they know they do not want to have distract them from the time of Sabbath rest, such as shoes, tools a laptop, phone, or other device that keeps us tethered to work. After the Sabbath, the box is opened, not just to retrieve items, but to be aware of how you respond to what you receive back into your life.

Reflection Questions

- Why is it hard to put away distractions?
- Why do we seem to have an inherent desire to multitask?
- What do you think causes us to live such distracted lives?
- Do you think that mental distractions become easier when physical distractions are removed?
- How have your distractions changed over the course of your life?
- In what ways do distractions hinder you from sharing goodness and love with the world?
- What the distractions that keep you from fully practicing Sabbath?
- What are some ways that you can encourage others to eliminate distractions on Sabbath?
- Who is someone that you can ask to help you to eliminate distractions?

Prayer for the Week

- Lord God of true peace and tranquility, we know that we often allow ourselves to be distracted by the cares of the world, even on the Sabbath. Help us to place distractions away from our minds so that we can focus our attention on you during Sabbath rest. Amen.

Additional Readings

- Isaiah 1:2-17
- Isaiah 25