

**Rest**

When I was young, I spent part of one summer painting my grandparents' house. The days were hot, so I'd start early in the morning. Every day, eventually, my grandfather would come outside and tell me it was time to get out of the sun. He always had a tall glass of iced tea ready as he led me inside to rest. When it cooled down enough after dinner, I'd go back to painting as long as the sunlight held.

We all have our limits. God knows that, and it's one of the reasons he not only invites us to rest but commands us to do so. This week we'll read about this command, and the rest God offers his people. We'll also see that God's rest is one of his good and perfect gifts for us, a gift even better than a tall glass of iced tea after a hot day's work.

**Monday – Meaning**

*"Day of the Lord, as all our days should be!"* Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, [Christus](#)

1. Please read Exodus 20:8-11 and Genesis 2:2-3. Why did God set apart one day out of seven? What might it mean for God to bless a day of the week?

**Text Insight:** The word "Sabbath" traces back to the Hebrew word "shabbath" which means, "rest".

2. Look at Luke 6:6-11 and Mark 2:23-28 for some of Jesus' words and actions regarding the Sabbath. What is Jesus' point about the importance of the Sabbath for God's people?
3. How do Paul's instructions in Colossians 2:16-17 follow from Jesus' statement in Mark 2:27-28?

**Making it Personal:** Is Jesus Lord over your Sabbath, your rest? Turn this over to him now in prayer.

**Tuesday – Rest**

*"How still the morning of the hallow'd day! Mute is the voice of rural labour, hush'd the ploughboy's whistle, and the milkmaid's song."* James Grahame, 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> c. Scottish poet, [The Sabbath](#)

1. Please read Psalm 27:2. How do you think this applies to you in light of Proverbs 24:33-34 and Ecclesiastes 10:15?
2. What does Psalm 46:10-11 tell you about why you can rest safely with God?
3. According to Psalm 23:1-6, what are some of the various ways God will provide for you as you rest in him?

**Making it Personal:** Do you desire God's rest? Pray that he will give you that desire, and that you will find rest in him.

**Wednesday – Retreat**

*"We are urgent about the body; He is about the soul. We call for present comforts; He considers our everlasting rest. And therefore when He sends not the very things we ask, He hears us by sending greater than we can ask or think."* Richard Cecil, 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> c. English pastor

1. Please read 1 Kings 18:16-19:4. How would you characterize what Elijah had gone through physically, emotionally and spiritually?
2. Now read 1 Kings 19:5-8. Have you ever felt the need just to collapse and allow others to meet your needs for you? What changes do you think Elijah experienced as he slept and ate under that tree?
3. The rest of the story is in 1 Kings 19:9-18. What did Elijah tell God in verses 10 and 14? How do God's responses differ in verses 11-13 and 15-18? How are they similar?

**Prayer Focus:** Do you know anyone like Elijah who needs to know that God is with them (v. 11-13), and that he has provided people to come alongside to help continue his work (v. 15-18)? Pray for that person now.

**Thursday – Recharge**

*"Never, never did Christ send a heavy laden one to work; never, never did He send a hungry one, a weary one, a sick or sorrowing one, away on any service. For such the Bible only says, 'Come, come, come.'"* Hudson Taylor, 19<sup>th</sup> c. missionary

1. Please read Leviticus 23:3. What does God allow his people to do for 6 days, and then require on the seventh?
2. Now read Mark 6:7-13 and 6:30-31. How do Jesus' instructions to his followers support both aspects of Leviticus 23:3 (work and rest)?

**Text Insight:** Jesus told his followers to go someplace quiet with him; he did not just send them to bed for rest.

3. According to Hebrews 10:24-25 and Psalm 122:1, how can we observe Jesus' instructions to get away from work in company with others who believe in Jesus?

**Digging Deeper:** In Leviticus 25:1-55, how did God extend the Sabbath to the very land his people lived on? What special rules applied for the neediest people? How did those rules support the principles of Sabbath?

**Friday – Refocus**

*"Focus – to concentrate attention or energy."* American Heritage Dictionary (4<sup>th</sup> ed.)

1. Please read Psalm 95:6-9 and Isaiah 58:13-14. How are we to join together in worship? What are we to avoid?
2. In Isaiah 55:1-2, what does God offer those who focus their attention upon him rather than strive in their own strength?
3. According to Matthew 11:25-30, in whom will we find God's rest and comfort? In light of Exodus 6:6-7, why do you think Jesus might have chosen a yoke as his metaphor?

**Making it Personal:** Do you focus on Jesus, God the Son, for your rest and strength? Why or why not?

**For the Weekend:** Re-read Exodus 20:8-11, Mark 2:23-28 and Matthew 11:25-30. What can you do now to fulfill God's invitation and instruction to find rest in him?