

Sabbath Engaged Learning Project

God has created humanity and all of creation to operate in a rhythm of work and rest. A few examples include waking and sleeping, day and night, different seasons, high and low tides, beating and resting of the heart, and breathing and resting of the lungs. God's rhythms of work and rest are all over His creation. And yet as humans, particularly in America, we have come to believe that we can ignore God's rhythmic cycles of work and rest all around us and remain stuck in overdrive every day. Wayne Muller observes, "Our culture invariably supposes that action and accomplishment are better than rest, that doing something—anything—is better than doing nothing. Because of our desire to succeed, to meet these ever-growing expectations, we do not rest. Because we do not rest, we lose our way."¹ We have bought into lie of "this hypnotic belief that *good things come only through unceasing determination and tireless effort* [and for that] we can never truly rest. And for want of rest, our lives are in danger"²(emphasis added). The Chinese have recognized the destruction of no rest through their pictograph of the word "busy," which is a combination of two characters: "heart and killing."³

So why is busyness and the lack of rest so destructive? Muller, a man who has worked in community development, public health, mental health, and criminal justice, says, "With a few notable exceptions, the way problems are solved is frantically, desperately, reactively, and badly. Despite their well-meaning and generous souls, community and corporate leaders are infected with a fearful desperation that is corrosive to genuine

¹ Muller, 1.

² Muller, 1.

³ Muller, 3.

helpfulness, justice, or healing.”⁴ When we refuse to rest “we miss the compass points that would show us where to go, we bypass the nourishment that would give us [sustenance]. We miss the quiet that would give us wisdom.”⁵ The guiding compass, of course, is God. When we refuse to turn to God, seeking and resting in His presence, we are left to our own thoughts and ideas to solve the problems of life, which results not in solutions but even more problems.⁶

Lack of rest and down time also causes us to forget what is really important in life. Muller points out, “The busier we are, the more important we seem to ourselves and, we imagine, to others. To be unavailable to our friends and family, to be unable to find time for the sunset (or even know that the sun has set at all), to whiz through our obligations without time for a single, mindful breath, this has become the model of a successful life.”⁷ This pace of life has described Steph and my pace of life for the first two and a half years of our marriage.

Steph and I are both people who like to get things done and have a hard time not finishing a task that “needs” done. So without surprise to me, when I asked the Lord what discipline He wanted me to seek and get a hold of this semester, He said Sabbath. My family and I desperately need to develop a rhythm of Sabbath in our lives. I will include my immediate family, defined as wife Stephanie and son Matthew, in this project in agreement with Ruth Barton who says, “Sabbath keeping is not primarily a private, self-indulgent

⁴ Muller, 3.

⁵ Muller, 1.

⁶ Muller, 4.

⁷ Muller, 2-3.

discipline...[but] a communal discipline...that people [should] enter into with those closest to them.”⁸

The following section is my original goals and plans to carry out the discipline of Sabbath with all five learning strategies⁹ in mind. Simply stated, our goal for this semester is to take an entire day off every week. This day off is to begin at 8pm Sat evening and conclude at 8pm Sunday evening. The purpose of this day off is to remember who God is as God and who we are as creatures, not God. God has given us a gift, called Sabbath “to honor the body’s need for rest, the spirit’s need for replenishment and the soul’s need to delight itself in God for God’s own sake.”¹⁰ We plan to incorporate biblical truth into this learning process by going to church each Sunday and engaging with the corporate Body in learning God’s Word. We will also conclude our day as a family in God’s Word as we do every day. Cognitively, I will read about Sabbath in at least five different books or articles to learn all that I can about this discipline. I plan to finish this reading by November 8. From the affective or heart perspective, I need to learn that God is God and I am not. Whether I believe that statement or not is manifested in how I spend my time. When I believe I am indispensable, meaning God is incapable of handling something without my help, I cannot stop working until a task is completed. But when I experientially know God is God and I am not, I can leave a task uncompleted and stop to rest knowing that God is in control. The task can be completed another day. I plan to assess my progress each week on Monday morning. I will use my body to experience this discipline in the following ways:

⁸ Ruth Barton, *Sacred Rhythms: Arranging Our Lives for Spiritual Transformation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 139-140.

⁹ The five learning strategies are as follows: 1. Scriptural emphasis, 2. Cognitive (head) Process, 3. Affective (heart) Process, 4. Experiential (hands) Process, and 5. Relationships and Interactions.

¹⁰ Barton, 137.

1. I will stop anything I perceive to be work at 8pm on Saturday and not resume any work until 8pm on Sunday. Work is anything that does not “delight [me] or replenish [me].”¹¹ I will try not to be legalistic about this practice as the Pharisees were in Jesus’ day but try to remember that “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.”¹²
2. I will designate Saturday as primarily a day of work around the house to complete any tasks needing to be done to prepare for Sabbath.
3. I will try to get my school work, along with any other work, done during the week, so as much as possible is done before Sabbath.
4. I will be intentional about what we plan and what we do not plan to do on Sabbath keeping the goal of delighting in God and replenishing my being in mind.

My first line of accountability to complete this project is my wife, who will be walking along side me as well as encouraging and exhorting me to meet my goals. I will ask my mentor to keep me accountable to what I have planned at our monthly meetings. I have also told my pastor about the project, who will likely ask me about it in our regular conversations. At the conclusion of this project I expect that my family and I will have a much healthier and balanced weekly rhythm of work and rest.

Where does Sabbath come from?

The first people to practice a regular Sabbath as a community were the Jews. God gave them the commandment to “remember the Sabbath day”¹³ based on the example of work and rest set by God during the seven days of creation.¹⁴ This command is one of the Ten Commandments given by God to Israel through Moses just months after they were freed from Egypt.¹⁵ Muller points out, “‘Remember the Sabbath’ means ‘Remember that everything you have received is a blessing. Remember to delight in your life, in the fruits of

¹¹ Barton, 142.

¹² Mark 2:27.

¹³ Ex. 20:8.

¹⁴ Ex. 20:11.

¹⁵ The Ten Commandments were given shortly after the events of Ex. 19:1, which happened three months “after the Israelites left Egypt.”

your labor. Remember to stop and offer thanks for the wonder of it.' The assumption is that we will forget. And history has proven that, given enough time, we will."¹⁶

Then in Deut. 5:12-15 God gives Israel a deeper meaning to the Sabbath after being in the desert forty years¹⁷ in their preparation to enter the Promised Land. God says, "Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day."¹⁸ This command emphasizes Israel's freedom from captivity. Enslaved people do not get a day off. So when Israel takes a day off, they are to remember why. Dorothy Bass states, "Together, these two renderings of the commandment summarize the most fundamental stories and beliefs of the Hebrew Scriptures: creation and exodus, humanity in God's image and a people liberated from captivity....Sabbath crystallizes Torah's portrait of who God is and what human beings are most fully meant to be."¹⁹

Jesus then, as a good Jew, practiced and observed the Sabbath but certainly not in the way that the Pharisees expected. The Gospels have many examples of confrontations between Jesus and the Pharisees on the Sabbath due to Jesus performing a miracle or some other kind of "work" that the Pharisees considered an infraction of the law. Jesus' purpose was not to irrationally provoke the Pharisees but to point out their blindness to the Sabbath's purpose. God's original intent for the Sabbath was to be a "gracious gift, a release from the necessity of seven-day toil, so that anyone who interprets the Law as to make the

¹⁶ Wayne Muller, *Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal, and Delight In Our Busy Lives*, (New York: Bantam Books, 1999), 6.

¹⁷ Deut. 1:3.

¹⁸ Deut. 5:15.

¹⁹ Dorothy C. Bass, "Christian Formation in and for Sabbath Rest." *Interpretation* 59, no. 1 (January 1, 2005): 25-37. (*ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost (accessed September 27, 2011)), 29.

Sabbath a burden, or to inhibit the free course of God’s mercy, merely reveals his own ignorance of God and His purposes.”²⁰ Jesus exposed the Pharisees’ error in many encounters by forcing them to answer the question “which is more important, rules or people?”²¹ Garland states, “The Pharisees’ approach treats ritual and institution as key. If the law contains any ambiguities, it must be made specific so that one may know precisely what must be done at all times and who is guilty of an infraction. Such an approach easily veers into a kind of slavery (Gal. 4:10; Col. 2:16)—religion for religion’s sake.”²² In trying to control behavior and make the law clear in every case, the Pharisees took the joy and delight out of the Sabbath and made it a “burdensome ordeal.”²³ Jesus then brought the Sabbath back to God’s original intent by exposing the Pharisees’ corrupt priorities of rules over people and stating, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.”²⁴ The Sabbath is to be a restful gift and a joy, not an anxious task to avoid doing wrong.

The earliest Christians, like Jesus, were Jews. They “observed the Sabbath on the seventh day of each week and then celebrated the resurrection of their Lord on the subsequent day.”²⁵ Then as Christianity spread throughout the world and became independent of Judaism, Christians began to “emphasize the Lord’s day, the first day of the week, [as] the Christians’ day of worship.”²⁶ Worshipping God as a corporate Body, and arguably celebrating Sabbath, happens for most Christians on Sunday to this day.

Sabbath and Three Types of Rest

²⁰ G. B. Caird and L.D. Hurst, *New Testament Theology* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), 47, as found in David E. Garland, *Mark*, NIV Application Commentary, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 107.

²¹ Garland, 116.

²² Garland, 116.

²³ Garland, 116.

²⁴ Mark 2:27.

²⁵ Bass, 28.

²⁶ Bass, 28.

The word “*Sabbath*,” as Scazzero points out, “comes from the Hebrew word that means ‘to cease, to stop working.’”²⁷ Muller explains further that “Sabbath time is time off the wheel, time when we take our hand from the plow and let God and the earth care for things, while we drink...from the fountain of rest and delight.”²⁸ Whatever we decide to do or not do must be for the purpose of these two key ideas: rest and delight. Richard Swenson, in his book *Margin*, defines three different types of rest: physical, emotional, and spiritual.²⁹ Sabbath must include all three.

Every Sabbath needs some amount of physical rest, which is refraining from physical activity entirely for a period of time. Physical rest goes beyond not doing what we consider work, because sometimes our play or vacations can be busier than our work.³⁰ Certainly our bodies need physical activity, but they also need physical rest. If we try to push the limits of human energy without resting sufficiently, our bodies will get the rest it needs but likely at the cost of a physical illness.

Emotional rest, which is more important than physical rest, involves the resting of our thoughts and feelings.³¹ When we are anxious and obsess over something, we have no emotional rest. Emotional rest is often best sought in times of quiet inactivity, which is rarely found in our noisy, busy society. Even more significantly, preoccupation with success and power, debt, and fractured relationships all contribute to our nation’s lack of emotional rest.³² If we want our anxiety levels and depression cases to go down “we must discipline

²⁷ Peter Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality: Unleash a Revolution in Your Life in Christ*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006), 163.

²⁸ Muller, 7-8.

²⁹ Richard A. Swenson, *Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives*. (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2004), 196.

³⁰ Swenson, 196-198.

³¹ Swenson, 198.

³² Swenson, 199-200.

our expectations, tame our discontent, and mend our relationships.”³³ Then we will begin to experience the emotional rest we need.

Spiritual rest is the most important rest. Swenson writes, “Relaxed muscles and minds are of little worth unless our souls also find rest in the acceptance of God. Such a rest transcends the problems of our world and shelters us where no injury can follow.”³⁴

Swenson goes on to explain two types of spiritual rest. The first is Sabbath rest, which he defines as a remembrance of God.³⁵ He says, “At Sabbath time...we cease reaping for our own cupboards and instead bring an offering to [God]....We rest and worship one day in seven simply because He is the Lord.”³⁶ Muller explains Sabbath “is not just a day off, when we catch up on television or errands. It is the presence of something that arises when we consecrate a period of time to listen to what is most deeply beautiful, nourishing, or true. It is time consecrated with our attention, our mindfulness, honoring those quiet forces of grace or spirit that sustain and heal us.”³⁷ We all need this type of healing and rest on a weekly basis.

The second spiritual rest is surrendered rest, which Swenson defines as meekness based on Matt. 11:28-30.³⁸ He says, “When we come to [Jesus] and surrender, accepting His yoke, we accept full vulnerability to the onslaught of the world. Yet, at the same time, we are assured that nothing can separate us from the victorious love of Christ.”³⁹ When we fully surrender ourselves to God and accept His way for our lives, we find spiritual rest, which is the deepest and most satisfying rest of all.

³³ Swenson, 200.

³⁴ Swenson, 200.

³⁵ Swenson, 201.

³⁶ Swenson, 201.

³⁷ Muller, 8.

³⁸ Swenson, 202.

³⁹ Swenson, 202.

How to Practice the Sabbath

The call to rest and to cease from work on the Sabbath does not mean to cease from all activity the entire day. To be sure, whatever activity is done on the Sabbath should be different from what someone does on a typical work day and may be some type of recreational activity. This goes along with the principle of taking delight. The recreational activity may even be “something that others do for ‘work,’ which is analogous to occasionally planting a different crop in a field to replenish the nutrients and make the soil more fertile for its normal crop.”⁴⁰ However, as valuable as recreation can be, it is important that the recreation actually is replenishing and that it does not take up the entire Sabbath time leaving no room for inactivity and contemplation.⁴¹ Our culture typically interprets time away from work to mean time for recreation. That is not Sabbath. Recreation alone does not include the three necessary types of rest⁴² thereby contributing to our exhaustion instead of taking it away.

As far as when the Sabbath is practiced, the day of the week is not as important as Sabbath occurring regularly on the same day each week.⁴³ We are creatures of rhythm and a sporadic Sabbath will not give us the rest we need. As ministers, Sundays are almost impossible to have as a Sabbath, because work is done on that day. But whatever day we choose, it should be the same day each week when possible.

Whether we spend the Sabbath primarily alone or with family, there are varying opinions. Tim Keller writes, “Do a realistic self-assessment of ‘family time’ and how it

⁴⁰ Tim Keller, “Wisdom and Sabbath Rest,” *Q: Ideas for the common good* (<http://www.qideas.org/blog/wisdom-and-sabbath-rest.aspx> [accessed Sept 1, 2011]), number 1 under the heading “Sabbath ‘Principles.’”

⁴¹ Keller, number 1 under the heading “Sabbath ‘Principles.’”

⁴² 3 types of rest: physical, emotional, and spiritual as stated by Swenson, 196-203, and explained above.

⁴³ Barton, 139, also Scazzaro, 166.

affects you. Family time is important, but parents need to be very careful that they don't let all of their regular Sabbath time be taken up with parental responsibilities. (Introverts especially need time away from the kids!)"⁴⁴ Barton acknowledges the "temptation" to spend Sabbath on her own.⁴⁵ However, she says, "Sabbath keeping is not primarily a private, self-indulgent discipline...[but] a communal discipline...that people [should] enter into with those closest to them."⁴⁶ By including family in our Sabbath keeping, it will teach them the benefit of Sabbath firsthand. Barton also acknowledges that we are "different on the Sabbath....We are much more in touch with the softer, more vulnerable part of ourselves, because we're not pushing so hard."⁴⁷ Her point is that it would be a tragedy if our family never saw this side of us. I have chosen at this point to include family in my Sabbath so they too can experience Sabbath as well as experience me during Sabbath. I am also an extrovert, and people energize me, while people can tend to drain introverts. So although I followed Barton more than Keller, Keller's caution is valid and needs to be taken before God by each individual.

Experiences and Reflection with Results and Evaluation

The most beneficial part of this project was actually taking a Sabbath, particularly as a family. I had been talking about the importance of Sabbath for a few years, but Steph was not so sure. During my two and a half years in full-time ministry, I almost always made sure that I personally had a Sabbath each week but did not include others. As a result, Steph saw Sabbath as one more distraction that took my attention from her and my household duties. Since then I have increased my share around the house, which freed her to take a day off as

⁴⁴ Keller, number 4 under the section "Sabbath 'Principles.'"

⁴⁵ Barton, 140.

⁴⁶ Barton, 139-140.

⁴⁷ Barton, 140.

well. We choose Sunday as our day of Sabbath, which I realize will be all but impossible for us to keep if and when I get back into full-time church ministry. However, at the current time, Sundays work best for us. I wanted to build a positive foundation of Sabbath during this season of life, so that if it needs to change we will know the benefit of Sabbath and make the change. Since being “forced” to take a Sabbath for this project, we both see its vital role in our personal and family lives and do not want to live life without it again.

In particular, we did take one 24-hour day off every week for the past ten weeks as planned. All of our days off were on Sunday, except for one which was on a Tuesday. I was at a men’s retreat with our church for most of Sunday, and it was more important for us to change the day of the week then to have Sabbath without being a complete family unit. We had a wonderful day on Tuesday; however, I do agree with Barton that Sabbath should be as consistent as possible.⁴⁸ Going nine days without a Sabbath was a long time, even with a retreat in the middle of it. It also threw off our shortened week by trying to get the usual family tasks done in a fewer amount of days. But the one day a week off as a family has proven to be a great way to bring us together and remind us of what is most important.

We included scripture at several points throughout our Sabbath to point us back to God to remind us of who He is as God and who we are as His children. In particular, we started and ended most of our Sabbath’s with scripture but not all due to a fussy baby. We also went to church to engage with scripture with a corporate Body every Sunday except the above mentioned men’s retreat, and the Sunday we went to Hershey Park. Prior to going to Hershey Park, we suspected it would not be a very restful Sabbath, and our suspicions were correct. The reason we went was due to free tickets that expired that day.

⁴⁸ Barton, 139.

So as a good Dutchman, I could not see those tickets go to waste. I also wanted to test out Swenson and Keller's theory that recreation is not equivalent to rest, and Sabbath must include an element of inactivity. They were right. We had a good time with old friends; however, we did not experience rest in its fullest sense. We felt our lack of rest Monday morning. Also, while there our car was hit in the parking lot though not seriously. I am not suggesting God was judging us, but I did find it ironic. From our experience we found the inclusion of scripture and the presence of some inactivity necessary to a life-giving Sabbath.

Cognitively I read and learned a great deal about the Sabbath as demonstrated above. I am grateful for the experiences and insights of those who have gone before me. I did not finish writing about my research by November 8th as I planned regrettably, but I was able to get the majority of reading done by the beginning of October, which helped our practice by being informed by others.

The affective, or heart, perspective was certainly the most difficult. This gets to the motivation behind Sabbath, which is to trust in God and not in myself. I am a limited creature who needs to take a day off to rest, reconnect with God, reconnect with those closest to me, and simply take delight in life. Sure I stopped doing work with my hands, which I admittedly did cheat on a few times, but to truly lay down all of my unfinished tasks in my mind was a much harder thing. Some tangible things we did to assist in clearing our minds were to put our school bags and laptops away during the Sabbath. This did help, and I noticed its necessity most on the weeks we did not put all of our "work" stuff away. My struggle to think about or actually work on the Sabbath shows my continued need to be reminded of who I am as God's beloved son but not God Himself and who God is as God.

Sabbath is the best way I know to date to help take this head knowledge of who I am and who God is and begin to transfer this Truth to my heart.

Another truth I learned in connection to the experiential process is the importance of intentionally preparing for Sabbath the day before. Because we knew we would not do any work on Sunday, Steph and I tried our best to get all the household chores done on Saturday. Some weeks we got all the chores done, and some Sabbaths we had dirty dishes on the counters. Obviously getting all the work done is not always possible. But when we intentionally made it a goal, it happened more than when we did not plan for it. We found that resting and being at peace were easier when work is done and put away.

Another experiential truth we learned had to do with timing. I always knew Sabbath was to be a 24-hour period. But it was not until I began to do some research that I began to see the value of starting the Sabbath in the evening and ending it the following evening. By starting in the evening, we were better prepared for the next day, which was the bulk of our Sabbath. By ending our Sabbath in the evening, we still had some time to make a few preparations for the next work day. Without starting in the evening, we likely would have gotten to bed much later in trying to get all our work done. Without ending in the evening, we likely would have had hectic and non-peaceful mornings to start our work week, which would have destroyed the purpose of Sabbath. In reality, some weeks we were done by 8pm on Saturday and some we were not. Some weeks we did not end our Sabbath before 8pm Sunday evening, and some weeks we did. However, as we go forward, we see the benefit of starting and ending in the evening and will continue to try to make that happen.

We also learned the importance of some planning and lots of guarding of our time on Sabbath. We only wanted to include activities and interactions with others that would

be life-giving including close friends and family. Prior to practicing Sabbath we would often fill our Sunday with people and activities some of which were life-giving and many were not. Filled Sundays can be especially common for those in ministry. The concept of Sabbath gave us the permission to be choosier with whom we spend Sabbath and that going home and resting is okay. In reality our selection of people has gotten much better, and our spending time as an immediate family going for walks, watching movies, and playing games has gotten better. But we still struggle to have at least some period of inactivity in our Sabbath. Inactivity seems to happen when nothing better is available. We have gotten more rest since practicing Sabbath, but we still have a lot to learn in terms of planning and guarding our time to provide the necessary space for inactivity and simply delighting in life.

Because our Sabbaths have been spent as a family, neither Steph nor I have had much opportunity to do activities that are unusual for us and may be considered work by others.⁴⁹ These could be hobbies, sports, or even chores. The purpose of using your body and brain in a different way than usual is to be refreshed when you get back to your typical work. Our Saturday preparation chores have provided some opportunity for me with mowing grass and trimming trees, which I have come to find enjoyable. We are also just now getting to the point where we can play sports together again, which had stopped for a while with her having a baby and my foot injury. We played ping pong for an hour a few Sabbaths ago, which was rejuvenating and different for both of us. Playing cards is another enjoyable way of using our minds in ways we do not normally. In the future, we need to be more creative about life-giving activities that will be rejuvenating.

⁴⁹ Keller, number 2 under the heading "Sabbath 'Principles.'"

From my research and experience I have also learned that one day off from work a week is not enough. I also need margin in my life on a daily level for the purpose of developing relationships and to account for the unexpected interruptions of life.⁵⁰ Ironically, I was not able to finish typing the word “unexpected” without being interrupted by four men and a baby coming into the room in which I was writing. Their purpose was purely relationship building due to the presence of the baby, so both aspects of margin were fulfilled in trying to write my sentence about margin. My life typically has so little margin and so much activity that I rarely brush my teeth without walking around the house doing something with my non-teeth-brushing left-hand. Steph and I have talked for years of trying to end our work and preparations for the next day by 9pm every night for the purpose of spending time together, but we often find ourselves looking at the clock at 10:30pm and wondering what happened. Having a baby has actually helped us get a better daily nighttime pattern, but we certainly have room for improvement.

In terms of those who held me accountable to this project, obviously Steph was the primary one. Once she experienced the benefit of Sabbath, she looked forward to it with anticipation. I received encouragement, resources, and practical ministry advice from my senior pastor as well as my mentor. I also had conversations with friends along the way who were intrigued about Sabbath, challenged me, encouraged me, and were encouraged by me. Sharing my ideas and experiences with others only made the project richer and more effective.

⁵⁰ Swenson, 69-78.

Conclusion

For me personally, Sabbath has been the best way to take the head knowledge that God is God and I am not and begin to transfer that knowledge into my heart and actions. I have such a strong tendency to look to me and rely on myself instead of God in a difficult situation. I think if I just try hard enough I can make it happen, which can easily slide into obsession, anxiety, and sleepless nights. Sabbath forces me to stop, regardless of how much is undone, and turn myself back to God and those closest to me to remind me of what is truly most important in life. Sabbath gets me out of the tunnel vision of whatever task I am focusing on to see the bigger picture. During Sabbath, as the song says, I “turn my eyes upon Jesus, look full in His wonderful face, and the things of earth grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace.”

Sabbath has helped make a good marriage great. Steph and I have always loved each other, communicated well, and longed to spend quality time with each other. But without intentionally planning time together, the tyranny of the urgent won out far too consistently. Sabbath has provided a minimum of one full day a week simply to take delight in our life together and with God.

Sabbath has also been a key tool to building a solid and godly foundation for our family. Matthew, our five and a half month old son at the writing of this paper, was included in all of our Sabbaths aside from the Hershey Park experience, which we do not plan to repeat. Steph and I want Matthew to also look forward to Sabbath and our weekly “snow day”⁵¹ as a family.

⁵¹ Scazzero, 171.

Based on the command from God,⁵² the experience and insight of people who have gone before me,⁵³ and my positive personal experience of Sabbath as seen above, I wholeheartedly recommend Sabbath to everyone, especially to those who are in ministry or any other busy, high demanding lifestyle. Practicing a regular Sabbath is absolutely essential for anyone who wants to be healthy physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Particularly in ministry, the work is never done, and we are often giving out to others. Sabbath provides a much needed and extended breath of fresh air where our bodies can rest, our minds can be at peace, our bodies can do something out of the ordinary simply for the fun of it, and we can reconnect with and take delight in those closest to us and God. Sabbath reminds us that God is God, we are not, and the world will not end if we disengage from it for one day out of seven. In fact we will be much healthier and whole people if we do.

⁵² Ex. 20:8-11; Deut 5:12-15; and many other mentions of Sabbath in scripture

⁵³ See the Bibliography for just a few examples

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