

Entering into God’s Rest

Part 1 of 3

Jesus is Our Sabbath Rest

Throughout Scripture we learn that God’s rest is multi-faceted. First, we will examine the Sabbath Rest, and then learn about other facets of God’s rest in Parts 2 & 3.

The Fourth Commandment:

“Remember to observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. You have six days each week for your ordinary work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath day of rest dedicated to the Lord your God. ...For in six days the Lord made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything in them; but on the seventh day He rested. That is why the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart as holy.” — Exodus 20:8-10a,11 NLT

Honoring the Sabbath is for all times:

“The people of Israel must keep the Sabbath day by observing it from generation to generation. This is a covenant obligation for all time.” — Exodus 31:16-17 NLT

God set a precedent for rest when, after creating the universe in six days, He rested on the seventh day. God created man as a triune being made in His image. Therefore, He established the Sabbath rest for our physical body, rest for our soul, as well as for spiritual revival, all from honoring the Sabbath and keeping it holy. God designed our bodies, our mental capacities and our spiritual hunger, so He knows what we need to function at our best and to be most fruitful; He also knows our limits. God wants us to flourish, so when Jesus came to earth, He reminded the people that the Sabbath was a gift. This is why Mark 2:27 declares, *“Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.”*

Even though observing the Sabbath is one of the Ten Commandments, many people don’t fully realize the significance nor the benefits of this command. However, when we obey God’s Fourth Commandment to honor the Sabbath, we step into His blessing. It is the same with all of God’s statutes and principles. God promises that *if we obey them, He will be our God and we will be His people*. Remember that Gentile believers are “grafted into” the Abrahamic blessing.

God gave His people this holy day of rest so they could recharge and trust that God would provide for them. Unfortunately, over time, Jewish leaders started piling on rules, adding their traditions about what was permissible and what wasn’t on the Sabbath. This overzealous focus on dos and don’ts eventually led them astray, causing them to lose sight of the true purpose of the Sabbath.¹ Even so, God knew that a day of rest was a good idea, and I think we should value what He has put in place for us.

As we all know, Jesus dramatically fulfilled the Mosaic Law concerning the Sabbath. He even declared in *Matthew 12:8*, *“For the Son of Man is Lord, even over the Sabbath!”* Also consider what the Apostle Paul said in *Colossians 2:16-17* *“Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come.”*

¹ Parts of this paragraph were excerpted from the GotQuestions.org website

These Scriptures make it clear that, for the Christian, Sabbath-keeping is a matter of spiritual freedom. Moreover, honoring the Sabbath is an issue on which God's Word instructs us not to judge each other. Whether or not you observe a literal day of rest, be careful not to judge those who make different choices regarding the Sabbath. In Christ, we have the freedom to celebrate the Sabbath, but it's equally important not to use that freedom to pass judgment on others or to lead them astray in their faith.

Remember, the true Sabbath is found in Jesus and is something His followers can experience at any time. In Christ, we experience a deep rest that a literal 24-hour Sabbath alone cannot provide. In Matthew 11:28, Jesus extends a comforting invitation, "*Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*" What a relief to know we don't have to strive to earn God's love or experience His peace. Jesus came to offer true, lasting rest in Him.

 Information and Revelation
 Application and Transformation

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your Word, given to me to bring New Life to my soul. Thank You for providing for every need that I have, spirit, soul and body, including my need for a Sabbath rest. Thank You for Your Word that tells me that You desire that I may prosper in all things and be in good health, just as my soul prospers. LORD, I surrender the cares and concerns that occupy my soul, and ask that You draw me close, even into Your presence, so that my soul will prosper for Your glory. I place my trust in You and You alone!

LORD, thank You that Your promises are "yes" and "amen" as I obey Your statutes and principles. I declare that You are my God and that I am Your child. I ask You for a deeper revelation of Your desire for a holy day of rest because I want to place value on the blessing You have established for me through Sabbath rest.

LORD, thank You for Jesus, who fulfilled every jot and tittle of the Mosaic law, leaving nothing for me to strive, trying to earn Your love and acceptance. Thank You for the freedom I have in Jesus, for He set me free from sin and the death penalty that the Law demands.

LORD, help me remember that the true Sabbath is found in Jesus, and is something I can experience at any time. Thank You for Jesus' comforting invitation to come to Him and give Him my heavy burdens, my perplexing concerns and to receive His true and lasting rest.

LORD, I ask these petitions and make these declarations in Jesus' precious and mighty name. Amen.

By David E McFadden© 2026
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