

“God is Great, Beer is Good, &  
People Are Crazy”:  
The Ten Commandments

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Grad & Career Spring '11

# The Desire for Rest & Purpose

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The Fourth Commandment

## The Ten Commandments in the Context of the Redemptive Story

No.	Commandment (Exodus 20)	Pre-Fall Desire (that God seeks to redeem in us)	End times Fulfillment (Heb. 1:1-2)
1.	“You shall have no other gods before Me”	Desire for Worship	Jesus is Lord (Acts 10:36)
2.	“You shall not make for yourself an image...[and] bow down to them or worship them”	Desire for Relationship with a Personal God	Jesus is Immanuel (Matt. 1:23, Col. 1:15)
3.	“You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain”	Desire for Integrity	Jesus is God’s Name & our Name (Phil.2:9-11; Rev. 13:6)
4.	“Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy...”	Desire for Rest & Purpose	Jesus is our Sabbath

## Exodus 20:8-11

<sup>8</sup> “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. <sup>9</sup> Six days you shall labor and do all your work, <sup>10</sup> but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. <sup>11</sup> For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

How many people would say they try to follow the 4<sup>th</sup> commandment?

What do you think it means to “remember the Sabbath by keeping it holy”?

(most of us treat the Sabbath like pagans or superficial Jews)

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Discussion Questions:

# Essence of Sabbath

The Sabbath is not merely a good idea; it is one of the Ten Commandments. Jesus did not abrogate, cancel, or annul the idea of the Sabbath. In the Ten Commandments, the fourth (Sabbath) is the bridge that takes us from the first three, which focus on God, to the final five, which concentrate on our relationships with others. The Sabbath is a day of delight for humankind, animals, and the earth; it is not merely a pious day and it is not fundamentally a break, a day off, or a twenty-four-hour vacation. The Sabbath is a feast day that remembers our leisure in Eden and anticipates our play in the new heavens and earth with family, friends, and strangers for the sake of the glory of God.

- Allender, Dan B. (2009). Sabbath (p. 5).

# Freedom to Sabbath!

<sup>16</sup> 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. <sup>17</sup> These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. – Colossians 2:16-17

- Questions that seek answers for all the possible parameters for Sabbath keeping usually betray an attitude of earning God's favor with obedience. Like the dating couple who insists on asking how far is too far instead of contemplating how purity will bring life. These kinds of question try to ensure "not sinning" for fear of God's judgment. In Christ we are free from judgment but we are also free to experience life to the full!

# Why are we so anti-Sabbath?

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Desire for Rest & Purpose

# 1. Work as Our Identity

“On that weekly holiday observed by all “present-day civilized humanity” (Ferenczi was writing in 1919, when Sunday was still sacred, even in Budapest, his very cosmopolitan hometown), not only did drudgery give way to festivity, family gatherings and occasionally worship, but the machinery of self-censorship shut down, too, stilling the eternal inner murmur of self-reproach. The Sunday neurotic, rather than enjoying his respite, became distraught; he feared that impulses repressed only with great effort might be unleashed. He induced pain or mental anguish to pre-empt the feeling of being out of control.” – Judith Shulevitz, “Bring Back the Sabbath” *The New York Times*

# 1. Work as Our Identity

“Work is a means to achieving personal goals, including money, professional stature, social standing, and self-fulfillment. I have spoken of the success ethic in the past tense, but this does not mean it does not continue to be the dominant work ethic of our time. Even Christians who repudiate its value system tend to live by a modified success ethic. It is simply part of our ingrained way of life...By Christian standards, the value underlying the success ethic are at best secondary motivations for work. Pursued as most of American society has pursued it, the success ethic has produced a form of idolatry, accompanied by moral impoverishment.” - Leland Ryken, *Redeeming the Time: A Christian Approach to Work and Leisure*.

# 1. Work as Our Identity

“Boasting about work is a national pastime. The one who works harder, against greater odds, and with fewer resources to gain the greatest ground wins. We are proud that we shoulder such immense responsibility and push our plow with the pride of aristocracy. Sabbath yanks us off our high horse, and for that reason alone few wish to dismount.”

- Allender, Dan B. (2009). Sabbath (p. 20).
- Why do we often feel like so much is at stake with our work performance???

## 2. Consumeristic “Rest”

“Overvaluing leisure takes several forms. One of the self-indulgence that leads to spend virtually all of their nonworking time and resources on having fun or pursuing a hobby. There is not time left for helping others or for worshiping God...If an excessive devotion to work robs leisure of its joy and meaning, the reverse is also true: excessive devotion to leisure detracts from the value of work. For many Americans, work has ceased to have intrinsic value and has been reduced to that which makes the weekend possible.” - Leland Ryken, *Redeeming the Time: A Christian Approach to Work and Leisure*.

## 2. Consumeristic “Rest”

“Many modern-day “vacations” have the allure of cotton candy—a brightly colored candy puff on a paper stick that promises a feast of fullness and is nearly impossible to eat without sticky compromise. Once we tear into the sugary diversion, it disappears in a flash and offers no substance. It is not enough, and it doesn’t satisfy, even for a minute. The end only increases the desire for more—it doesn’t bring awe or gratitude. This is the energy of consumerism, the heartbeat of a self-serving capitalism.”

- Allender, Dan B. (2009). Sabbath (p. 11).

Sabbath is about our worship of the Lord of lords who is lord over time:

To “remember the Sabbath and keep it holy” is to set aside our time for...

- Rest & Refreshment
- God’s Rhythm of life
- Celebration
- Redemption
- Mercy & Justice

# 1. Sabbath as Rest & Refreshment

On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. <sup>11</sup> For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but *he rested* on the seventh day. - Exodus 20:10-11

“ <sup>10</sup> “For six years you are to sow your fields and harvest the crops, <sup>11</sup> but during the seventh year *let the land lie unplowed and unused*. <sup>12</sup> Six days do your work, but on the seventh day do not work, so that your ox and your donkey may rest, and so that the slave born in your household and the foreigner living among you *may be refreshed*. – Exodus 23:12

<sup>12</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, <sup>13</sup> “Say to the Israelites, ‘You must observe my Sabbaths. This will be a sign between me and you for the generations to come, so you may know that I am the LORD, who makes you holy... <sup>17</sup> It will be a sign between me and the Israelites forever, for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day *he rested and was refreshed*.’” - Exodus 31:12-13

## 2. Sabbath as God's Rhythm of Life

<sup>9</sup> Six days you shall labor and do all your work, <sup>10</sup> but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God. - Exodus 20:9

<sup>11</sup> For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. - Exodus 20:11

### 3. Sabbath as Celebration

<sup>31</sup> God saw all that he had made, and *it was very good*. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day. <sup>1</sup> Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.

<sup>2</sup> By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. <sup>3</sup> Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done. – Genesis 1:31-2:3

## 4. Sabbath as Redemption

<sup>12</sup> “Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy, as the LORD your God has commanded you. <sup>13</sup> Six days you shall labor and do all your work, <sup>14</sup> but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your ox, your donkey or any of your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns, so that your male and female servants may rest, as you do. <sup>15</sup> *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.* –

Deuteronomy 5:12-15

## 4. Sabbath as Redemption

<sup>8</sup> For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day. <sup>9</sup> There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; <sup>10</sup> for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his. <sup>11</sup> Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience. – Hebrews 4:8-11

## 4. Sabbath as Redemption

<sup>3</sup> Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup> and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you. – 1 Peter 1:3-4

- The Christian Sabbath is generally the Lord's Day now and on the Lord's Day we celebrate our resurrection in Christ and our future inheritance in Christ.

## 5. Sabbath as Mercy & Justice

<sup>10</sup> “For six years you are to sow your fields and harvest the crops, <sup>11</sup> but during the seventh year let the land lie unplowed and unused. *Then the poor among your people may get food from it, and the wild animals may eat what is left.* Do the same with your vineyard and your olive grove. – Exodus 23:10-11

- The Sabbath rest year for land is also a provision of mercy for the poor (and animals actually!).

## 5. Sabbath as Mercy & Justice

<sup>22</sup> “[Festival of the Harvest] When you harvest the crops of your land, do not harvest the grain along the edges of your fields, and do not pick up what the harvesters drop. Leave it for the poor and the foreigners living among you. I am the LORD your God.” – Leviticus 23:22

- Sabbaths were also connected to Jewish festivals. In the instructions given about harvesting during the Festival of Harvest, God indicates again merciful harvesting practices that left food for the poor and foreigners!

# The Sabbath as Delight???

“If you do away with the yoke of oppression,  
with the pointing finger and malicious talk,  
<sup>10</sup> and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry  
and satisfy the needs of the oppressed,  
then your light will rise in the darkness,  
and your night will become like the noonday.

<sup>13</sup> “If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath  
and from doing as you please on my holy day,  
if you call the Sabbath a delight  
and the LORD’s holy day honorable,  
and if you honor it by not going your own way  
and not doing as you please or speaking idle words,  
<sup>14</sup> then you will find your joy in the LORD,  
and I will cause you to ride in triumph on the heights of the land  
and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob.”  
For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

– Isaiah 58:9-14

If you were to plan a day of  
delight that led you to praise of  
God, what would you plan?

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