

# *EMBRACING THE SABBATH*

**A GUIDE TO RESTING WITH GOD  
IN DIFFERENT SEASONS OF LIFE**



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**Definition of Sabbath: Purposefully creating spaces & rhythms to be mindful of God and to enjoy Him and His activity around us**

Discipleship is a journey of walking with Jesus and His people. It's a journey that takes time. At Resonate, we have identified 3 essential elements of the discipleship journey: enjoy grace, embody love, and engage culture.

1. Enjoy Grace — This is our experience of being with Jesus and enjoying His unearned love and favor.
2. Embody Love — This is our transformation of becoming more like Jesus in how we love each other.
3. Engage Culture — This is our mission of living like Jesus and proclaiming who He is that all would believe in Him.

**How does the spiritual practice of sabbathing help us to enjoy grace, embody love, and engage culture?**

In Mark 2, Jesus addressed some of the Jewish leaders who were criticizing him in the way he was approaching the Sabbath. To the religious leaders, the Sabbath was a holy time for God's people to practice devotion to specific practices (rest, cleaning, etc.) and any deviation was a sign of disobedience. Jesus' response to the religious leaders was simply: "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath (Mark 2:27 ESV).

# WHAT IS SABBATH?

### So what did Jesus mean?

Jesus was clarifying the reality of sabbath rest: It was and always will be a gift to God's people for their flourishing. God knew that His people would have to toil and work their whole lives. In order to provide them rest and point to something better, He gave the gift of the Sabbath and the practice of Sabbath rest.

The Sabbath provides a structured time for rest away from the busyness of daily life. This rest is not just physical but also spiritual and mental, allowing God's people to reconnect with themselves and with Him. It's a time to experience grace—unearned and freely given rest. Sabbath rest is a chance to enjoy the grace of God. Taking a break from routine work provides opportunities for reflection and expressing gratitude to God for His provision.

Within this enjoyment of grace is the opportunity to embody the love of God to others. The Sabbath often involves spending time with family and the Church, through enjoyment of God's presence together. Enjoying Jesus together helps us enjoy and love each other better.

Finally, we recognize in a culture that so often glorifies productivity, the Sabbath is a counter-cultural practice that emphasizes rest and reliance on God. In our practice of sabbath rest, our enjoyment of God's grace and embodiment of His love makes us look different to the world. This in and of itself, is our opportunity to engage the culture around us and "give a reason for the hope that we have" (1 Peter 3:15).

# WHAT IS SABBATH?



# WHERE AM I WITH GOD?

Because practicing Sabbath rest is a spiritual discipline, it is a habit that must be built with time, intentionality, and productive struggle. Wherever you're at in your relationship with God, there's a next step for you and we can help! Use this page to help you identify how you've been feeling about God.

## ***You might be feeling like your relationship with God is distant if...***

- You attend church based on your feelings or schedule.
- You only read the Bible when it's read aloud during a sermon.
- You see God as good when life is good and see God as bad when times are bad.
- You reject what the Bible, God, or other Christians have to say whenever you don't agree with it.
- You only talk to God when you're in crisis or in search of blessings or good luck.

## ***You might be feeling like your relationship with God is routine if...***

- You attend church because it's just one of the things you do each week.
- You read the Bible with other Christians and maybe also follow a Bible reading plan but read more for completion than for transformation.
- You pray before each meal or whenever someone asks you to.
- You talk to God when life is normal, but when life gets busier or harder, your prayer life tanks.
- You are part of a small group and/or you serve on Sundays but you don't quite know or feel how it affects your relationship with God.

## ***You might be feeling like your relationship with God is thriving if...***

- You attend church because you know that you belong and you want to be obedient to God.
- You read the Bible more often than not, but when you do, you believe that it is filling and transforming you, even when you don't always feel it.
- You are usually aware of God's presence with you and you continue to pray, even when life gets busier or harder.
- Your prayers aren't only requests and are also full of praising God both for who he is and what he has done.
- You are intentionally saying "no" to certain things in order to be able to say "yes" more and more to God.

# WHEN GOD FEELS DISTANT...



**If you're feeling like your relationship with God is distant, your next steps might be...**

- *Enjoy Grace*

- Schedule a 1-hour block of time each week, device and distraction-free, if possible. You can do this on your own or with someone who helps you to enjoy Jesus.
- Set aside time each day to write 2 things that you are grateful to God about. At the end of the week, look back at your list, thank him in prayer and tell someone you know about the list.

- *Embody Love*

- Have discussions with 2-3 different people and talk about the ways each of you most naturally give and receive love.
- Pick 1 or 2 people each week and go out of your way to give them your attention. Be curious, ask questions, talk less, and listen more.

- *Engage Culture*

- Read or watch stories of some well-known missionaries from the past who engaged culture well. For example, Adoniram Judson, Corrie ten Boom, Elisabeth Elliot, or Hudson Taylor.
- Take a walk around your neighborhood 1-2 times a week and take up every opportunity to introduce yourself to the people who live around you.



# WHEN GOD FEELS ROUTINE...

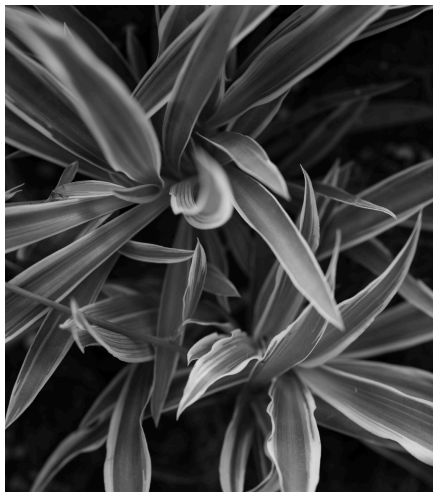


**If you're feeling like your relationship with God is routine, your next step might be...**

- **Enjoy Grace**
  - Schedule a 3-4 hour block of time on your regular day off, device and distraction-free, if possible. You can do this on your own or with someone who helps you to enjoy Jesus.
  - Spend time each week thinking about the people you have been unkind to through actions, thoughts, or words and confess them to God and ask for his forgiveness in prayer. Let him lead you to see if there's anyone's forgiveness you need to ask for.
- **Embody Love**
  - Reflect on the people whom God has given you as gifts to love you well. Go out of your way to tell them how God is using them and praise God for it! Don't assume that those people already know.
  - Consider the tangible needs of your friends. Pray about being a part of meeting 1-2 of those needs and act on it!
- **Engage Culture**
  - During one of your intentionally scheduled blocks of time, pray for the "one(s)" or nonbelievers to know Jesus.
  - Pray for one of your co-workers or neighbors every day and act on any opportunities to engage them in meals and meaningful conversations.



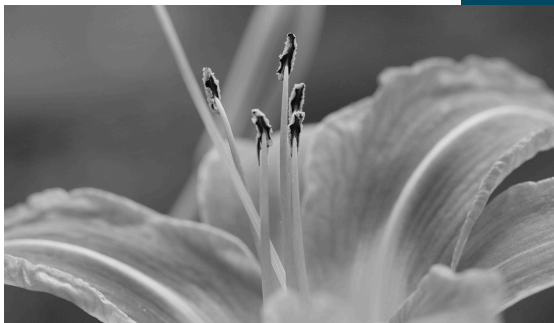
# WHEN GOD FEELS NEAR...



**If you're feeling like your relationship with God is thriving, your next step might be...**

- *Enjoy Grace*

- Schedule a 3-4 hour block of time on your regular day off each week, device and distraction-free, if possible. You can do this on your own or with someone who helps you to enjoy Jesus. For one of those scheduled days each month, let it be a whole or half day block of time.
- Gather a small group of people with the expressed purpose of enjoying Jesus by reading the Bible together on a regular basis, especially since MCs are on break.



- *Embody Love*

- Spend time in concentrated prayer for a different friend every day, that they would feel loved by Jesus and need him more.
- Think and pray about a friend who needs loving feedback about how they can love others more or how they can live in a way that is in greater joy and obedience to Jesus. Have that conversation with them!

- *Engage Culture*

- Ask one of your "ones" to coffee or to go for a walk and give them your distraction-free attention. Ask them to share their story and be curious throughout their sharing. Before you leave, schedule another time to hangout.
- Plan a meal where you invite one of your "ones" and one or two other Christian friends to get together and build a relationship.





...entering into and experiencing something. You love  
...ation of the world implies that he  
...of the Trinity has  
...myself, or I set myself apart (for holy service to God) <sup>4</sup> Greek  
...and his disciples entered. <sup>2</sup> Now Judas, who  
...trayed him, also knew <sup>3</sup> the place, for <sup>9</sup> Jesus