

MY BEST LIFE NOW: Rest and Delight on the Seventh Day

Scripture used: [Mark 2:23-24 \(NLT\)](#)

OVERVIEW

This week Pastor Hurmon continued our sermon series *My Best Life*. In today's Scripture, Jesus is walking through a field on the Sabbath. The disciples following Him are picking at the grain, and the Pharisees are shocked, asking how the followers of Jesus dare being busy on the day of rest. Why harvest grain on the Sabbath? Jesus points out that the disciples are not working, but they are free to enjoy God's gift of Creation.

The Sabbath was made to meet the needs of people, not vice-versa. It is not meant to enslave humanity, but - on the contrary - to set us free. It is meant to bring us inner peace; to facilitate the unforced rhythms of grace; and to lure us into daily prayer and contemplation.

KEY POINTS

1. Our definition of prayer is too narrow. The disciples ask Jesus how to pray, and He gives them rabbinical "Cliffs Notes": the Daily Prayer. "Give us our daily bread." Ask for provision, to make our request known. Then gratitude and praise. Then intercession (friends, colleagues, community, world). Confession. Feeling safe in the presence of God. Request for wisdom and guidance. There is a rhythm of listening and reflecting. And finally, Jesus encourages concrete action in prayer: fasting from food and pointless distraction. Prayer evolves from being a duty to becoming a place of delight – to be with the Father in a special and blessed space.
2. The "Cosmic Companionship" of relationship with Jesus carries us through times of great loss and emptiness, in big and small ways. The daily Sabbath rhythm is built into our DNA; humanity needs the Sabbath principle. It is the answer to somebody's prayer, to step off the treadmill of life. God created, paused, surveyed, looked over, delighted in Creation. God did not rush from accomplishment to accomplishment but He punctuated His work by pausing, to fully take in the beauty of His work.
3. Jesus observed a "weekly day of delight." It's time to inaugurate that in our own lives. [Genesis 2:2 \(NLT\)](#) shows that God rested on the seventh day. It's in the blueprint of creation. Same for us: we need to stop from all our work and rest, worship, and delight. Set that time apart for the Lord. The Sabbath does not have to be a given day – but it has to be one day per week. It is not a day of errands and busy work, but pure delight. We can't make excuses.
4. Why can I do for 24 hours that will fill my soul with joy and praise? We have three blessings: the Creation of the world, of humankind, and of the seventh day. There is a connection between the three: each produces new life. New life will be born in our body, soul, and relationships if we stop working. Things won't fall apart – that's an illusion, and comes from our addiction to busyness.
5. Let's dare to consider the Sabbath experience. PF40 is going to be our church's approach during the march to Easter. We should "pilot" a weekly sabbath. Focus on rejuvenation, family, friends, and delight in the Creation. And delight in God Himself!

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - Imagine a day that you choose to refrain from anything that you consider work. What would you want to do on such a day? What anxieties arise as you think about such a day? When was the last day that you had spent in this way?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Consider [Mark 2:23-27 \(NLT\)](#). In our culture, we no longer have a sense of obligation to keep the Sabbath, and yet for many of us, the prospect of taking a full day off from work brings significant stress and anxiety. What are the practical obstacles for reserving a day of the week purely for rest, renewal, delight, and relationships? As you reflect on this question, do you notice the consequences or challenges that you might be facing now in your life because you do not have a day reserved for rest and renewal?
- 3) **DO** - As you consider the upcoming 40 days of Prayer and Fasting (PF40) that will begin at NBCC on March 6, consider building in a day of rest, renewal, and relationship in the 6 weeks leading up to Easter Sunday. If you decide to make this commitment, plan it out in your calendar now, and share this commitment with some close friends or family that you hope to grow in relationship with!