

Rediscovering Sabbath, Week 3

Small Group Discussion Guide, week of Sept 25th

SEPT 25TH SERMON SUMMARY

REDISCOVERING SABBATH: RELINQUISH (EXODUS 16)

The Israelites had to learn to trust God for daily manna, and for rest on the 7th day. *The best way to find out if you can trust God is by trusting Him.* There are 2 things we have to relinquish in order to trust God for a day/time of Sabbath rest.

1. Relinquish the burden of having to know what's best (wisdom). Taking a Sabbath day off from our busy week doesn't always make sense, but God is wise and knows what you need (Isaiah 55:8-9, 1 Cor. 1:25).
2. Relinquish the burden of having to provide for all your own needs (responsibility) and thinking it is all up to you. You can give up control, fear, worry, and trust God as your ultimate provider.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If you were starving in the desert, what food would you want God to miraculously provide?
2. In the Israelite exodus from slavery in Egypt, God had already shown his power and faithfulness prior to Exodus 16 and the provision of manna. How had God already provided, in:
 - a. Exodus 13:21-22
 - b. Exodus 14:29-31
 - c. Exodus 15:22-27
 - d. How do you think Israel should have been feeling toward God after these incidents?

READ EXODUS 16:1-7

1 The whole Israelite community set out from Elim and came to the Desert of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had come out of Egypt. **2** In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. **3** The Israelites said to them, “If only we had died by the Lord’s hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death.”

4 Then the Lord said to Moses, “I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions. **5** On the sixth day they are to prepare what they bring in, and that is to be twice as much as they gather on the other days.”

6 So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, “In the evening you will know that it was the Lord who brought you out of Egypt, **7** and in the morning you will see the glory of the Lord, because he has heard your grumbling against him.”

3a. How would you describe the attitude of the people?

- b. Why do you think they forgot about all that God had already done for them?
- c. How do you think this compares to the behavior of people today? Give examples.
- d. Why do you think it’s so hard to trust God (for them or for us)?

4a. How would you describe the attitude of God?

- b. What can you learn about God in his response to the Israelites? Discuss the attributes or characteristics of God you see demonstrated here.

EXODUS 16:23-29 says this about the Sabbath:

23 Tomorrow is to be a day of sabbath rest, a holy sabbath to the Lord.

25 “Eat it today,” Moses said, “because today is a sabbath to the Lord.”

29 Bear in mind that the Lord has given you the Sabbath

5a. How is the Sabbath described? Explain what each description means (or implies) to you.

- In verse 23
- In verse 25
- In verse 29

b. What were some of the obstacles to Sabbath rest for the Israelites?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

6. How does the idea of taking a Sabbath day challenge you and your ideas about what is wise or responsible?

7. What will you need to relinquish so that you can trust God for a Sabbath day/time?

8. Share your thoughts on any of these questions (asked at the end of the sermon):
 - What's stopping you from taking a day of Sabbath rest?
 - How could you start?
 - What activities or attitudes is the Spirit bringing to your attention?

SABBATH PRACTICES AND EXERCISES

Each week you will be given some practical ideas and exercises to incorporate a time of Sabbath - use them (or not), or tweak, change, or adapt them in whatever way fits you.

Creating Time and Space

Sabbath can only begin if we close the factory, turn out the lights, turn off the computer, and withdraw from the concerns of the marketplace. Choose at least one heavily used appliance or device – the phone, television, computer, washer and dryer – and let them rest for a Sabbath period. Whether it is morning, afternoon, or an entire day, surrender to a quality of time when you will not be disturbed, seduced or responsive to what our technologies have to offer. Notice how you respond to its absence.

(Excerpt from *Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal, and Delight in Our Busy Lives* by Wayne Muller, p. 27-28.)