

24/6

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Sermon-Based Study Guide
Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church
Genesis 1.26-2.3 | March 1, 2020
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I. Introduction to this Study

This week we begin a new series for the season of Lent, a 40-day journey with Jesus to Jerusalem for the events of Holy Week. This season recalls God's people wandering in the desert for 40 years and Jesus' temptation in the wilderness for 40 days. And while there are 46 total days between Ash Wednesday and Easter, the Sundays aren't counted (more on that below!).

Through Lent, we will be engaging the topic of Sabbath. Hence the title, 24/6.

II. Connecting with One Another

How is our world increasingly 24/7?

What do you think of when you hear the word "Sabbath"? What images are conjured up in your mind? Why?

III. Study the Text

- a. As we sometimes do in a topical series like this, we're beginning in the beginning, to be reminded of the character of our Creator God.

Read **Genesis 1.1-2.3**, slowly, and out loud if possible.

- b. In your own words, describe the earth at the outset of the story, in **verses 1-2**.
- c. How do God's creative commands through the first three days add form to the formless earth? (**verses 3-13**)

How do God's creative commands through days 4-6 add fullness to the empty earth? (**verses 14-25**)

How do the days correspond to each other (Day 1 with 4, Day 2 with 5, and Day 3 with 6)? What does that reveal about God's creative design?

- d. Other ancient creation stories describe the earth as bad. How does God view his creation? (see **verses 4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25**)

Why do you think he sees it this way? Is that how you see it? Why or why not?

- e. It's been written "the creation account reveals that God brings order, beauty and harmony out of an originally chaotic situation." How does that reveal God's desire for your life?



- f. How do you understand that humanity – both male and female – is made in the image of God? (**verses 26-27**) This is a different view of women than other ancient stories. What does it mean that both male and female reflect God's image?
How does God describe his work on that sixth day? What is different? Why?
- g. What does God call the man and woman to do? (**verses 28-31**)
How should we interpret these words in light of our current environmental crisis?
How should Christians respond?
- h. In **Genesis 2.2-3**, God does something very different than the first six days, communicated with three sentences of seven words each. What is it? Why do you think he does this?
What did God say about the first six days (in **4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25**)? What did he say about the seventh? (Look for two new words) Why? What do these words mean to you?
- i. In the first three verses of Genesis 2, we encounter a repetition of the words "work" and "rest." Interestingly, "rest" is a verb in this passage, while "work" is a noun!
What does that reveal about the nature of God's rest?
- j. Think about Adam and Eve's first full day with God, after being created on the sixth. How do you think their first day (the world's seventh), shaped their understanding of who God is?
Again, this differs from other ancient creation stories, where humanity was put here to work for the gods ceaselessly. As one author puts it, "We worship the God who invented the weekend."
- k. We often think of humanity as the crown of creation, but what occurs on the "seventh day of completion"? What does that tell us about God?
- l. We don't count Sundays in the 40 days of Lent because Sundays are a "feast day" instead of a "fast day."
How could you take on a Lenten observance of practicing Sabbath through this season of Lent?

IV. Pray

- a. Confess the ways you have neglected Sabbath in your own life,
- b. Ask God to help you prioritize what needs to get done in six days, and to give you the ability to trust Him enough to rest on the seventh.

V. Digging Deeper

- a. Meditate on Jesus' invitation to the "weary and burdened" in Matthew 11.28-30.

