

# LISTEN UP & WRITE IT DOWN

## **The God who Rests**

*The Gospel According to Genesis: Beginnings*

Genesis 1:31-2:3

Sunday, February 15, 2009

### **IV. The Practice of Rest**

*Why should we practice the Biblical "rhythm of rest?"*

1. It is part of our reflecting God as His \_\_\_\_\_.
2. It is an offering to God of our time and, therefore, \_\_\_\_\_.
3. It reminds us that God finishes His work and will finish His work in \_\_\_\_\_ and in the \_\_\_\_\_.
4. It is an expression of faith in the truth that it is the Lord who provides, not our \_\_\_\_\_.
5. It reminds us that our \_\_\_\_\_ with God is not based on our own \_\_\_\_\_, but on His provision and work in Christ.
6. It helps us long for the \_\_\_\_\_ rest that is ours through faith in Christ.
7. It makes time and space for \_\_\_\_\_ and restorative reflection on the works of God in creation and the work of God in Christ.
8. It makes time and space for family, friends, personal \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, and the practice of mercy.
9. It frees us from the rat race and breaks the patterns of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in our lives.
10. It honors the value and place of both \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, under the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ.

**This Week's Assignment:** Evaluate the "practice of rest" in your life. Schedule some "Sabbath Rest" sometime this week, ideally half a day or more. Set the time apart for the Lord and whatever you do, offer it to the Lord as "Holy Leisure." Then discuss your experience with a friend.

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### **I. The God who Rests (Genesis 1:31-2:3)**

- A. What "God rested" does NOT mean . . .
- B. What "God rested" does mean . . .

### **II. The Command to Rest (Exodus 20:8-11)**

- A. Why did God command it?
- B. Why don't we strictly keep it?

### **III. Christ, Our Rest**

- A. The shadow of the law covenant has been fulfilled and replaced by Christ ("the substance"), and a new covenant in His blood. (Col. 2:16-17, Rom. 14:5-9)
- B. Christ is the "rest of God". We enter God's rest now by faith in Him, looking forward to our eternal rest. (Heb. 3:7-4:11)
- C. Jesus invites us to find our soul rest in Him. (Mt. 11:28-30)
- D. The early church clearly shifted from strict Sabbath keeping on the 7th day of the week to a continuing practice of the rest principle and "the Lord's Day" on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the week. (Acts 20:7, 1 Cor. 16:2, Rev. 1:10)

*So where does that leave us as believers today?*

# THINK IT OVER!

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1. Read Genesis 1:31-2:3. If you look at the pattern for the early days, what is different on this 7<sup>th</sup> day? What do you make of that?
2. Was God tired and worn out from His work? Is that why He rested? Did God's work cease completely? Why do you think we are told of the rest of God?
3. Look at the command to rest in Exodus 20:8-11. What is this command connected to? Now look at Deuteronomy 5:12-15, where the command to rest is restated. What additional thing is connected to the command in this text?
4. Why have Christians throughout the ages worshiped and rested on Sunday, instead of Saturday, the traditional Sabbath? Why don't we strictly "keep the Sabbath" now that Christ has come? (Look at 4 reasons and Scriptures under 3<sup>rd</sup> part of outline.)
5. So if Christ fulfills the Sabbath command, and if now, according to Colossians 2:16, "no one is to act as our judge in regard to a Sabbath day", does that mean that the principle and practice of rest are eliminated from God's moral law, the Ten Commandments? Are we left with only 9 commandments now?

# WORK IT OUT!

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1. What was new and most challenging for you in this week's text/message?
2. For some, from non-Christian backgrounds, the "practice of rest" is a completely new concept. If that's you, talk about your reaction to this new concept. For others, from Christian backgrounds, the "practice of rest" was negative, rigid, legalistic and ritualistic. If that's you, talk about your experience.
3. What are some reasons that believers today have shed not only the legalistic observance of the Sabbath, but also the entire principle and practice of rest? Have we "thrown out the baby with the bathwater?" If so, how do we go back?
4. Do you practice any consistent "rhythm of rest?" Talk about your experience. What does that look like? What have been the challenges and the benefits of the practice? If you do not have a consistent practice, why not and are you willing to try one?
5. Which of the 10 reasons/benefits for practicing a rhythm of rest challenge you most? Which draw you most? Which do you need the most?