A “day of rest” or what the Bible calls Sabbath, is a key part of our life of following Jesus. But how do we in our busy, overcommitted culture do a day of rest?

Here are a few suggestions for how you can develop a regular “day of rest.” One note: this will take some time. You won’t get it perfect every time. Plus, stuff will come up that you must deal with on your day of rest. So be graceful to yourself and come back to the day that God made for you (passage) to rest, repair, and restore your life.

1

PICK A TIME AND GET THE TEAM ON BOARD.

Everything rises or falls on this decision. Whether you’re married, married with kids, or single living by yourself, it is incredibly important that the people in your life know that you’re taking a day of rest and either join you in it or give you the space for it.

If you are doing this at home with family, you need your family on board. If not, it’s not nearly as impactful to do it alone and likely you’ll get pulled in different directions.

Consider starting with an 8-hour period. From 9am-5pm on a specific day each week, you shut down anything that looks like "work." Talk with the people in your life and plan for this day – protect it and ask others to either join you or help you protect it as well. Then over time you can plan for a full 24-hour day of rest.

If you are a parent, you may need to say no to some of your kids' activities. They would benefit from a day of rest as well, and it will help them learn about the importance of rest to the way God created them.

It is *critical* that you pick a day and stick to it for a few weeks. You may have to change it later but having that day set aside in advance will help you plan for it and look forward to it!

2

DECIDE WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO DO TO REFILL YOUR TANK

Sabbath is meant to be a *CELEBRATION* – Jewish culture says Sabbath should be a *menuha*, a time of peace and relaxation. So, what kinds of things do you like to do – apart from work – that are restful, relaxing, and fit the idea of a celebration?

Get specific and think about things like what you would like to eat, what conversations or relationships are helpful for you, and what does your body need to restore and repair after the six days of work behind you?

One great piece of advice is this: "If you work with your mind, rest with your hands. If you work with your hands, rest with your mind."

You can read a good book, eat a good meal and eat it slowly, take a nap, spend time outside, exercise, talk with your family or a friend and know you don't have to rush off anywhere else. For people who work with their minds (do a lot of thinking, writing, processing, etc.) it may be good to do a little work in the yard or garden. If you work with your hands, spending time thinking could be incredibly restful for you.

The point is to pick a few things to do in advance and plan for them so that you're not scrambling at the last minute.

It is also important to know that if you're an excessively busy person, doing a day of rest may lead to you not feeling "right" or even getting sick. This is your body doing what it does best, now that you're giving it time and space to do it! If you do feel off or if you get sick, then take that time to get the rest you need and recover your health.

3

PUT GOD AT THE CENTER OF YOUR REST

Since rest is all about reminding ourselves who God is and that we are not God, it is important to have some time with God in your day of rest. We recommend starting with prayer and worship. If your day of rest is Saturday or Sunday, your worship time at church can be that starting point.

As a family, take some time during this day to talk about good things God has done during the past week. Ask God for help with the tasks that are coming in the week ahead. Take time to read the Bible but let yourself read different passages without hurrying or trying to "get something out of it." Let it be "restful reading."

We also recommend spending some of your day of rest in silence, listening for what God has to say to you. Our work and activity are so incredibly noisy that we often miss what God is saying. Your day of rest is a great time to stop and listen to the God who is always speaking.

CLICK BELOW FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW TO BUILD A DAY OF REST:

SABBATH: HOW DO I ACTUALLY DO IT? >

THE SABBATH PRACTICE >