

For Heaven's Sake, Give It a Rest!: God's Radical Sabbath Command
Session Three – *Giving the Sabbath: It's Nothing Personal*
Pastor Ruud – November 2023

Session Overview

Having examined the aspect of “remembering” and “observing” or “keeping” Sabbath, we now look into the added reality of the command to “give” Sabbath. God’s command is one held in relationship with God, surely, and yet is tied to the act or allowance of providing Sabbath for others. We’ll note also how the Sabbath command is taken to include economic, social, and even ecological attention, particularly as a form of “release” or “setting free.” In particular, Jesus’ example and enactment of Sabbath will be a key as he revealed more greatly the heart of the command over and against the hard-lined rules of purity or righteousness.

Key Scripture

- [Deuteronomy 15:1-2](#)
- [Exodus 23:10-11](#)
- [Luke 4:14-21](#)
- [Mark 2:23-27](#)
- [Luke 13:10-17](#)

Questions

- How often do you think of *giving* Sabbath to others? What are some ways you may gift Sabbath?
- While the Sabbath command promotes rest, scripture shows how it includes release and/or setting free (*shemitah*). From what may you need to be released to experience true Sabbath? From what may others need to be released?
- Jesus commonly violated the hard-lined pure and righteous rules of Sabbath in order to give life. How do Jesus’ actions and words inspire us in similar actions of love and freedom every day?
- In what ways do our daily structures of economy, society, and ecology prevent Sabbath? What are the consequences? What would it take for us to honor the Sabbath in these aspects of life together? What changes would it demand of us?

Prayer:

Lord of the Sabbath, inspire in us the faith to give Sabbath rest and release to our neighbors even as we seek to observe it for ourselves, through the redeeming and freeing power of Christ’s grace and mercy. Amen.