

*Living Well: Christian Practices for Everyday Life*  
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# Living Well

*Christian Practices for Everyday Life*

7

## Keeping Sabbath



## 7 Keeping Sabbath

# Yearning



We live in a society that is always on. There is no off switch. Our lives are so busy—caring for a family, working, studying, participating in activities, attending meetings, shopping, spending time online, and the list goes on. But we long for rest from our work and busy lives. We search for a way to replenish our spirit in a 24/7 world. We hunger for Sabbath.

### Do You Keep the Sabbath?

I plead guilty.

I know that one day a week is supposed to be a day of rest, a day of worship, a day of getting closer to God and family. I know all of that is a great idea. I know I should do it.

I don't.

I get to church nearly every Sunday, “home and road,” as we say in the sports business, which means whether I’m at home or traveling. But I often leave church to hustle to a game. That’s true at least twenty times a year, and there are only fifty-two Sundays.

I bet I write my newspaper column at least thirty Sundays each year. For sportswriters, the weekend usually is the heart of the workweek. It would be super if the work I did on Sundays was service to others. Sometimes that’s the case when I speak in prison, at a church, or at the city’s mission. Or it can be when I take an elderly person to a service. But most often on Sundays I’m working at my job.

I know that one of the Ten Commandments is to keep holy the Lord’s Day.

I know that Moses said in Exodus 16:23, “The Lord has commanded that tomorrow is a holy day of rest, dedicated to him.”

I know that some faiths have lots of rules about what you can and can’t do on the Sabbath.

I know that Jesus went to the synagogue regularly.

I know that I need a Sabbath rest. I know that I seldom take it.

I can give all the excuses. We live in a 24/7 world where nearly every business is open every day. Some are open every day and night. Sunday “blue laws” and other restrictions on trade and activities have gone the way of the hula hoop and the black-and-white TV. There are times when most of us simply must work on the Sabbath to keep our jobs.

I’m not talking about the exceptions when we simply must work. I’m talking about how I regularly break the rule about resting on the Sabbath.

Guess when I’m writing this article? You got it—Sunday night!

(Terry Pluto, *Faith and You*)



## Developing my Sabbath Day

When I first learned about the Jewish Sabbath, I was fascinated. I thought it was impossible, but I was fascinated. At the time I was working part-time, attending college full-time (an hour away from home) and interning at my job. Working, attending classes, doing my internship hours and traveling took fifty-five hours a week. This was before I ate, slept or did any studying. Take one day off every week? Right!

But a strange thing happened: God urged me to give the Sabbath a try. In fact, God insisted I give the Sabbath a try. Apparently, my schedule did not impress God. So I started taking a few hours off on Saturdays (Sunday was a work day for me). I was restless and wanted the time to be over, as though it were jail time. I had so many things to do.

God kept up the pressure, wanting me to forget my duties for one day. I learned new ways to do my work so I could observe the Sabbath fully. I typed up first drafts of college papers for the week ahead on Friday nights. Sometimes it took until 2:00 AM, but I got everything on paper, turned off the computer, and closed the door to my office. I spent Saturdays doing nothing, in essence, observing the Sabbath. I took lots of naps, I read fun, noncollege books. I ate and relaxed. On Sunday nights I finished my assignments, got a good night's sleep, and began the new week refreshed and energized. I took a whole day off every week, but I got more done than I ever imagined before. I was hooked.



I still keep the Sabbath. It has been four years. I look forward to it the way most of us look forward to a vacation at a tropical resort. This command of God is a pleasant experience. My health has improved so much. I can count on one hand the number of days I have been sick enough to take to my bed.

These days my Sabbaths are not as quiet as they were when I was in college. I was with people all the time then. My Sabbath was a time to withdraw. Now I work at home, so my Sabbaths are more social. But I would not give up my special day anymore than I would give up eating and breathing!

(Susan Rowland, *Make Room for God*)

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# Reflecting

“All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.” So many of us today live to work, rather than work to live, because productivity and achievement are at the heart of capitalism, the economic system that has governed most first world countries for over a hundred years.

But we all hunger for rest. Our days and our weeks are consumed by activity as we rush from place to place, task to task, one more meeting, sports event, call to make, person to consult, item to buy, thing to do. Contemporary life is a constant exhortation to do more, be more, have more. “Overworked Americans need rest,” writes Dorothy Bass in *Practicing Our Faith: A Way of Life for a Searching People*. She continues, “and they need to be reminded that they do not cause the grain to grow and that their greatest fulfillment does not come through the acquisition of material things.”

Keeping Sabbath offers us the God-given gift of rest. It allows us time to look at ourselves and at our lives apart from the everyday world. More important, it offers extended time and space to give thanks and praise to God for the many gifts in our lives.

To function as whole and holy people, there must be a balance between work and rest in our lives. In his book *Leisure: The Basis of Culture*, Josef Peiper writes: “Culture depends for its very existence on leisure, and leisure, in its turn, is not possible unless it has a durable and consequently living link...with divine worship.” Peiper further writes:

*Leisure, it must be clearly understood, is a mental and spiritual attitude—it is not simply the result of external factors, it is not the inevitable result of spare time, a holiday, a weekend or a vacation. It is, in the first place, an attitude of mind, a condition of the soul, and as such utterly contrary to the ideal of “worker” in each and every one of the three aspects under which it was analysed: work as activity, as toil, as a social function.*

(Joseph Peiper, *Leisure*)

Leisure can be either active—such as recreational sports, games, exercise, or other such pastimes—or passive—reading, watching a movie, daydreaming. In its very essence, leisure is a state of restoration, where the mind and soul are freed from utilitarian ties, from a need to justify one’s activity. Too, intention comes into play with the types of leisure

activity we choose. There are times when watching TV offers us rest, a brief time to not think, perhaps enjoying a laugh or learning about something new. But if we are slumped in front of the set for hours on end, mindlessly watching with no real engagement with what we are doing, this is destructive to a spirit of restoration and renewal.



During Sabbath, we switch to “God time,” *kairos*, rather than *chronos*, manmade and regulated time. *Kairos* is quality time, the appointed time for God’s work; *chronos* measures the quantity and movement of our day-to-day world.

*The difference between the Sabbath and all other days is not to be noticed in the physical structure of things, in their spatial dimension. Things do not change on that day. There is only a difference in the dimension of time, in the relation of the universe to God. The Sabbath preceded creation and the Sabbath completed creation; it is all of the spirit that the world can bear.*

(Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Sabbath*)

Yet Sabbath is more than simply resting from our work. According to Norman Wirzba, “Sabbath is a discipline and practice in which we ask, consider, and answer the questions that will lead us into a complete and joyful life. As such, the Sabbath is a teaching that has the potential to redirect and transform all our existence, bringing it into more faithful alignment with God’s life-building and life-strengthening ways.”

Christians have traditionally observed Sunday as the Sabbath day. And while it is good to set aside one day each week for worship and rest, the practice of keeping Sabbath should be an evolving practice for us, extending into the rhythm and flow of daily life.

*The custom of the “weekend” has become more widespread, a weekly period of respite, spent perhaps far from home and often involving participation in cultural, political or sporting activities which are usually held on free days. This social and cultural phenomenon is by no means without its positive aspects if, while respecting true values, it can contribute to people’s development and to the advancement of the life of society as a whole... Unfortunately, when Sunday loses its fundamental meaning and becomes merely part of a “weekend,” it can happen that people stay locked within a horizon so limited that they can no longer see “the heavens.”*

(John Paul II, *Dies Domini*)



Adopting a Sabbath attitude keeps us balanced throughout every facet of our lives. It allows us to see the work that we do as part of the big picture of our lives, to know that we are more than the job we do, more than our roles as husband, mother, friend, colleague, or confidant; we are God’s blessed creatures, part and parcel of the evolving story of creation.

- What does Sabbath mean to you? To your family?
- Do you regularly observe a day of rest? Do you do this on Sunday, or does your life necessitate setting aside another day of the week for rest?
- What activities are most restful to you? Which of these do you wish you had more time for?
- What is your definition of leisure? Do you see it as an active and essential part of your life?

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# Exploring

Observe the Sabbath and keep it holy. You have six days in which to do your work, but the seventh day is a day of rest dedicated to me. On that day no one is to work—neither you, your children, your slaves, your animals, nor the foreigners who live in your country. In six days I, the Lord, made the earth, sky, the seas, and everything in them, but on the seventh day I rested. That is why I, the Lord, blessed the Sabbath and made it holy.

(Exodus 20:8–11)

### The Biblical Roots of Keeping Sabbath

We are invited to participate in the creative work of God by stepping outside the routine of our daily work. God's immanent and transcendent being is available to us throughout the created world, and the observance of Sabbath allows us the space to open ourselves to discovering God's presence more fully in our lives. In his book, *The Family Cloister*, David Robinson writes: "The Sabbath invites us not only to enjoy leisure and recreation. The Sabbath is a weekly invitation to be re-created by our Creator, to have our whole selves refreshed and renewed by God."

But there is also an aspect of liberation in observing Sabbath. "The God who rests on the

seventh day, rejoicing in his creation, is the same God who reveals his glory in liberating his children from Pharaoh's oppression" (John Paul II). We see this illustrated in a passage from Deuteronomy:

*Observe the Sabbath and keep it holy, as I, the Lord your God, have commanded you. You have six days in which to do your work, but the seventh day is a day of rest dedicated to me. On that day no one is to work—neither you, your children, your slaves, your animals, nor the foreigners who live in your country. Your slaves must rest just as you do. Remember that you were slaves in Egypt, and that I, the Lord your God, rescued you by my great power and strength. That is why I command you to observe the Sabbath.*

—Deuteronomy 5:12–15



By the very nature of our humanity, we are bound to the demands of the material world. We are confronted by our imperfection and know that sin and evil are a very real part of our existence in both an individual and communal way. Rabbi Irwin Kula writes in his book *Yearnings*, “We are free only when we break loose from the physical, emotional, intellectual, and cultural forces that drive us without our even knowing it.” The practice of keeping Sabbath liberates us from this bondage.

## The Jewish Practice of Keeping Sabbath

The word “Sabbath” comes from the Hebrew verb *shavat*, which means, “to cease.” Thus, for the Hebrew people, the Sabbath was a day of ceasing from work. Even today Orthodox and Conservative Jews refrain from all non-essential activity during their Sabbath, called *Shabbat* or *Shabbos*, which begins at sundown on Friday and lasts until sundown on Saturday. Shabbat is a day of celebration as well as prayer, and many Jews attend synagogue services on Friday night or Saturday morning. Although most Shabbat laws are restrictive, there are also joyful practices that encourage a spirit of celebration. These include:

- preparing for the upcoming Shabbat by bathing, having a haircut, and cleaning and beautifying the home (with flowers, for example)
- eating three festive meals: Friday night dinner, Shabbat lunch, and a third meal, eaten late Saturday afternoon
- visiting with family and friends
- singing special songs for the Shabbat meal
- reading, studying, and discussing Torah
- wearing festive clothing and refraining from unpleasant conversation, including talk about money or business matters
- engaging in marital relations.



Restricted activities are taken from a list of thirty-nine activities prohibited by the Talmud, such as sowing, plowing, reaping, kneading, baking, sewing, writing, building, demolishing, lighting a fire, and transporting objects. Orthodox and some Conservative branches of Judaism rule that it is prohibited to turn electric devices on or off, as this action is analogous to lighting a fire and extinguishing a fire. Also prohibited is the use of automobiles on Shabbat as a violation against transporting objects, among other regulations.

Generally speaking, adherents of Reform Judaism and Reconstructionist Judaism believe that it is up to the individual Jew to determine whether to follow prohibitions on Shabbat or not. For example, some Jews might find writing or other activities (such as cooking) for leisure and social purposes to be an enjoyable activity that enhances Shabbat and its holiness, and therefore encourage such practices. Many Reform Jews believe that what constitutes “work” is different for each person; thus, only what the person considers work is forbidden.



Photo Credit: Yakov Vershubskey

### The Christian Practice of Sabbath

For Christians, Sunday, the day when Jesus was raised from the dead, has been the traditional day for keeping Sabbath since the formation of the church.

*The early Christians were convinced that God’s creative activity extended beyond the seven-day week, and so the first day, Sunday, was also the eighth day of God’s work. Their dedication of Sunday for gathering and worship grew out of the post-resurrection appearances of the Lord... As they gathered in homes and at the Temple on the “first day of the week,” the disciples broke bread, prayed, interpreted Scripture, rehearsed the good news, and prepared for ministry. By the end of the first century the designation “the first day of the week,” which reflects a Jewish way of reckoning time, was replaced by a uniquely Christian term, “the Lord’s Day.”*

(Robert Kruschwitz, *Sabbath: Christian Reflection—Study Guide*)

In 321 AD, the emperor Constantine declared Sunday to be a day of rest throughout the empire. This practice was motivated as much out of concern for productivity as for religious reasons. The declaration read, in part: “On the venerable day of the Sun let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed. In the country, however, persons engaged in agriculture may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits because it often happens that another day is not suitable for grain-sowing or vine planting; lest by neglecting the proper moment for such operations the bounty of heaven should be lost.”

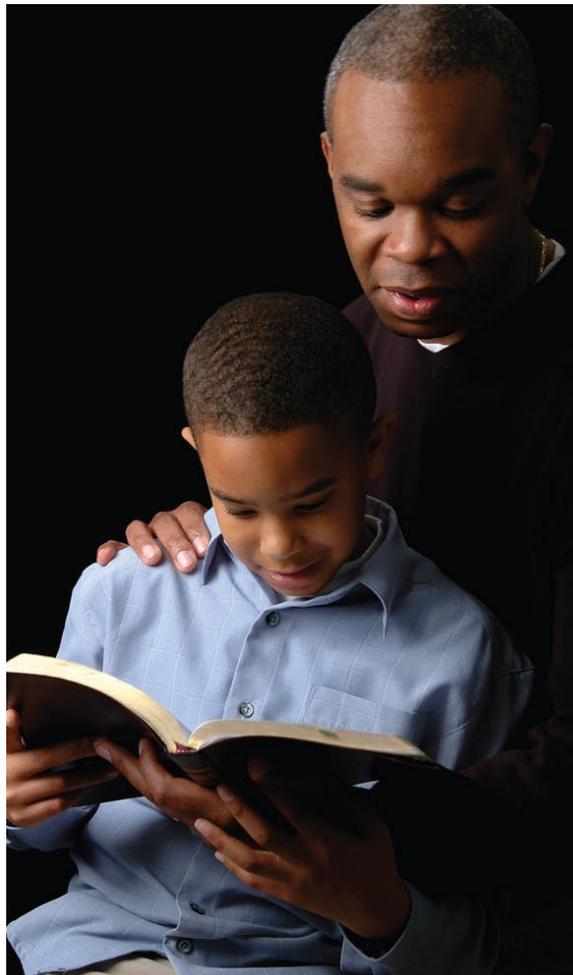




During the Middle Ages and into the Renaissance, Sunday continued to be observed as a religious and commercial holiday throughout Christianized Europe. (As noted earlier, Jews observe Sabbath on Saturday; the Muslim Sabbath is observed on Friday.) Even with the advent of the Industrial Revolution in the 1700s, Sabbath observance was a key part of the culture in both Europe and the developing United States.

Today, many of us have lost any sense of Sunday being a day set apart, a day of rest, celebration, and worship. Laws that once regulated what could and could not be done on Sunday have been, for the most part, repealed.

*Until quite recently, it was easier in traditionally Christian countries to keep Sunday holy because it was an almost universal practice and because, even in the organization of civil society, Sunday rest was considered a fixed part of the work schedule. Today, however, even in those countries which give legal sanction to the festive character of Sunday, changes in socioeconomic conditions have often led to profound modifications of social behavior and hence of the character of Sunday.*  
(John Paul II, *Dies Domini*)



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Despite this trend, a recent survey on Beliefnet.com shows that religious practice and quiet time with family are still important to many people. When asked, “How do you keep the Sabbath?” here’s how visitors to the site responded:

- by attending a service and then staying home for a quiet time with my family: 53%
- only by attending a religious service: 17%
- only by setting aside quiet time with my family: 13%
- I don’t observe the Sabbath: 15%.

For the majority of these respondents, Sabbath holds a place of importance that warrants setting time aside to mark this day in a special way, especially by attending a religious service and/or spending time with family.

“I think people really would like to keep a Sabbath, although they may not call it a Sabbath,” said John Fisher of McLean, Va., a retired math teacher and management consultant who belongs to a “Sabbath keepers” group at his church. “They would like to have some private time, some rest, and they’re afraid to do it” because they fear losing productivity. “I think people are looking for permission to stop and think and reflect.” Fisher and his wife light a candle at sundown each Saturday to mark a period of reflection that ends Sunday evening, “just to remind us of God’s presence and of peacefulness,” he said. After a quiet dinner together, they go for a walk, do crossword puzzles, or read—mundane practices that Fisher says help rejuvenate him for the busy week ahead.

(Beliefnet.com)

# Living

What was it like in your family when you were growing up? You may remember Sundays as a time for going to church, eating a relaxing family dinner, and visiting with relatives or friends. Perhaps your household held a stricter observance, with long church services, no time for play, and prayer or Scripture reading. Maybe Sunday in your family was spent just like any other day of the week, with no special rituals or practices.

## Celebrating the Sabbath

For every hundred people, there are probably a hundred ways to “keep holy the Lord’s day” and heal the self battered by the week’s demands. One friend cherishes a Sunday morning ritual of donuts, milk, and the *New York Times*. Another cooks a huge dinner; a third takes a long walk outdoors. Each person knows from experience what restores energy and peace after a hectic week. In this activity they find...a restorative ritual that in all its essentials echoes the anointing of the sick. Sometimes, too, the ritual resonates with dying: we look back over the week’s losses, great and small. Perhaps we say goodbye to unrealistic expectations: I’ll never be president, pope, or a CEO. The house isn’t immaculate and the bank account isn’t overflowing. We give up our delusions of greatness and ease more happily into who we are: limited but loved.

(Kathy Coffey, *Immersed in the Sacred*)

Blaine and Sarah McCormick have been developing a very focused and intentional Sabbath practice for some time now. They write:

Our family observes Sabbath from approximately 6 PM Saturday to 6 PM Sunday. This timing mirrors the Jewish Shabbat, which begins at sundown on Friday, but we have moved the holy time forward to the first day of the week to encompass our Christian beliefs.

Our family begins Sabbath time on Saturday evening with a ritual. We light a Sabbath candle for each of our three children as Mom welcomes the Sabbath with a blessing: “May the light of the Sabbath candles drive out from us the spirit of anger and the spirit

of fear and the spirit of pride. Send your blessing that we may walk in the ways of your Word and your Light. Enter our hearts this night, O Lord.”

(Blaine and Sarah McCormick, *Sabbath: Christian Reflection*)

Then Blaine and Sarah bless each child by reading a favorite Scripture passage, reflecting with them on the previous week, and offering a prayer. They might pass around a pleasant or pungent spice to remind them how their lives are to be a “pleasant aroma” to God, or share a taste of bread strips dipped in honey as they remember how God’s words are “sweeter than honey.” They then share a prayer or story before blowing out their Sabbath candles.

For one family, Sunday is often a day for extended cooking. After attending liturgy, they take the time to make a large dinner, and sometimes a few other dishes to keep for the week. Sunday afternoon offers the space and time to cook in a leisurely fashion, as opposed to the more rushed preparations during the week. Usually, they will invite nearby relatives over for dinner in the evening, perhaps followed by a movie.



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Of course, cooking and/or entertaining others are not necessarily enjoyable activities for everyone. In your house, Sunday may be the time for a meal eaten out, or for sandwiches and juice boxes.

It may be necessary to adjust our lifestyles in order to accommodate a commitment to keeping Sabbath. If you have children, you might ask whether activities that require Sunday engagement are done for the sake of rest and enjoyment—active leisure—or for some other reason. And if you work on Sunday, you will need to be intentional about setting aside time and space on another day of the week for Sabbath practice. This might mean a day during the week devoted to a personal Sabbath or a Friday afternoon and evening for a family Sabbath. Find the right time and practices that will help you live your commitment to keeping the Sabbath.



*Sabbath practice is the focus and culmination of a life that is daily and practically devoted to honoring God...and to sharing in God's own creative delight. We do not wait for one specified day of the week to offer our thanksgiving and praise, even if one day is set apart to shed a critical and corrective light on all our other days. The goal is rather to arrange our schedules and direct our choices so that they manifest at all times a deep appreciation for the diverse and costly ways of God's grace.*  
(Norman Wirzba, *Living the Sabbath*)

Adopting a Sabbath attitude throughout our week can support and nurture all our efforts. It urges us to respect ourselves and others, live in gratitude for the gifts we have been given, and develop a lifestyle that is conducive to our well being. We are created in the image and likeness of God, and a Sabbath mindset forges that image into our everyday life, governing our actions and our choices. It helps us stay open to the possibility of God entering into the marrow of our lives, in countless, intricate ways.

## Developing a Sabbath Practice

Sabbath is God's way of saying, "Stop. Notice your limits. Don't burn out." It is a day God gives us to remember who and what work is for, as well as what matters most. Sunday generously hands us hours to look into the eyes of those we love. We have time for loving and being loved.

(Adele Ahlberg Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*)

You don't have to change your whole life—yet. Plan for one Sabbath at home to start. Put the date on the calendar and pray that God will help you to honor this Sabbath and keep it holy.

Consider what preparations and planning are necessary for making sure that you set aside all types of work and worry on this day. Gather your family or household together to discuss how to arrange your Sabbath for refreshment, renewal, and relationships. Select one or more of the following questions for reflection.

- How do you mark the Sabbath in your home today? In what ways are your practices like those in your home while growing up? In what ways is it different?
- In your home and in your life, what are the obstacles standing in the way of taking at least one day of rest each week?
- What, if anything, would you like to change in the way you celebrate Sabbath?
- Do you see Sunday as the best day for keeping Sabbath? Or do you need to keep Sabbath on a different day of the week?
- What can you learn from the Jewish observance of Sabbath?



### 1. Saying “No”: What to Exclude

You can begin shaping your Sabbath practice by deciding what should be excluded from this day and what should be included. There are three categories of things that we do well to exclude from our Sabbath. (The following ideas were developed from *Sacred Rhythms* by Ruth Haley Barton.)

1. *Work*: What constitutes work for us? We must commit ourselves to not doing these things on the Sabbath. We need to identify the challenge and temptations related to our work and establish clear boundaries to protect Sabbath time.

*How can you say “No” to work on the Sabbath?*

2. *Buying and selling*: If we are out buying, selling and engaging in the world of commerce, it means someone has to work and we are contributing to it. It feeds our consumerism, an aspect of life in our culture that needs rest on the Sabbath.

*How can you say “No” to buying and selling on the Sabbath?*

3. **Worry:** The Sabbath is an invitation to rest emotionally and mentally from things that cause worry and stress, such as budgets, major decisions, and planning the week ahead. If we observe Sabbath on Sunday, perhaps Sunday evening after dinner is a time when, from a place of rest, we can engage in some of the decision-making that needs to be done.

*How can you say “No” to worry on the Sabbath?*

- **Suggestion:** Prepare a “Sabbath box” or “Sabbath basket.” Each Saturday evening, put all the things you don’t need in order to observe the Sabbath into the box or basket. This might include cell phones, credit cards, pagers, and so on. Put work projects and homework in the box, as well; you can take them out again on Sunday evening.



## 2. Saying “Yes”: What to Include

What is to replace all that we are excluding from our Sabbath practice? The simple answer is, whatever delights you and replenishes you. Consider the following three things to include in your Sabbath practice. (The following ideas were developed from *Sacred Rhythms* by Ruth Haley Barton.)

1. **Resting the body.** What are the activities that rest and replenish your body? The invitation of Sabbath time is to replace the time you would normally spend working with activities that you find restorative, such as a walk or other physical exercise, eating your favorite foods, reading, and listening to music.

*How can you say “Yes” to resting the body on the Sabbath? What types of activities can you do?*

2. **Replenishing the spirit.** Another invitation of the Sabbath is to pay attention to what replenishes the spirit, and choose only those activities that renew you and bring you joy. Find personal activities that replenish the spirit: silence, reading, dancing, and listening to music. Find activities for the whole family that replenish the spirit: a special meal, recreation, games, sharing stories, gathering with relatives and friends.

*How can you say “Yes” to replenishing the spirit on the Sabbath? What types of activities can you do?*

3. **Restoring the soul.** Perhaps the deepest refreshment is the invitation to renew the soul through worship and quiet reflection. This is the part of us that gets most lost during the workweek, which is governed almost completely by the value of productivity. In addition to personal activities, such as silence and prayer, identify rituals or shared activities that create a spirit of reverence for God on this day such as a special meal with a Scripture reading and time to go around the table and



talk about where God seemed particularly present with you during the week. Light a candle to mark the Sabbath day.

*How can you say “Yes” to restoring the soul on the Sabbath? What types of activities can you do?*

### 3. Sunday Worship

Worship is an important part of keeping Sabbath. It allows us to acknowledge the gracious gifts of God while celebrating our role as participants in the divine process. Being part of a faith community and regularly worshipping together is an essential part of our Christian faith. In *Soul Feast*, Marjorie Thompson writes: “We delude ourselves if we imagine we can live the spiritual life in total isolation from Christian community, for it is impossible to be Christian in solitary splendor. To be Christian is to be joined to the Body of Christ....Life in the church teaches us that we are made for communion not only with God but with one another in Christ.”

Going to church on Sunday allows us the opportunity to worship as a community. We stand with others who believe what we do as we take time to pray together, listen to Scripture, and be renewed through our celebration of the Lord’s Supper. In communal worship we remember that we are not alone, that as part of the Christian community we share a commitment to following the model of Jesus Christ through the gospels and liturgy.

Sunday can be a time for private prayer and devotion, a practice that can extend our Sabbath to every day of the week. Reading Scripture can help us focus on the week ahead, whether we re-read the readings for the day,

look ahead to the readings for the following Sunday, or simply reflect on selected passages that speak to us.

You might want to spend time quietly reflecting on the Scripture readings; perhaps you might talk about the readings with your family or a group of friends. Some questions to consider are: What was Jesus trying to teach through this gospel? What did it mean to each of us? Is there something we could do during the week to keep the theme of the gospel in our minds and hearts?

Singing hymns or listening to religious music is another form of prayer that can enhance our Sabbath keeping. However you keep Sabbath, make sure that you take time to acknowledge God’s loving and generous presence guiding the actions and activities of your daily life.

- How can you overcome the obstacles to attending church on Sunday?
- How can you prepare for Sunday worship or extend Sunday worship in your home?

Review your ideas for Sabbath practice and consider these guidelines:

- Do our activities allow us rest in body, mind, and spirit?
- Do our activities nurture our spiritual life in some way?
- Do our activities give us time away from the temporal activities of our lives?

#### Resources for Living the Christian Practice of Keeping Sabbath

Go to our project web site  
[www.lifelongfaith.com](http://www.lifelongfaith.com)  
 for exciting ideas, practical resources,  
 and recommended books  
 and web sites to help you live the  
 Christian practice of keeping Sabbath.

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# Prayer

*God of all creation,  
you breathed us into this world and called us by name  
to be yours.  
Guide our days.  
Let our work reflect your glory  
and promote the good of all humankind.  
Show us the goodness of keeping Sabbath,  
that we may be whole in body, mind, and spirit.  
Help us to know the patterns and rhythms of our lives,  
and bring peace to the places of chaos in life.  
Let us live in your love forever.  
Amen.*

