



Sabbath Guide

worshiping & delighting

Sabbath // Worshiping & Delighting

“Because the world is full of ugly things, we need the Sabbath to feed our soul with beauty.”

– Tim Keller

Sabbath is a day to reorient our lives back to their center in God. By consciously engaging in worship, we can enter into the soul-level rest that can only come from surrender to God. Sabbath is designed by God as a day to give yourself fully to delight in God’s world, in your life in it, and ultimately in God himself. This also includes opening ourselves up to joy—in the New Testament we find that joy is a gift, but it’s one that must be chosen and cultivated, day after day, as an act of apprenticeship to God. Consider which of these practices might help you engage in *worshiping* and *delighting* this month:

Plan a Sabbath feast.

Gather those in your community or family together for a Sabbath dinner. You might do this to begin or to end your Sabbath. Save the best for this meal—your favorite foods, dessert, wine, whatever would set this apart as unique. This is also an opportunity to practice hospitality if you are able to host others in your home or cook a meal. If you know people without a community, bring them in. Create your own ritual to give structure and meaning to your gathering. Here is one example:

- Light two candles reminding us to “Keep” and “Remember” the Sabbath.
- Read a psalm or liturgy aloud. Bless one another and pray together.
- Feast!
- Share highlights of the week or what you are grateful for, and celebrate life together.

Identify 2-3 practices by which you enjoy God and engage in them.

This might include Bible meditation, contemplative prayer, silence and stillness, a walk in nature, quality time with friends and family, or joy-inspiring singing and dancing in worship of God. Consider the following questions to identify the spiritual practices that might help you focus on God:

- Is this different from what I do on normal workdays?
- Is this restful? Does it refill my soul with new energy emotionally, intellectually, physically, spiritually?
- Does this activity bring me joy in God? Do I find myself grateful and connected to God as I do it?
- Does this activity connect me more deeply to God and his goodness and beauty? Do I find myself noticing the wonder of his nature and giving him praise?



Practice a light and life-giving version of “Fixed-Hour Prayer.”

Pause 2-3 times during your Sabbath to pray—not to intercede for God to move in the world (which Orthodox Jews actually consider a form of work!) but to reorient your heart to God in wonder and awe. One understanding of prayer is coming to rest in God’s goodness.

A simple approach is to pray through a psalm. We recommend Psalm 23, 37, 103, or 105. You can also do this by listening to worship music, praying with a friend, or going on a walk in nature. The end goal is to spend as much of the Sabbath as you can in conscious communion with God, receiving his love for you and giving back your love for him.