

Small Group Bible Study: The Gift of Sabbath Rest — Caring for Ourselves

Scripture: Mark 2:23–28

Opening Reflection

1. When you hear the word *Sabbath*, what comes to mind?
 - Is it something that feels restful, restrictive, or maybe unfamiliar?
 2. Think about your past week — what kind of pace are you living at right now?
 - Where do you see signs of rest or burnout in your own life?
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Read Mark 2:23–28

“The Sabbath was made for humankind, not humankind for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.” (vv. 27–28)

Understanding the Text

3. What is happening in this story? What are the Pharisees upset about, and how does Jesus respond?
 4. What do you think Jesus means when He says, *“The Sabbath was made for humankind”*?
 5. How does this statement challenge a rule-based or performance-based view of spirituality?
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Exploring the Sabbath Principle

6. If the Sabbath is a *gift* rather than a *law*, what kind of gift is it?
 - What does it say about God’s care for our physical, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing?
7. In what ways do our modern lives resist rest?
 - What lies or cultural pressures make rest feel unproductive or irresponsible?
8. How might neglecting rest affect our ability to love others well — in our families, workplaces, and church communities?

Personal Application

9. Jesus claims to be “Lord of the Sabbath.”
 - How does recognizing His lordship shape your approach to rest and self-care?
10. Describe a time when intentional rest (even a few hours of slowing down, solitude, prayer, or play) restored your sense of peace or clarity.
11. What rhythms or practices help you “cease striving” and reconnect with God’s presence?
12. How could you begin to weave the principle of Sabbath — not just a day, but a rhythm — into your week?

Group Reflection

13. How can your small group or church community encourage one another to rest well?
14. What would it look like for your community to model a healthy balance of work, worship, and rest — as a witness to the world around you?

Closing Reflection & Prayer

15. Take a moment of silence together. What might God be inviting you to release or lay down in order to receive His rest?
16. Pray together for renewed minds and bodies — that rest would become a way of trusting God and a foundation for caring well for others.