

Small Group Curriculum • Genesis 2:1-2 • Foundations

SABBATH • WEEK 6 • Genesis 2:1-2

This week we wrapped up the teaching series, Foundations, and Ryan spoke about the rhythms of sabbath through the creation account found in Genesis 2. From this we learned as a church that the Sabbath was the only part of creation in which God set apart as Holy wherein God designed a day of the week for His image bearers to participate in weekly renewal of the soul in resistance to the work that is before us so that we might rest in the Lord and delight in His creation as an act of faith.

REMINDERS

- Interested in being baptized the Sunday after Easter? Sign up [here](#).
- Looking for a place to serve? Try serving on set-up or tear-down once-a-month with the Space Team. Email layth@awakeningchurch.com for more information.
- Our café team is in need of volunteers. Would you be willing to serve once a month to offer care and hospitality to our guests and church family? Email bailey@awakeningchurch.com for more information.

Past Session Check-In:

- Take a moment and review the application from your last discussion. Ask the group where they were challenged, if they made any commitment for change and/or action, and if they followed through with their decision.

ICEBREAKER

Take a moment to think of an accomplishment that you have made that you are genuinely proud of (Something you feel comfortable sharing with the group). It can be anything from a workplace accomplishment, that time you took first prize at the regional pinewood derby competition, the first time you “Prestiged” in COD, the fact that your begonias fully came in last year and you finally took down Francine from down the street in the biannual “Parade of Pansies” gardening competition (sorry Francine it had to be done). Go around the circle and reflect on how hard you had to work to accomplish this work (try and keep your humble brag down to 3-4 minutes).

Now that you have shared and before moving on in the curriculum, pause and think about how quickly you had to move onto the next thing. Internally reflect for a minute or two about how fleeting that accomplishment felt because the next task was knocking at your door.

INTRODUCTION

The documentation of the Genesis 2 account for sabbath is substantial for all major Bible categories. It gives historical account of the creation of God’s image bearers and the foundations of the world. It provides awareness to the law that is written in our DNA thus revealing our nature as humans. It provides clear wisdom to those who are challenged between

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the choice of pushing to do more every time, and setting aside one's ambition and anxiety for peace. And if you look close enough it provides the blueprint of God's intent; That ultimately, He would be our rest.

ILLUSTRATION: When we moved to the area, my daughter was going into first grade. A new school meant new peers to learn how to get along with which made for a challenge to say the least. My wife and I teach her that she can do anything she puts her mind to and no grown up, or boy, or girl should ever make her feel like she isn't good enough. Well of course the first day of school she goes to the most challenging area possible, the monkey bars which were inundated with boys telling her, "you're not strong enough to be here, go play with the girls." She knew better though. Their words meant nothing. My girl didn't care and she went for it. Over and over and over til her hands were throbbing with blisters. When I picked her up from school, she beamed with pride about how she stood up for herself and showed me her schoolyard battle scars. I was so happy for her but I told her she should take it easy on her hands. The next day she went for her spot in the monkey bar lineup. And behold she did NOT take it easy. That next day when I picked her up, she was a sobbing and broken spirited girl with hands bleeding from her conquest. I reminded her of how proud I was of her and just sat with her and showed her my own hands. I had her feel all the calluses on my hand that I have from years of work. I let her know that I have bled plenty of times and knew the sting of the air on her open palms. I assured her that she would heal and the skin on her hands would get stronger just like the muscles in her arm were. But she needed to take a break and let her hands heal before she kept going. A week and a half later I gave her the okay to go for the monkey bars again. She got more blisters but took the pain in stride this time, and she chose to take her own break. When she was ready again she went three days straight with no issues and then only a little blister. Eventually her hands were strong, just like her Dada's. There was no stopping her after that, and nobody dared question whether or not she belonged on those monkey bars, especially herself.

TRANSITION

We are made in God's image (Gen 1:27) and we ought to pay attention to what He models for us. We can do every God honoring work possible under the sun. We can go the distance and make ourselves ragged and raw from fulfilling the tasks set before us. But it is not God's design nor His intent that His children become bewildered by their occupations. Rather we have a deep need to seek rest in our Lord, not because we are flawed, but because we grow stronger and wiser and work better when we rhythmically rest in Him.

DISCUSSION

READ Genesis 2:12— Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.
² By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. ³ Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

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READ Matthew 11:28-30—28 “Come to me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, because I am lowly and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

1. The Old Testament is riddled with the command and wisdom of keeping the sabbath, almost 100 times over. Why do you think it was so important to God to communicate this to humanity so necessarily?
2. The ancient Israelites learned that obedience to God’s law meant that they would not be separated from His presence and His protection would remain over them. They took this so seriously that it was ingrained into their society under God’s command that the offense of desecrating the sabbath meant death (Exo 35:2). Obviously, this gets our attention. However, in the new testament Jesus says “The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath” (Mark 2:27). What is Jesus teaching to us about how we should approach the sabbath?
3. Ancient Israel certainly had an issue with idolizing the law so much that they missed Jesus walking in their midst, the one who wrote the law. In our American culture we have the opposite issue wherein we idolize our work and dismiss whatever law we think shouldn’t apply to our particular lifestyles. What is the balance between obeying God’s word regarding our work and our sabbath rest? What does that need to look like for you in your current season of life?
4. What does it mean that Jesus is Lord of the sabbath (Matt 12:1-8)? How ought we approach the scripture to understand this?
5. When God made all of creation, He rested because his work was good and complete. When we finish our work we also ought to pause and rest because our work is complete as prescribed by His weekly rhythmic design. How can you pause this week and reflect upon the good work that God has done through you?
6. As we go through our weeks we would be remiss to ignore the work that God is doing within our souls as well. As you approach your sabbath rest this week, what will you do to pause and give thanks for what God has done in your life in this season?
7. What boundaries, or lack of boundaries are keeping you from being able participate in the rest that God designed you to have?

APPLICATION

Carve out a chunk of time this week to find rest in the Lord. Protect it at all costs because it is time that you are choosing to keep Holy and separate from all else where you might pause and rest in the presence of our Creator, King and Father. If you don’t know how to rest, begin with gratitude. If you feel like you’re at the end of your rope, allow yourself to break in His presence. If you haven’t the energy for any of this because you’re just spent, take a nap in the name of Jesus. Start small and pay attention to the richness that the Lord can provide for you when you choose to rest in Him.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we are limited people with limited understanding of all of your infinite ways. Help us to trust you this week and find rest in your presence. Your created order is designed so



that we might reflect on your goodness through repeated and rhythmic rest. We thank you Lord for this gift. May we not squander the gift that you have set before us so that we might not rely on our own strength, but find it in your power to do the good work you have set before us. God, we seek your way that we do this good work from within your rest which gives us perfect peace which surpasses all understanding. Give us courage Lord to stand against the world's ways and follow yours. We pray all of this in Jesus' name, Amen.

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUR GROUP TO CONSIDER

Check out our outreach page at <https://awakeningchurch.com/outreach/> to explore ways your group can volunteer at our biweekly food pantry, support Foster the City, or join the City Team movement.

VERSUS

Exodus 35:2

² For six days, work is to be done, but the seventh day shall be your holy day, a day of sabbath rest to the Lord. Whoever does any work on it is to be put to death.

Mark 2:27

New International Version

²⁷ Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.

Matthew 12:1-8

12 At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick some heads of grain and eat them. ² When the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, "Look! Your disciples are doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath."

³ He answered, "Haven't you read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? ⁴ He entered the house of God, and he and his companions ate the consecrated bread—which was not lawful for them to do, but only for the priests. ⁵ Or haven't you read in the Law that the priests on Sabbath duty in the temple desecrate the Sabbath and yet are innocent? ⁶ I tell you that something greater than the temple is here. ⁷ If you had known what these words mean, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice,'^[a] you would not have condemned the innocent. ⁸ For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."