

Guidelines for a Sabbath Rhythm



ADAPTED FROM ROB MUTHIAH

WARNING: Potential spiritual health hazard. Do not try this without first understanding the spirit of Sabbath!

For this experiment, Sabbath observance will begin with the evening meal on Saturday and go through the evening meal on Sunday. Please remember that following these guidelines is not the only way to observe the Sabbath. Consider this an experiment from which you may discover additions and deletions that might shape your Sabbath observances.

Prepare for the Sabbath

- Choose in advance one activity that will help this day be a celebration for you and write it down it here: _____
- Clean your living space.
- Buy all your groceries, gas, and other things on Saturday or earlier.
- Invite family and friends that you would like to join with you

Sabbath Observance

- **BEGIN YOUR SABBATH WITH AN EVENING MEAL ON SATURDAY WITH FAMILY AND/OR FRIENDS**
 - Light three candles to signify the presence of Christ, remembering the Sabbath (Exod 20:8), and observing the Sabbath (Deut 5:12).
 - Before the meal, pray and set aside the next 24 hours as an act of recognition of the all-sufficiency of God, and ask the Holy Spirit to help you to rest in the gift of the Sabbath..
 - After the meal, spend the rest of the evening doing something fun.
- **EMBRACE THE REST OFFERED BY THE SABBATH.**
 - Take a nap
 - Don't work.
 - Don't do things for which you earn money.
 - Don't clean the house.
 - Don't wash your car.
 - Don't do laundry.
 - Don't organize your office/papers/books.
 - Don't fix or repair anything.
 - Married couples are invited to follow the rabbinic encouragement to make love on the Sabbath.
 - Don't study.
 - Don't make lists of things to do in the coming week
- **WORSHIP WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY.**
 - In preparation, start thinking about this as you begin the Sabbath observance on Saturday night – pray for others in your community who will be coming together on Sunday.
 - Once our social distancing protocols are lifted, plan to get to church a few minutes early and stay a few minutes late – build margins into your worship experience for preparation, conversations, and reflection?

- **CHOOSE TO OPT OUT FOR THE DAY FROM THE ECONOMIC SYSTEM OF BUYING AND SELLING.**

- As a conscious way of confronting the idolatries of consumption and materialism, don't use any money or credit cards.
- Plan meals at home or in a park with family and friends rather than going out to eat.
- Don't pay any bills.
- As already mentioned, buy your groceries, gas, etc. on Saturday.



- **PUT ASIDE MEDIATED EXPERIENCES AND ARTIFICIAL UNITS OF TIME.**

- Turn off your cell phone for the day, except to call loved ones.
- Keep your t.v. turned off (so, no movies or sports on t.v.).
- Keep your computer turned off.
 - Don't look at your email – it will be there waiting for you after the Sunday evening meal.
 - Don't surf the internet.
- Take off your watch during the worship service, or for the day.

- **END THE SABBATH OBSERVANCE WITH A SIMPLE MEAL.**

- As part of your prayer before the concluding meal, offer a prayer of thanks for the Sabbath day.
- At the end of the meal, give something sweet (like a chocolate chip or a caramel) to each person and as you do so, say something like this: "May the sweet taste of Sabbath stay in your mouth all week long!"



Pause & Rest