

Welcome to Sherwood Oaks. I'll try that again.

50 years and I still can't figure out whether it's left or right on this mic button back here. We're glad you guys are here. We're starting a new series called Rhythms of rest. I don't know if you saw and identified with some of the activities on that, but that was my morning before I got here. Actually feel like sometimes you have Sundays like that.

You feel like, man alive. I'm exhausted before I even get in the car.

I'm excited about this series. I think it's important for us to learn how to live in a pattern of rest and work that honors God and is good and healthy for us. So I'm gonna pray. But before that, just a quick note from sort of family concerns we mentioned in prayer time last week for Margie Owens. And she passed away on, well, a couple days ago, Friday night.

So Jerome is at the funeral home today. They're making arrangements. We will let you know. If you follow us on facebook, you will know what's happening with the service and how you can help and encourage Jerome. But I thought we would just pray for him real quick as they're meeting right now.

Can we do that? Let's just lift up Jerome. Heavenly Father, we lift up our brother in Christ, who is dealing with a lot of grief this morning. I lift up Trish and Dennis. Trish dad is Jerome, and I know that she aches for him as well.

So, lord, we just pray in this place of sadness that you comfort us with the hope that we have in you. You comfort Jerome with that hope. You remind him of your plan for both Margie and him. And while this temporary distance is very real, it is not forever. And we have the promise of eternal life with you.

God be with them now as they plan a service that honors Margie in Jesus name. Amen.

Rhythms of rest. Specifically sabbath. When you hear that word, what do you mean? What do you think of? I feel like a hypocrite preaching a series on how to honor the Sabbath because I'm horrible at it.

We just don't really know how to rest. Well, even when I'm traveling, I'm leaving for a vacation and I'm pulling my suitcase out behind me and I'm thinking, it would just be so much easier to stay home, wouldn't it? I know I'm going to be exhausted when I return. Vacationing is exhausting. Our world lives at such a crazy, unsustainable place.

We work hard, we play hard, we even vacation hard. And even when we

give ourselves permission to take a break for a week or two, it's just so that we can hit it even harder when we get back. Our last series was on our default settings, and I feel like our default setting sometimes is not to give ourselves a healthy rest. Genesis in the second chapter seems to indicate that God knew this about us, and so he established a special day where we could rest. In fact, the scripture says that God worked, and then he rested, and he gave us a gift, a special day.

The hebrew word for it is Shabbat. Say that with me. Shabbat, it's a special day, and it carries so much meaning in jewish culture. But I don't know how to let you all know this, but we're not jewish.

So does it mean the same thing to us as it does to them? Over the next four weeks, we're going to unpack that a little bit and see how we can honor and how we can celebrate this idea of Shabbat, this rhythm of rest as believers. So I'm gonna pray, and then we'll dig right in. Heavenly Father, we thank you. We thank you for a moment where we can just sit and just.

Just even for an hour to turn our attention and our thoughts towards you before the pressures of the world sort of weigh in on us again. So, Lord, right now I pray for any of those who do feel just burdened by stuff beyond these walls. I pray that you would be peace to them right now. In Jesus name, amen. Growing up, I loved Sundays.

I was a church kid, and I was not at all ashamed of it. I liked going to church. My buddies were there. I got to hang out with friends. There was always a snack at some point in the morning.

The rhythm of Sunday for our family, for me, was pretty simple. You get up, you get dressed, usually in clothes that mom told you you were going to wear. You have some breakfast, you pile into the back of the 1972 Ford limited country squire station wagon. There it is. There it is.

Now, that's not our yacht in the back. Ours was much bigger than that. Yeah, that was it. The great thing about the Ford limited country squire station wagon was it had a back, and then it also had the backety back. So any of you grew up with the back and a backety back?

Oh, my word. We lived in both places simultaneously. Seat belts had not yet been invented. I feel like back in the seventies, we didn't even know what they were. We loved that car.

We'd jump in that car and drive, really, just a few minutes to the church parking lot where we would get out. We would go inside and we'd be met by our teacher, and we'd go down in the basement of the church to our little class with our little chairs. Anyone identifying with me right now in this. Yeah, we'd sing he's got the whole world in his

hands he's got the whole. Come on, help me out.

In his hands he's got the whole world in his hands he's got the whole world in his hands I know that they were preaching sermons and stomping and spitting and yelling upstairs, but we knew nothing of that. Church would be over. And we get back in the Ford limited country squire station wagon with the faux wood paneling on the side, rich naugahyde red leather on the inside. Go back home, have dinner that someone prepared. I don't know how that arrived.

Finish up, play a little bit. And then dad would say, okay, we're gonna take a little road trip out to Fayetteville to see one of the grandmas and some uncles. We'd go out there. There'd always be cousins out there. We'd play with and have a great time running around out there.

Then we'd come back and kind of clean up a little bit and go to night church. Now, none of us here know what night church is. We've sort of removed that from our vocabulary. I'm not complaining about that. But night church, you go to night church.

And then you would come home, get a little snack and rest up, because then you hit it hard. The next day, school was coming. Unless I'm revealing something here, don't tell my mother. Unless I could fake a cough, cough, cough, cough. And get out of Sunday night church so I could watch wonderful world of Disney.

Can I get an amen from anyone? Yes. Yes. Oh, my word. It was perfect.

That was a perfect Sunday for me. The sad thing is, I measure every subsequent Sunday by that right there, and none of them ever measure up to that. Here is how my normal Sundays run. Now, if there's any point where you go, oh, yes, just say amen. Just say amen.

My alarm clock goes off at six. I toss back my first cup of coffee and get myself ready, then upstairs to begin bribing and cajoling others to get out of bed. I go back downstairs and get my second cup of coffee, listening for the showers to start running. If I don't, I go back upstairs and make a second attempt. This time I.

This time I've moved to threats, not just bribes. Then we scramble around til we're all in the car. I try to ignore the screaming and the yelling and the cussing in the backseat. Anyone? Anyone?

Anyone there? Anyone there? Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. We pull in the parking lot. By the time we pull in the parking lot, things have calmed down. We're pretty good. We're religious right now.

We're good. We make it all in. We walk in the front door and everything seems absolutely fine. We have church, we leave here, we go try to find food that I don't have to fix, which sometimes that's easier said than done. We complain about how much it costs to feed people.

Then we drop a kid here, we drop a kid there. We run down to see the folks. We get back, we rush around for something to feed them again and then put them to bed. And I sit in my chair and fall asleep there. And I don't think that's what God meant when he asked us to observe a day of rest.

That's why I said, I feel like a hypocrite talking about Sabbath. But honoring the Sabbath was a big deal to God. In order to honor him, the ancients devised all sorts of rules, hundreds of little commandments to ensure that the Sabbath wasn't broken. In fact, if you broke the Sabbath, there is one scripture that indicates they could stone you if you broke the Sabbath. They thought that by keeping all the rules, therefore you could keep God happy and stay alive.

But Jesus, the incarnation of God the Father, remember this, seems to understand Sabbath differently. In fact, he was continually on his time on earth doing something that violated one of those rules that the Pharisees created to keep the Sabbath holy. In fact, when you're reading the gospels and you come across this line, now it was the Sabbath day, you're pretty much guaranteed that Jesus is going to do something to tick someone off. But in each of those moments, Jesus points to something very important. He either references himself when he says, the son of man is the lord of the Sabbath, meaning Jesus is king over Sabbath.

Or he says something even, well, not more intriguing, but as intriguing when he says that we also are somehow over Sabbath. Here's what he says in Mark 227. He says, the sabbath was made for man, not man or the Sabbath. So yes, God commanded us to keep a Sabbath, but it was intended to be a gift, not a burden. So what does that mean?

Well, I know that when I was growing up, my uncle had a neighbor across the street who was a baptist preacher. I think he gets baptist preachers. This is not a slam on Baptist, but he did mow his yard on Sunday. And my uncle, who was not a religious man at all, was offended by that and noticed it. He said, no, no, no, you can't, you can't mow the yard on Sunday.

That's the Sabbath. You've got to keep it holy. Did anyone else grow up with ideas of things you could do on the Sabbath and things you couldn't do on the Sabbath? You couldn't go to the movies. We didn't really watch tv except for wonderful World of Disney when I stayed with my pagan grandparents and they let me.

There's things you couldn't, you couldn't do. The point of Jesus saying the Sabbath is made for man and not man for the Sabbath is to let us know this, that when keeping the Sabbath involves more stress and effort than simply ignoring it, then we sort of lost the point. And the point of the Sabbath is not stress. The point of the Sabbath, rest, resting, pausing, catching our breath, even assessing. Remember on the 7th day, God looked around and he said, ah, it's good.

Sabbath is just stopping. The word here, we mentioned it earlier, is Shabbat. Shabbat is a special day. The second part of this day of rest is Shabbat ton, which is a special day of rest, a special day for rest. And we go back to creation where God looks, he stops, he assesses, he says, it is good.

And he commands us then to do the same. Six days, he says, you should work, and then on the 7th, you should stop, you should pause, you should take a breath, you should look around, you should appreciate what is around you. It is good. Not easy, but good. You say, Tim, I'm with you.

I think it's great. It's a great idea. People should, we should. But here's the deal. Kids need to be fed.

Clothes need to be washed. There's school tomorrow. Grass needs to be cut. It rained all weekend. The trash needs to be taken out.

It's piling up in the kitchen corner. Emails need to be answered. Monday is coming. Yes, of course. Yes.

But here's the deal. Tomorrow the exact same things will be true.

Food will be required, clothing will be required, shelter will be required, work will be demanded. And God says, if we don't stop, we will find that one day leads on to the next, to the next, to the next, to the next, to the next. And we take no opportunity to look around and say, ah, life is good and God is good.

You say, that sounds good, but Tim, you don't understand. I'm so necessary now. No one says that. Do they no one says I'm so necessary. But we do think it sometimes.

Like, if we're not on our game, things will fall apart. If I don't do it, it won't get done. Any moms in the room right now? If you don't do it, it won't get done. Can I just say you're right?

You're right. But if you don't do it today, it can be done tomorrow.

Here's the deal. You're not that necessary. What?

God says this. You need a day to remind yourself that it all doesn't

depend on you.

So much of our self worth is tied to the belief that we are indispensable to our organization, to our families, to our kids. They just can't do it without me. I remember years ago taking a Sunday off from church and stressing about what if the Holy Spirit decided to move in a miraculous way and I wasn't there to make sure it was done correctly. Now you can laugh because that is absolutely ludicrous. Ludicrous?

I am incredibly dispensable. You may think, Tim, it's different for me. Literally, I'm holding it all together for my family. I just want you to think about your neighbors next door. Maybe down the street, maybe across town.

Maybe let's go over to Thailand or India or down in South America. There are families and cultures and businesses and churches and situations that are happening all over successfully without your input. Have you ever thought about that? Life is going on without you. Now, that's not to say that we don't love you.

It's not to say that you're unneeded. But it is to remind you that it's all right to stop and rest, to realize that. Hmm. A bowl of salted caramel ice cream for dinner is not the worst thing that laundry can pile up for. I'm just going to say it.

Two weeks without alien life forms breeding in it. It's all right. It's all right. Here's the hard one. For a lot of us, missing a text or an email or a phone call very rarely has eternal consequences.

You can put it down. You can relax. He's got the whole world in his hands? He's got the whole world in his hands? He's got the whole world in his hands?

He's got the whole world in his hands and when we can put the stuff down and look around and go, ah. The world is still turning on its axis. The sun is still shining. My children are still alive. And the business didn't crash overnight.

Look at this. God's got this under control. We also realize this. We are loved not because of all the stuff we get accomplished and all the people we keep alive. We are loved simply because God is loving.

He just loves us. His love is extravagant. He loves us for who we are. One of the most powerful things Jesus says to us is this, come to me, all you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Sometimes it's the heavy laden and the weary that are the most resistant to letting anyone take their burdens and take their stresses.

Sometimes we find those identifiers in our lives to be who we are. Who are we? Without our anxieties and our burdens and our stresses, who do we become? And Jesus says, I'll tell you, if you come to me and release those to me, let me become your rest. This is amazing because the rest that the scriptures command of us is accomplished in Jesus.

The rest that God says is a gracious gift to us, that anyone who wants it can have it. If they come to Jesus, I think we would all say amen to that.

So, Tim, are we to keep the Sabbath or are we not to keep the Sabbath? Because you've wandered all over the place here with this. I get it. Well, yes, we are to keep the Sabbath, but no, we don't need to worry about the Sabbath. Sean says it this way.

Yes, we should keep the Sabbath because we were created with limits. We can only push ourselves for so long before we bump into those natural limits and we go, oh, oh, oh, I'm exhausted. I can't go another step. When we bump into those limits, it can be pretty painful. So in his grace, God has invited us into periods, regular periods.

He didn't say twice every year you should take a week off. No, he says, no, no, no, no. You need it more consistently, more regularly than that. Every seven days you need to take a day where you stop. You take a rest that will replenish and refresh your heart, soul, mind and strengthen.

So, yes, setting aside one day a week, one day every seven days, pick every 7th Monday. I don't care. I don't think God does. Just every seven days, pick one day to say, I want to be intentional about just observing and watching and giving thanks for what God has done in my life. I'm going to remind myself that I'm not indispensable.

I'm just going to do things that are restful and enjoyable. I'm going to honor God with some practices that would just make him happy. You see when we allow ourselves to rest, when we give ourselves permission to ignore the text and the emails and the laundry for the day, we find that when that 8th day comes, say Monday, the things that we were so worried about missing out on on Sunday, the stresses that were like, oh no, what if on Monday we look at our emails and go, oh, that resolved itself. I'm glad I didn't spend a lot of time worrying about that. Or oh, that has not yet resolved itself.

But now I have the mind and the heart and the emotion space, the soul space to deal with this issue. Because I have taken some time to be rested and replenished, invariably I discover that the world has not fallen apart. He's got the whole world in his hands. Even while I was resting, he managed so, yes, find ways to honor God on a special day of rest. A Shabbat tone, but also, especially for those of us who grew

up with really firm rules about what we could and couldn't do on Sunday.

I would say this, you are relieved from the pressure of observing a Sabbath. Here's why. Hebrews, which is a book in the New Testament, tells us this. For Christians, for those who have accepted Christ, our Sabbath is not a day. Our Sabbath is a person.

That person is Jesus. You see, the laws that you can't break on the Sabbath, all those laws are answered and fulfilled in Jesus. Hebrews says that Jesus has become our Shabbaton, our Sabbath rest. He didn't get rid of the Sabbath, he became the Sabbath. That's incredible.

Hebrews says it this way in chapter four, verse three. We who have believed have now entered into that rest when we believe in him, when we put our trust in him, when we allow him to come into our lives and wash us clean and then follow him as he leads us out of our hurts and our hangups and our habits into this new and free life. We discover a new way of living that is Sabbath, and we enter it again not by stressing over what we can and what we cannot do, but by believing in Jesus. We who have believed have entered into that rest. Remember those long ago sabbaths?

I enjoyed those Sundays. I don't recall a single time writing in the back or the backety back where I worried. And I stressed about whether I was keeping and honoring the Sabbath appropriately. I just did whatever mom and dad told me to do and really nothing more.

Worship together, enjoy time with family and friends, get some rest, get refreshed, because Monday's coming.

I don't remember stressing about keeping the Sabbath when I was a kid. And I don't believe Jesus asked us to stress about it either. Because if we live in this place where Jesus is our Sabbath, then we can sing with absolute confidence. You know what I'm going to ask you to do? He's got the whole world in his hands he's got the whole world in his hands he's got the whole world, world in his hands he's got the whole world in his hands and for us, Sabbath becomes not just a day, but he comes this life where we are trusting God and enjoying the freedom and the peace that he offers us in him.

Today, as we prepare for a time of communion, I want to remind ourselves of the main thing. The main thing is this, that Jesus has extended an invitation for us to enjoy his rest, his Sabbath. Come to me, all you who labor. Anyone here labor? Yeah.

Anyone who has some heavy burdens. Anyone here have some heavy burdens? Yeah. Jesus says, come to me. You're the kind of people I want.

You're the kind of people that I'm doing this for the burdened, the laborers. And I will give you rest. There will always be more work to do. There always will be. It'll never get done.

It'll never get done. I say that tragically because there's a pile of laundry that never disappears in my house now. There will always be work to do. Both laundry. Just life.

We don't finish. We don't wrap it up until it's time to wrap it up. But until that time, remember that it's not all about us. Jesus has done the work. We can trust Jesus with our unfinished work and our unfinished lives.

We can place our lives and our work into the hands of our loving Father who loves us extravagantly. And if you've never done that, today is the day to do so. If you feel something tugging on you to make a spiritual decision this morning, talk to me after the service. I want to help you through that. In the meantime, we're going to take communion.

Communion is just a weekly reminder for us. A little bit of a Sabbath rest for us in this moment to say, Lord, you've got this. Thank you for accomplishing what I couldn't accomplish on my own. Thank you for inviting me into this place where I belong to you, not because of stuff I managed to get done because of what you did. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, we thank you not just for opening up eternal life to us in the future, but opening up through your sacrifice on the cross, opening up to a way of living life abundantly and with joy and peace and rest in the here and now. You have become our eternal rest, and it begins today for some of us. So as we take this bread and the cup, these symbols of your love for us, we rest our worries and our stresses, and the same love that expands and opens wide and embraces us in the grace of Jesus.

Lord, we want to experience those rhythms of your grace, rhythms of your rest that we've sung about, knowing that you've got us, you've got the whole world and your very, very capable hands. We give thanks for this. In Jesus name, amen.

Thank you for listening to this message from Sherwood Oaks Christian Church. Did you know? You can watch all of our video content, both current and past, on our YouTube channel? Visit [YouTube.com/sherwoodoaks](https://www.youtube.com/sherwoodoaks) to watch messages, series and complete worship services.