

I did. I pushed it the right way. I was in my office Wednesday morning, and my tooth started to hurt. Anyone ever been there? You're like, oh, no.

It was just a dull ache. But by about 1130, I told Heather, I've got to go find some medicine. So I left the house. By the time I got home, it was like a stabbing shisht. You know what those are?

Picture a metal one right in my ear. Like, oh, my word. So I had some aleve, I had some tylenol, I had some hydrocodones. Don't ask me where I got them. I cannot tell you.

Nothing was touching that. So I got into the dentist, and they. They got me an appointment to have a root canal. He thought that might be it on Tuesday. It's Wednesday.

Tuesday. Oh, my word. So all Wednesday night, wide awake, couldn't go to bed. Just had to keep. The doctors called it a hot tooth.

Anyone ever heard of that? A hot tooth. And all that helps is just chilled water on it. So I had to keep water constantly in my mouth. I got a month's worth of hydration in 24 hours.

I had to play the rabbi at the little theater that night. And I remember the first scene, the first act. I would run out, do my. Have a mouthful of water, get out. Right before my line was to be said, I would swallow the water, say my line.

And then as the dancers moved around, I would sort of sneak up behind the curtain, take another slug of water. Everything I tried did nothing. That pain was ever present. Finally, about 36 hours, it landed. About the time the second act started, the hydrocodones, the tylenol, the aleve, all the things you were never supposed to combine finally took effect.

And I could actually see clearly. I could hear what the other actors were saying. I could respond. I could say my lines without blinding pain. I almost felt normal, besides the slight dizziness I was experiencing.

So my mom called me, and she goes, how's it going? I said, I'm feeling better. She goes, okay, well, take the medication. And she said, this line, stay ahead of the pain. Stay ahead of the pain.

You don't want to get that way again. No, I did not want to get that way again. Staying ahead of the pain is how I'm afraid. A lot of us live our lives just doing what we have to do to stay ahead of the demands, the stuff that just keeps coming at us, and we do what we have to do just to keep moving forward. Alan gave me this phrase last week.

Exhausted, well-milled. Anyone remember that anyone got a chance to use that this week. I didn't get to use it, but I certainly felt it. That word reminds us that we need a place and a time to safely stop and rest and regroup and refresh. Jesus calls it a Sabbath.

The scriptures give it to us in Genesis. And God says, this is an important thing for me because it's important for you. A special day of rest. Now, if you're joining us here today for the first time and feeling even a little bit exhausted, well-milled, I hope today will one refresh and rest you, but also challenge you to begin seeing the Sabbath as the gift from God that he intended it to be. I'm going to pray and then we'll dig in.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the way that you bless our lives. And one of the ways you bless our lives is just to remind us and call us to this place of remembrance, to remember the Sabbath and keep it holy, keep it set apart because it's good for us to do so. It's healthy for us to do so. So, Father, as we've gone through these last four weeks talking about how to do it and how to honor it and how to keep it as a special thing, today we wrap it up with an idea of what it means and why it's important to us individually. So, Lord, Holy Spirit, work through your word, work through your spirit, work in us to be the kind of people you have created us to be.

For your glory. In Jesus name, amen. Well, God tells us to remember the Sabbath and keep it holy. But how can we do that when life requires so much of us? Our jobs, our schedules, sports, academics, all of those things require time and attention.

So how do we set ourselves apart to experience these rhythms of rest that we've been talking about this past week? We did our first little family Sabbath. Me and the boys, I'll intersperse. Perhaps some thoughts about how that went. As you might expect, it was not exactly how in my planning I thought it was going to go, but it ended up being really good.

So I'll talk a little bit more of that. But here's the deal. The Bible says that we are to remember the Sabbath. Remember it, don't forget it. Remember it and keep it holy.

Why is this and how do we do it? And I think the key is this, by remembering that we too are holy. You are holy. Turn to your neighbor and say, hey, how you doing, holy.

Some of you, it took a lot of effort to look into someone else's eyes and say, that because, you know, I'm too. Well, the truth is that we are holy. Now, what does that mean? So to figure out and to figure out what holy actually means, I think it is important to look at what it originally meant. And so many of you know the story of the Israelites leaving slavery in Egypt.

Are you tracking with me? The Israelites were slaves in Egypt and then God miraculously delivered them. Yes, Lord. I will not deviate from the script again, I promise. God miraculously delivered them from slavery.

They went through the Red Sea, and then he brings them out and begins to teach them what it's going to look like for them to be his people. And part of that is this place and setting for worship called the Tabernacle. The tabernacle itself could be a whole series. I'm on point. I promise you, the tabernacle itself.

Just ignore the flashing light. Thank you. The tabernacle itself is worth a whole series. But what's inside the. What's inside the tabernacle is sort of what's important.

They were to build a tabernacle, and it would be furnished with different items with specific purposes. Specific purposes is the key term right there. So there was this wooden box. A wooden box. Can you picture a wooden box?

This wooden box was covered in gold, and it would hold the ten Commandments, the stone tablets, there ark. In this instance, it's called the ark of the Covenant. The ark is just the container. Moses, you remember, his mother, put him in an ark made of rushes, and he put them down through the Nile. That was an ark.

Noah built a container, built an ark. And so this box is an ark, and it contains the covenant. So it's the ark of the covenant. There's a lid to that box. All boxes should have lids.

It would fit. It would seat on top of the box, and it was called the mercy seat. It's just the lid to the box now. On top of the lid, two angels. Cherubim.

Any of you guys have precious moments figurines in your house? I know some of you old ladies do. Darren. Oh, oh, not old ladies. Sorry.

Sorry. I didn't. I didn't mean that. So these are not precious moments figurines. These are pretty impressive gold angels that mount and sit on top of this lid, the mercy seat.

And this reminds them that God meets with them. Here, where those angels signify God's presence, he meets with his people. There's a wooden table. You all have wooden tables in your houses. They had a wooden table in this tent, and it was covered with gold.

I doubt any of yours is covered with gold. But on this wooden table were twelve loaves of bread, called the bread of God's presence. And that just reminded them that God provided and God was present there at this table, there was a lampstand, there was a candlestick there. Not candles, but oil. It contained oil.

And that reminded them that God's light was directing them. There was another wooden box, a bigger one, this time a taller one, covered in bronze with a seven half feet wide and 4ft high. And this was a grill. Anyone have a grill on their back patio? This was a grill.

And that's where they offered sacrifices. There was a gold covered smaller box where they would burn incense. Anyone ever burn incense in their house? Make things smell good? Yes.

So they had an incense burner there in this tabernacle. And then there's this large bowl or big basin, and that's where water for purification rites and washings, ceremonial washings would take place. Now, here's the deal. Think about this. Boxes and bowls and candlesticks and tables and grills and incense burners.

And if I were to survey this crowd right here this morning, I would say that 100% of us have some of those things in our house. They're not holy. So what made these things holy? After all, they're ordinary things dressed up a little bit. It wasn't considered holy because it was nicer.

However, it was holy because it had a special purpose. The priest didn't pull up chairs to the golden table and play Yahtzee. They didn't toss their junk mail on top of the incense burner. They didn't rinse out their socks in the basin. Those things had a specific purpose.

And to use it for anything other than its specific purpose would deny its holiness, its set apartness. So in the same way that God says these things are holy, God says you too are holy. Let's make something clear. It's not because you're nicer. Can we just say amen to that?

You're holy not because you're nicer. That's a pleasant thing to be nice, but that's not why God says you're nicer. You're not holy because you've dressed up in Sunday morning finery or you've put on your best behavior. You're not holy because you've quit smoking or chewing or that's not what makes you holy.

We're holy because through Jesus, we are set aside for a specific purpose. First, Peter two nine says it this way. You are a chosen people. You are a royal priesthood. You are a holy nation.

You are God's special possession with a special purpose. What is that special purpose? That you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Because we are holy. It dishonors God when we use all our time and all our energy in pursuit of our own purposes and neglect his.

His purpose is to work in our lives to declare his glory. You may say, well, I know how to do that. Tom's here. Tom's an evangelist. I gotta be an evangelist.

Maybe I got to run a missions agency. Maybe I've got to serve the homeless. You guys do a great job at all of that. Maybe like Samantha, I'm going to start a special ministry using the flowers in my backyard to encourage others who need encouragement. Those are amazing things.

Those certainly please God. They indicate how God has designed us and how he's placed desires in our hearts. Those interests and pursuits that bring you purpose and even enjoyment are part of his gift to you, his design for your life. The psalmist said it this way, delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart. Desires of your heart, and I believe, desires for your heart.

There's nothing wrong with any of that. They're good, they're beneficial, but they aren't your primary purpose. They flow from your primary purpose. And I think the primary purpose is in this psalm 37 that we just saw. Can we put that up again, guys?

Psalm 37 four. The first part is this. Delight yourself in the Lord. This is where Sabbath comes. In Sabbath.

These moments, these rhythms of rest that provide space and time for us just to be. Just to be who God created us to be, remind us that even the good and the beneficial things, our job, our ministry, our marriages, even our parenting, isn't our primary calling. Our primary calling is to delight ourselves in the Lord, to be who he's called us to be in him. So back to the original question. How do we do this when the forces and demands of life are stacked against us and you all have some in your life and I have some in my life, but it doesn't change the fact that God's called us to remember the same Sabbath and to keep it holy in some way.

You say, man, Tim, it's tough. I get it. This is not the first message on Sabbath I've ever preached. This is not my first Sabbath rodeo. I have attempted Sabbath with medium to moderate to minuscule success in the past and then slipped right back into the bad habit of not remembering the Sabbath and keeping it holy.

So I want to give some suggestions, because I think it's always good to have something to take note of and apply at some point, especially when it comes to something that God considers so important that he says, please remember this. So I'm going to cheat. I'm going to go back two weeks ago, because I think the same considerations I offered for helping our families enjoy a Sabbath apply to us individually as well. And one of the things we talked about was this idea of just finding a time to set apart. For some of you, it may be Sunday.

Alan talked about that last week. Sunday is sort of his day. For me. Sunday is not my day. That's just hard.

And so we as a family had to find a time that, that worked best for us, and we settled on Thursday night. Last Thursday night, we started at six, and the goal was to make it to ten. Enjoying a rhythm of rest, we found a time that worked for us that didn't compete with a lot of other stuff. Because we don't want Sabbath to add another burden to our lives. That's not its intent.

So we find a time that works for us as a family. And because you are holy, you need a Sabbath too. So if you don't have a family to sort out, that doesn't take you off the loop. You need a time for Sabbath as well. So find a time that works for you.

Remember the Sabbath Jesus says, when made for you, not for it, not you for it. So, time that works for you, time that already has little demands for me, is a Friday. Friday I have less official responsibilities, less people, stuff to consider. I'm a people pleaser. And so when I have to say no to someone, it makes me feel a little bit guilty.

When I say no. I can't. I'm sorry. Ugh. I'm tempted to ignore the Sabbath and, and go into the obligation of making people happy.

So right now, Friday is sort of the day I'm leaning into. If I can't give the whole day, I'm going to find 3 hours that I can say, this is my Sabbath right here. This is a rhythm that I'm going to lean into. But there's no perfect time, not for me, not for you. So find a close to perfect time.

And then, and then, in that close to perfect time, be wholly present in that moment. We talked about putting down the phone and turning off the distractions. For the boys, this was the big deal. They were convinced that I was going to take the phones away and never return them. I was tempted, but that is not the purpose.

The purpose was to put it down the phone, turn off the distractions, and let's just be together for a couple of hours.

I know as adults, we're like, but what if? But what about. Especially if you've got little kids you're responsible for? But those what ifs and what abouts are really just another way of saying that God can't handle the world I live in without my support. It'll fall apart without me.

But the song we sang a couple of weeks ago still holds. He's got the whole world in his hands he's got the whole world in his hands he's got your world in his hands. So turn the tv and the cell phone off. Can you do it? Sabbath is really about learning to trust God with the what ifs and the whatabouts.

And then, this is a controversial one, but I like it. If you find a rhythm of rest where there's food, where you need to eat, do it. Sabbath is not about fasting. Sabbath is about resting. One of the things I've tried to do on Sabbaths is to eat with someone.

Because Sabbath is a communal activity. It was designed to be experienced in community. So eat with someone, invite someone that's not stressful into your Sabbath, and just enjoy being together with them. The next one is an obvious one, but maybe not. But not so much in the way that I intended.

Make time for prayer. And I've got in parentheses there, just listening. So what I mean by this is Sabbath is not. I don't mean you spend an hour kneeling at your bed praying. That's not the point.

First, Thessalonians tells us to rejoice always and to pray continuously. Give thanks all the time, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. This rejoicing and engaging with God in prayer and being in this place of thankfulness is another way of saying, delighting in God, being there, present with Jesus. Oswald Chambers calls prayer sort of breathing. It's like the oxygen and the breath in our lungs and the blood flowing through our hearts.

It's happening just naturally, without a lot of work and stress on our part to make it happen. In the same way, prayer and thanksgiving should sort of be the same experience. So how does that look in our lives? Well, for me, when I'm working out in the yard and my brain is sort of just powering down, and I'm really focused on getting little weeds out, and maybe something will come to my mind and I'll think about Darren Swengo in that moment. It is not disloyal to God in this place of Sabbath rest and praying, to have a thought of Darren Swangle come in my head.

What do you do in that moment? You say, Lord, I lift up Darren Swengo to you right now. I pray for him. I pray he's having a great day. And then you keep right on digging in your weeds.

It's what you do. This is sort of this lifestyle and this pattern, this breathing of prayer. So this is not setting aside an hour and putting your knee pads on to pray. This is just living in this moment where you're just tuned into what God's saying. Now, what does that mean?

That means that we talk as little as possible on our Sabbath. We reduce in our personal sabbath time. We reduce the level of our own voice, and we just listen. We listen to what God brings to our mind. We listen for what God's telling us through the surroundings around us.

And then you offer that in thanksgiving or prayer or rejoicing right back to God. Then you do something fun and refreshing. This is totally up to you. Read, paint, cook, garden, things that restore you. I cleaned out my garage.

I didn't clean it out. You know how this works. I rearranged things in my garage yesterday and swept. I feel really good about it. It was actually restful.

I could do it without thinking too much about other stuff. Maggie Mobley, who's going to be here next Sunday with me, says this. If you use your brain a lot, Sabbath with your hands. If you use your hands a lot, Sabbath with your brain. That's an interesting thought, isn't it?

I like that. When she said that, and I said, I'm going to quote you, she goes, oh, it's not my original thought. I said, well, I've heard no one else say it, so I'm going to give you credit for

it. If you're like me, in front of a desk or a computer all week long, getting outside in the sunshine is a good place to Sabbath. But if you really work, and you guys, there's people in here who really work, you know what I mean?

Like, they sweat at their job. Sabbath is about a big glass of iced tea and shade and maybe a book and just resting, just being. Just being restful. And then this is the controversial one. Stay close to home.

What do I mean by that? You may love hiking, but on the Sabbath, consider walking around your neighborhood instead of driving 20 miles to a national park to walk through the glens and forests and waterfalls. As beautiful as that is. God instructed his people, the Jews to limit their travel, to restrict it to a very small geographical area. And I think there's something very wise in that because there's something restorative by just being home.

Anyone say amen to that? Just being home, listening to the birds in your own backyard, listening and watching nature grow in your own patio. Just being home, being close to home is so important. I think if we do that, if we can find Jesus right there in our own backyard where Jesus wants to meet us, then we've experienced a real Sabbath. Now, all of these suggestions, and you take the ones that will work for you immediately, and you're free to adjust the rest of them.

But all of these suggestions serve simply to remind us that God has, the world has our families, God has our provision, our work firmly in his hand, and we can stop and we can rest, and we can trust him. So I'm going to encourage you to take and accept this Sabbath gift and stop and rest. I am 57 years old. That's where you go. No, Tim, surely not.

Yes, I'm 57 years old. And what I am learning is that life is never going to get to the point where my stresses and anxieties cease. They will always be there, at least not this side of eternity. There's always going to be something about life that can leave us exhausted and overwhelmed. But God didn't give us the gift of the Sabbath to only lean into when we are exhausted and overwhelmed and stressed.

He gave it to us to use continually on a regular rhythm. He commanded us to observe it consistently so that the pain of mental and spiritual and physical and emotional exhaustion never sets in. As my mom said, the Sabbath allows us to stay ahead of the pain. It's a great, beautiful gift from God. Whether you're a Christian, whether you're a believer in Jesus or not, the Sabbath is a gift, a delightful gift to you.

But Jesus is the permanent solution. I had the tooth pulled. It had to go. It was too much.

Advil, Aleve, tylenol, even hydrocodone. They serve a purpose, they provide some relief. But the permanent solution required something a little more drastic. It required I had to sacrifice a tooth. My mouth is feeling a little more lonely today than it did this time last week.

But here's the deal. If you are here this morning and you've not yet trusted your life to Jesus, I want to remind you that there is an even deeper Sabbath that's available to you beyond the every seven days consistent pattern that you're going to put into your life. This deeper Sabbath only comes as we trust Jesus. And Jesus offers us not just a few hours on Friday morning. Not just a day, but an eternity of rest for those who will surrender their lives and their hearts to God.

He promises a Sabbath rest that goes far, far beyond just a few hours. He promises forgiveness for our worst sins. You know what your worst sins are? So does God. And he offers forgiveness for those.

He promises to give us a new life led by his spirit. He promises a future life with him forever. And you ask, how do I find that life? Well, if you've never acknowledged Jesus as the rightful king of your life and followed him in baptism, today could be the day that you experience what that Sabbath rest Jesus offers really looks like. I'm going to pray for communion.

But if that describes you this morning, will you not leave the church this morning, the service this morning without talking to me? I'd love to pray with you. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, Jesus doing life our way has left us, many of us, with with stabbing pain in our lives. So this morning we give you permission to wash us clean and start fresh with us.

Lord, this morning, as we prepare to take just time of communion with you, a Sabbath, if you will, a moment just to put yesterday behind us and be purely here with you and have you speak to us, I want to pray for those who need to take a next step with you. Maybe it's just committing some dedicated time this week just to Sabbath, just to rest with you. Maybe it's those who need to take the next step of surrendering their lives to Jesus and being baptized into his family. Maybe it's someone here who just needs to make Sunday worship a priority for themselves and their family. Whatever the next step is, we thank you that the hard work, the real work, the drastic work of bringing us into your rest has already been accomplished.

There's nothing more we can add to that accomplished through Jesus and the work of the cross that gives us a place to rest spiritually, emotionally, physically, mentally. Even so, we thank you for this bread and this cup, these symbols of the finished work of Jesus on the cross. We give thanks for that in his name. Amen.

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