

5

SABBATH

None of us were created to work all the time. It's not healthy nor is it effective. Countless research studies have backed up how the best leaders and biggest difference makers take a regular day completely off in order to do something replenishing. They make a decision to create margin and live at a pace below their limits.

The idea of finding a day of rest isn't new. It actually began with a biblical concept known as the Sabbath and is one of the Ten Commandments in the Bible. While God clearly calls us to take rest seriously, this commandment is one we tend to blow off the most.

In this session, let's talk about a simple, yet very counter-cultural choice to take intentional time to rest, replenish, and recharge. The Sabbath may have been a great idea a thousand years ago, but is it possible today?

*Remember the Sabbath day
by keeping it holy.*
Exodus 20:8



"The best leaders and biggest difference makers take a regular day completely off in order to do something replenishing."

YOUR STORY

- What did your Sunday routine look like growing up? Did your family talk about or try to honor the Sabbath?
- When was the last time you felt truly rested and replenished? Where was it? What were you doing (or not doing)?

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WATCH THE VIDEO

Use the space provided to record your thoughts and questions as well as the things you want to remember or follow up on. After watching the video, have someone read the discussion questions in the Hear God's Story section and start the conversation.



HEAR GOD'S STORY



EXODUS 20:8-11

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

THINK ABOUT IT

- What does it mean to keep the Sabbath day holy?
- Why did God create the Sabbath?
- How did the Pharisees' idea of the Sabbath differ from Jesus' approach to the Sabbath?

MARK 2:23-28

One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grainfields, and as his disciples walked along, they began to pick some heads of grain. The Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?" He answered, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need? In the days of Abiathar the high priest, he entered the house of God and ate the consecrated bread, which is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions." Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

STUDY NOTES

It is mentioned several times in the Bible that the Sabbath is to be kept holy. The Hebrew word for “holy” stands for several things, including clean, sanctify, hallow, dedicate, and consecrate. So when the Bible says to keep the Sabbath holy, it means to set apart the Sabbath from the other six days. It means to honor the Sabbath, to keep it pure, and to dedicate it to our Lord. With this said, let’s not forget what Jesus said, *“The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.”* (Mark 2:27). We are not to treat the Sabbath legalistically, but rather, we need to remember that God created the Sabbath for us, so we can rest.





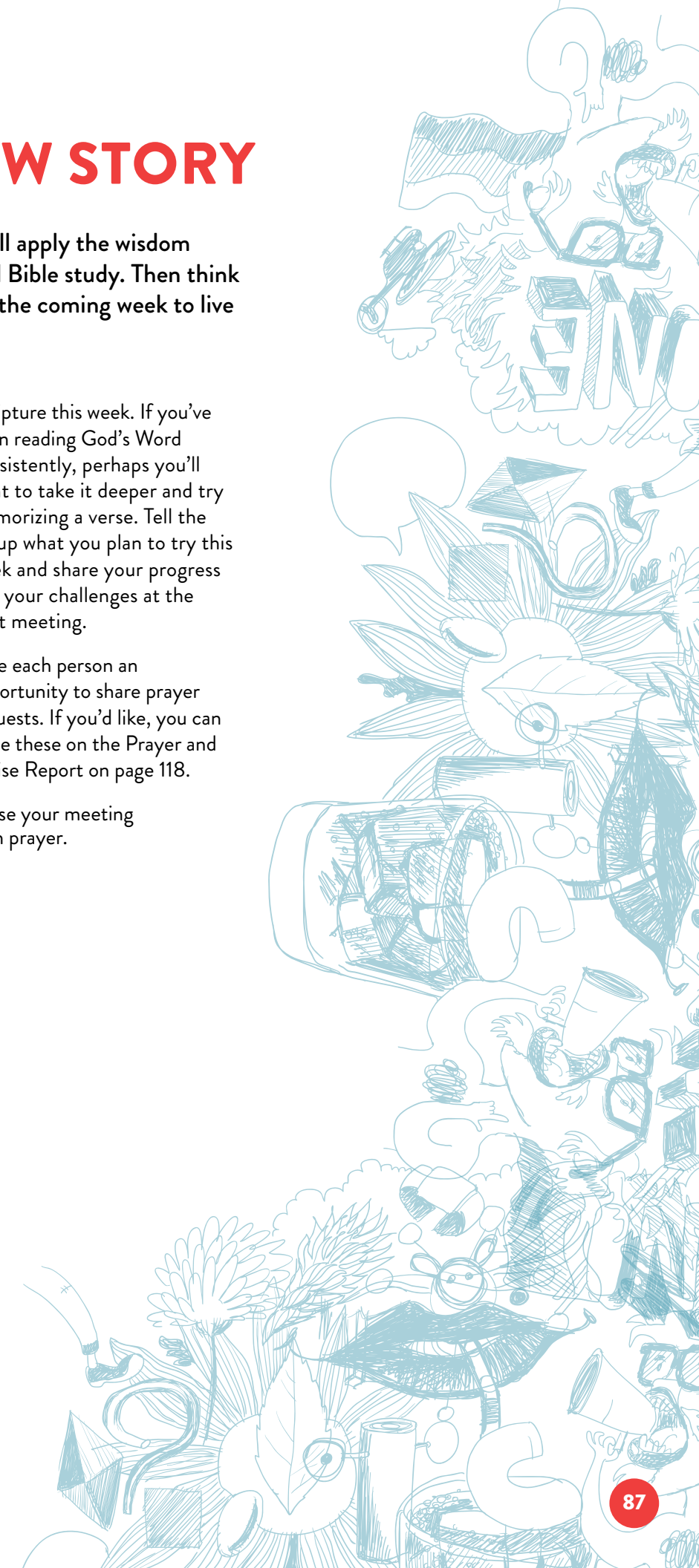
CREATE A NEW STORY

In this section, talk about how you will apply the wisdom you've learned from the teaching and Bible study. Then think about practical steps you can take in the coming week to live out what you've learned.

- Does the idea of taking an entire day of rest or rejuvenation seem possible for you? Why or why not?
- What is the cost of ignoring rest and rejuvenation? Is there a specific place in your life where you know you are less effective because your tank is empty?
- What is most replenishing and rejuvenating to you?
- Are you intentional about planning time for these activities?
- Jeff said, "No one will do this for us—no one will make sure we're getting time to rest." How can you intentionally plan to rest? How can you get creative about finding Sabbath time?
- A strong group is made up of people who are all being filled up by God so that they are empowered to love one another. What specific steps will you take this week to connect with God privately so He can "fill you up"? If you've focused on prayer in past weeks, maybe you'll want to direct your attention to

Scripture this week. If you've been reading God's Word consistently, perhaps you'll want to take it deeper and try memorizing a verse. Tell the group what you plan to try this week and share your progress and your challenges at the next meeting.

- Give each person an opportunity to share prayer requests. If you'd like, you can write these on the Prayer and Praise Report on page 118.
- Close your meeting with prayer.



FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY



Take some time between now and your next meeting to dig into God’s Word. Explore the Bible passages related to this session’s theme on your own. Jot down your reflections in a journal or in this study guide. You may want to use a Bible website or app to look up commentary on these passages. If you would like, share what you learn with the group during your next meeting.

READ ISAIAH 58:13

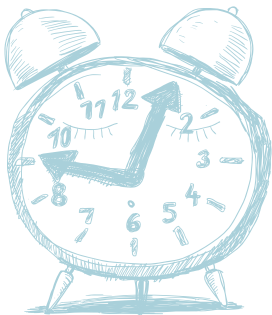
If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight and the Lord’s holy day honorable, and if you honor it by not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words...

- In your own words, what does this verse mean?
- Whose day is the Sabbath?
- What are we supposed to do on the Sabbath? What are we not to do?

EXODUS 31:15-17

For six days work is to be done, but the seventh day is a day of Sabbath rest, holy to the Lord. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day is to be put to death. The Israelites are to observe the Sabbath, celebrating it for the generations to come as a lasting covenant. It will be a sign between me and the Israelites forever, for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.

- What does the Sabbath signify?
- What do we need to rest from on the Sabbath? Look at your everyday life and try to be as specific as possible.
- When you keep the Sabbath, do you feel refreshed?
- Ask God where you are too busy and need rest.



DAILY DEVOTIONS

DAY

1

ISAIAH 56:2

Blessed is the one who does this—the person who holds it fast, who keeps the Sabbath without desecrating it, and keeps their hands from doing any evil.

REFLECT

To keep the Sabbath is to embrace God’s law. Are you obedient to God? If not, what hinders you?

DAY

2

MARK 2:27

Then Jesus said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.”

REFLECT

What did Jesus mean when He said that the Sabbath was made for people and not the other way around?

DAY

3

HEBREWS 4:9-11

There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience.

REFLECT

To rest is to obey. Why do you think we need to be told to rest? What does God know about us that He would make such a commandment?

DAY

4

LUKE 23:56

Then they went home and prepared spices and perfumes. But they rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment.

REFLECT

What can you do leading up to your Sabbath so that you can rest and enjoy the Sabbath to its fullest?

DAY

5

MATTHEW 12:12

How much more valuable is a person than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.

REFLECT

Honor the Sabbath, but honor the one who created the Sabbath even more.

DAY

6

REFLECT

Use the following space to reflect on what you learned this week and what God is saying to you.