**Genesis 2:1-3**

Introduction

I. Read Mt 11:28-30

 A. Are you experiencing rest in your soul?

B. We live in a very rest-less culture that measures our identity based on what we can accomplish, achieve, and acquire

II. The idea of a Sabbath is radically counter-cultural

The Passages

I. Genesis 2:1-3

 A. God rests on the 7th day (v. 2)

-Rest = “Sabbath” in Hebrew

 -After 6 days of fruitful work, God stops working and rests

 B. God “blesses” the 7th day and makes it “holy” (v. 3)

-previously God had blessed creatures (1:22, 28), now he blesses a period of time

-we often think of holy places or people (holy = set apart), but here God makes holy time (it is set apart from the other 6 days for something unique)

II. Exodus 20:8-11

A. Notice how this command is grounded in God’s work as Creator in Genesis 2:1-3

 B. We keep the day holy by:

1. Doing no work

 -Sabbath is a day to scrap the “to do” list

 2. Living it “to the Lord” (v. 10)

While every day should be lived “to the Lord” this day is a special day to him (much like a “date night” functions in a marriage)

C. So, it’s a day to stop and acknowledge God as our Creator

1. Darrell Johnson: “When God’s people stop their work for a day, it is a dramatic sign that they recognize who actually runs the universe.”

2. See also Psalm 127: 1-2

III. Deuteronomy 5:12-15

A. Notice how this command is grounded in God’s work as Savior (v. 15)

1. Sabbath is a day to remember how God rescued us from slavery by his own power and strength (not by our strength and hard work). It’s a day to celebrate the freedom we have because of his salvation.

2. While we weren’t rescued from slavery in Egypt, we were rescued from slavery to our own sin and its consequences by Christ, our Passover lamb

 B. So, it’s a day to stop and acknowledge God as our Savior

See Ephesians 2:8-9

IV. Mark 2:23-28

A. Context: When Israel returned from exile, the religious leaders built up all kinds of rules to try to keep Israel from disobeying the law. So, rather than being a day of freedom and refreshment, Sabbath became a day of legalistic observance

B. The disciples were picking grain and thus, according to the Pharisees, harvesting and therefore breaking Sabbath

C. “The Sabbath was made for people, not people for the Sabbath” (v. 27)

1. Jesus reminds them that God created humans in his image, and Sabbath simply exists to give humans rest and refreshment

2. This should keep us from over-spiritualizing the Sabbath or scheduling the type of Sabbath that would actually not be life giving to us. We are invited to consider what would be a refreshing day with God for us and to feel freedom in that

Implications for us today

I. Does the Sabbath even apply to us as New Testament Christians?

A. We are not required to keep Sabbath as an expression of a legalistic law, but the Sabbath is still relevant as God’s good gift to us.

 B. Why would you not want to keep the Sabbath? What a wonderful command!

II. What would it look like for you to have a healthy rhythm of work and rest in your life?

A. Even in the first 6 days of creation, God had a healthy rhythm of work and rest

B. When our identity is based on our achievements, we can get into a rhythm of “workaholism” followed by escape (vegging, etc.)

 C. When our identity is in Christ, we can have a healthy rhythm of work and rest

III. What might an actual Sabbath day look like for you personally?

**Discussion Questions**

1. What has your own experience of the Sabbath been historically?

2. Consider the question posed at the beginning of Sunday’s message: how is it with you soul? We live in a rest-less culture that measures our worth based on what we can achieve, accomplish, and acquire. How do you experience your own soul and its level of rest or restlessness at this time in life?

3. As you considered the Biblical passages on the Sabbath and their implications, was there anything new you learned about God’s intention for the Sabbath?

4. On Sunday we briefly addressed the issue of whether the Sabbath day still applies to us as New Testament Christians. What did you think of the answer given, and how would you answer that question based on your own understanding of Scripture?

5. What are the main barriers keeping you from observing the Sabbath? Is there anything specific you are feeling led to do going forward regarding the Sabbath in light of this discussion?