

Peace Progress

Peace Progress Editor, Kay Glathar

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A Word from Our Pastor:

Dear Friends of Peace,

I hope your summer is a great one. We have some exciting events planned for our family including a Fourth of July celebration, the Philomath Frolic and Rodeo and extra time with family. What do you have planned?

Whatever you do, consider thinking of this summer as one extended Sabbath—a rest. God knew that this was a healthy and good way for us to live, so He gave us the commandment: "For six days, work is to be done, but the seventh day shall be your holy day, a Sabbath of rest to the Lord" (Ex. 35:2).

In the Hebrew, Sabbath, literally means "stop or cease". In Old Testament times it required God's people to cease from any kind of work or regular activity. Yes, believe it or not, the markets were shut down! Yes, normal daily activities like washing and cleaning were put on hold. And yes, running errands, collecting food supplies for the week were stopped. Jewish culture developed strict boundaries so that these activities ceased.

Times have changed—I get it. Work schedules are more frenetic and unpredictable. Most people are supposed to be available for communication even on their days off. In many families both parents work and the weekend is an important part of catching up with all the other things that must be done. Many children and youth activities are now intentionally planned for the weekend. We have totally lost, at least in North America, one of the original intentions of the third commandment. I do think that we are suffering because of it. What can you do this summer to bring back the idea of cessation? Maybe it is no TV after dinner-instead, you enjoy conversation with an old friend? Maybe it is carving out one afternoon a week to journal? I strongly encourage you to think intentionally about this-I know that I am for our family.

The idea of Sabbath really took on a whole other meaning when Jesus came. Jesus became the point of the Sabbath. Jesus himself once proclaimed, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath (Matt. 12:8)." What Jesus was saying was that the stopping and ceasing of Old Testament ritual now had a more defined purpose. The stopping and ceasing should be done in order to reflect upon God's work through His Son—Jesus.

Consider the Sabbath as a marriage date with God. People in growing marriages continue to date just as they did before they got married. They take time in conversation to explore their partner's joys and challenges. They find recreational activities that they each will enjoy. Sometimes it requires nothing more than just hanging out.

Jesus is the great Lover of our souls. Jesus yearns to have fun with us, just hang out with us, to enjoy conversation through prayer. The Pharisees wanted a Sabbath that was about obligation, a burden, nothing more than duty. Jesus wanted the Sabbath to be about an encounter with the Lover of our souls.

How can you transform Sabbath from an obligation to an impactful encounter with Jesus? I understand that this is a loaded question, but when answered, it has the power to transform us for our whole lives.

Let your rest be meaningful this summer! It is a great privilege to be serving you as pastor. Thank you for sharing your life with me (I Thessalonians 2:8).

God's Blessings,

Pastor Lucke



