

Gifts of Time and Sabbath Rest

Time is an elusive resource. No matter how hard we try, we can't grasp it or control it or change it.



- We complain that there isn't enough of it in a day to get things done.
- It flies by when we're having fun.
- Things can become frozen in it.
- The older we get, the faster it goes.
- It's of the essence.
- We tell people to stop wasting it.

What is time, really?

The Gift of Time

With the creation of the sun and the moon on Day 4, God bestows upon us the gift of time and seasons. This Genesis 1 gift keeps on giving. We live out our lives within its parameters: seconds, minutes, hours; days, weeks, months, years. Over the course of a year, we rotate through the seasons of birth, growth, harvest, and

rest.

Cyclical rhythms are safeguards, to make sure we avoid the errors of doing too much or too little.



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But how many of us even notice this gift of time or the seasons that should give meaning and purpose to our lives, both in our days and in our years? Do we fully experience and engage with our senses the passing and changing of day to night, of week to month, of season to season, of year to year?

Do we build into our days times of rest, or do the days parade by in a stream of busyness and business, barely acknowledged much less celebrated?



Sabbath Rest?

As I've started working through The Way of Discipleship book with a friend, we're currently studying the practice of Sabbath. The definition states the following: "Sabbath is a specific period of rest from the labors of life for the purpose of rejuvenation and fellowship with God and one another." Three questions then direct me to evaluate my practice of Sabbath regarding these points:

- my pace of life and its effect on my soul and those

around me

- what rest looks like for me, and
- how much time I set aside to rest or reflect on God

As I sat with these thoughts, I realized this wasn't going to be a section I could zoom through, because honestly I couldn't see much Sabbath rest going on in my life on Sunday or any other day for that matter. I thought uncomfortably about what my Sundays typically look like. Morning is devoted to church, yes, but the afternoons are nearly indistinguishable from any other day of the week, crammed full of activities, cleaning, cooking, and laundry, lots of laundry. I often *intend* to slow down and relax, but rarely does it happen.



God set aside Day 7 to rest from His labors. It's a pattern He means for us to follow that's somehow been lost in our skewed vision of time. Each day we race from work to school to home to lessons to home and then start the process all over again. Sunday is supposed to be different, as it was when I was a child. Stores closed. Businesses shut. Families went to church, ate a leisurely dinner, napped, played, and visited. Somehow from

then to now, we've shed that tradition and made Sunday the catch-up day. Catch up on work, chores, laundry, with precious little time for Sabbathing.

I've tried to tackle this issue before in my life, but without much success. I want to be mindful of the gifts of time and rest and Himself that God has given us. I want to discover how to infuse them not just into my Sunday, but to create mini-Sabbath times throughout the rest of the week too.

Next post, I'll look at my first attempt at creating some margin in my Sundays.

If you'd like to join me, I'd love to hear your thoughts on time and Sabbath. Just leave them below.

Jane

I'd like to thank my friend, artist Jennifer Bulp,, for allowing me to use her beautiful Sabbath collage.