

Exodus 20:8-11, 23:10-12

8 Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. ⁹For six days you shall labour and do all your work. ¹⁰But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. ¹¹For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

REFLECT & DISCUSS

Context

The 10 Commandments are composed of 2 sections: the first 3 commandments focus on worshipping and honoring God, and commandments 5-10 focus on relationships between humans. The fourth commandment is about the Sabbath, where God worship and human relationships intersect. To rest is both an act of worship and an act of respecting the dignity of human creatures--ourselves and others. God doesn't just tell individuals to rest, but to create a society where rest happens for all. Sabbath isn't just something we do *for ourselves*, it is something we *do and secure for others*.

Big Ideas

1. Rest is not optional.
2. Sabbath is not recreational rest, it is rest that re-creates us.
3. You don't make time for Sabbath, Sabbath makes time for you.

Reflect

1. Read the scripture passage carefully and slowly. What word or image stands out to you? Why?
2. What does Sabbath mean to you? When you picture Sabbath, what comes to mind?
3. More work time doesn't equal more productivity. Most of us only have a few short hours where we are maximally productive. Why do we keep working long hours and long days anyway?
4. How might work become an idol (see commandment 2) and keep us from Sabbath?
5. Children, livestock, and alien residents were vulnerable to overwork. The Sabbath protected them. What might this form of the covenant look like today? How might faith communities protect those who are vulnerable to being overworked today?
6. Do you have a weekly or seasonal Sabbath plan? Create one or discuss yours with someone else.