

## Lord of the Sabbath

Mark 2:23-3:6 (ESV)

*One Sabbath he was going through the grainfields, and as they made their way, his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. <sup>24</sup> And the Pharisees were saying to him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?" <sup>25</sup> And he said to them, "Have you never read what David did, when he was in need and was hungry, he and those who were with him: <sup>26</sup> how he entered the house of God, in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him?" <sup>27</sup> And he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. <sup>28</sup> So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath."*

*<sup>3</sup> Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there with a withered hand.<sup>2</sup> And they watched Jesus, to see whether he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him. <sup>3</sup> And he said to the man with the withered hand, "Come here." <sup>4</sup> And he said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?" But they were silent. <sup>5</sup> And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored. <sup>6</sup> The Pharisees went out and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him.*

**I. Ignoring the Sabbath may be Christianity's most neglected commandment.**

(Exodus 20:8-11)

Matthew 5:17 (ESV)

*"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.*

**2. The Sabbath is a gift of God to be enjoyed by His children. (Mark 2:27)**

- Without Sabbath rest (physical and emotional) you will certainly experience stress.
- Failing to practice a Sabbath will rob you of God's peace and God's power.
- Observing a Sabbath is an admission that we are finished with work for the week.

Exodus 20:11 (ESV)

*For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.*

A Sabbath is not so much a rest from work but a work from rest.

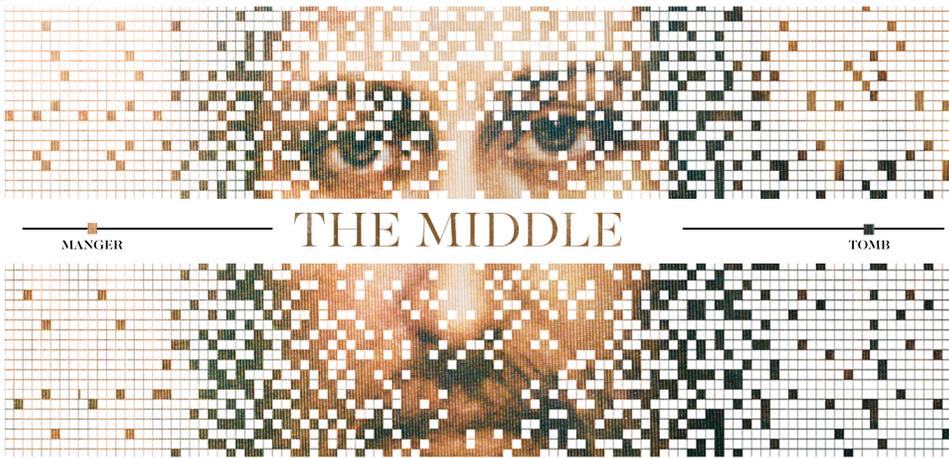
**3. A Sabbath is a symbol of our ultimate rest in Christ. (Hebrews 4:1-2; 4:9-10)**

- God's perfect rest is found by resting in the finished work of Christ on your behalf.

John 19:30 (ESV)

When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

- Unbelief and self-effort forfeit ultimate rest.
- God's perfect rest is a rest in free grace.



## LORD OF THE SABBATH

### MARK 2:23-3:6

### #NVSTORYSHARE

#### CONNECT THE STORY

What happened in our last story? What key principles or truths did we discover through the story of Jesus feeding 5,000 people? Can someone retell the story?

#### TELL THE STORY

Tell the story: as best as you can, do not stop and teach, try not to make points (Commentary), just tell the story.

#### REBUILD THE STORY

As a group: chronologically rebuild the story from memory. Ask questions if necessary. Like – “What happened first?”, “What happened next?”, “Did we leave out anything?” Finally, have participants look at their Bibles and see if anything was added or left out of the story as they go through it one more time.

#### ASK QUESTIONS

- **Where do you see yourself in this story?**
- **What do we learn about Jesus/God in this story?**
- **What do we learn about man in this story?**
- **What is Jesus teaching you personally through this story?**
- **What application/adjustment do you need to make in your life due to the truth discovered in this story?**

#### ADULTS

- What is the Sabbath?
- The Pharisees had become rigid. How can you keep your heart open to the Truths of Christ?
- What keeps you from taking a day of “rest” in our busy society?
- What day can be your “Sabbath rest” day?

#### COLLEGE

- Have you ever done something simply out of tradition? How is this counter to the Gospel story?
- Is tradition a good or bad thing?
- Why was Jesus being “Lord of the Sabbath” a big statement for Jesus to make?

#### STUDENT

- Do you or should you treat Sunday different than other days in the week?
- Reread Mark 2:28. Explain this in your own words.
- What does this healing say about Jesus’s concern for people? Is He more concerned about people or tradition? Why?

#### CHILDREN

- Older Child – What is more important: Following Jesus or following rules? Why?
- Older Child – How did Jesus answer the Pharisees?
- Younger Child – As Christians, what does Jesus want us to care about?
- Younger Child – How should we live: like the Pharisees or like Jesus? Name 3 ways we can.

#### KINDERGARTEN/PRESCHOOL

- What did the disciples do in the grain fields?
- Why did the religious leaders say it was wrong?
- Who is in charge, even of the Sabbath?
- What did Jesus do in the synagogue?
- Why did the Pharisees make Jesus sad?
- Jesus wants us to tell people how much He loves us.
- Can you tell someone about Jesus’ love and invite that person to church?
- Who?



# THE MIDDLE

MY  
TIME  
WITH  
GOD

## MONDAY

### READ EXODUS 31:12-13.

The Lord refers to the Sabbath as a “sign.” What does it mean for the Sabbath to be a sign for God’s people? Why do you think that working on the Sabbath was punishable by death? We often take our weekends for granted. In our culture, we usually take off on Saturday and Sunday, but in the ancient world, the weekends weren’t very different from any other day. The Israelites lived in a world where most people were farmers. This was hard work, and it required constant attention. If they took a break over the “weekend,” their crops suffered—and thus their livelihood. Yet the Lord anticipated the needs of His children; He gave them a Sabbath day so they could rest and recover from their labor. It is rather amazing that God would have to enforce a day of rest through the death penalty! God wanted His people to take time off to rest and to worship, and He knew that if it wasn’t strictly enforced, people would disobey and work. We are a greedy people, and Israel was no different. We will often put work ahead of our health, our family, and even our God so we can make just a little more money.

### READ EXODUS 31:14-18.

What did it mean for Israel to be dedicated to the Lord on the Sabbath? Not only did the Lord want Israel to recover physically, but also He wanted them to take that day to worship. Jesus said, “The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath” (Mark 2:27). The Sabbath promoted rest and spiritual health by forcing Israel to take a day off from labor, and to contemplate the things of God and worship Him. The Israelites had to keep the Sabbath until the Messiah came so that they would not forget the Lord in the meantime. Why did the Lord rest on the seventh day? The Israelites would have observed the Sabbath on a Saturday, but American Christians typically take a Sabbath on Sundays. Does it matter which day of the week you observe the Sabbath? The Hebrew word for Sabbath can mean “to rest” or “to cease.” The Lord God “rested” on the Sabbath, not because He was tired as we get tired, but because He had finished His initial work of creating. The Lord gave His rest for us as an example to rest from our work, and to contemplate what we have done and what God has done for us. We should meet with the church to worship. We should take time to rest and contemplate the things of the Lord. If we neglect the “work” of rest, our bodies and souls will suffer for it.

## WEDNESDAY

### READ LUKE 13:10-13.

What was Jesus’ reason for being in the synagogue on this particular Sabbath? Why do you think Jesus chose to heal this woman as He was teaching? If Jesus could have healed the woman by simply declaring her to be free of her issue, why do you suppose He then laid His hands on her? Somehow, Jesus had been invited to teach in the synagogue on the Sabbath day. Judging by their reaction, it doesn’t seem that the leadership of the synagogue understood Jesus and His message very well. As Jesus was teaching, He saw a woman who had been struggling with a disability for 18 years. The woman never asked for healing, but Jesus was moved with compassion for her and healed her in the middle of His lesson. Even though Jesus could have simply spoken and cured the woman (as in John 5:8), He spoke and laid His hands on her. This personal contact was not just for show, but rather was a sign of relation and comfort. This woman was not untouchable because of her disability. Jesus cared enough to lay His hands on her and make her well. This personal interaction demonstrates Jesus’s compassion and care for others.

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## THURSDAY

### READ LUKE 13:14.

Why do you think the religious leader became so indignant? Do you think that he was really concerned that Jesus had broken the law of God? If the religious leader feared that Jesus had broken the law of God, why didn’t he rebuke those who might come to be healed instead of rebuking Jesus? Whatever the reason for his rebuke, this man’s hardness of heart was such that he could not rejoice in this miracle. This woman, who he likely knew, had been afflicted with a disability for 18 years. Yet when she was instantly healed, this man was aggravated that it happened on the Sabbath! We all must be careful that our love for “church” and “order” is not so great that we fail to love people. For Jesus, people were not an interruption; they were the ones He came to save in the first place!

### READ LUKE 10:15-17.

It is true that the law of God forbade work on the Sabbath day? (Exodus 20:8-9). But there were exceptions. (Deuteronomy 22:4) The law of God was not given to destroy life. It was written to preserve life. The breaking of God’s commands does merit death, but the commands themselves are good and life-saving. On this day, Jesus saw a daughter of Abraham who was bound by Satan in a particular affliction. He noticed her, as He was teaching, and He immediately had compassion on her. For Jesus, this was like seeing an ox in distress on the Sabbath. These leaders would rather this woman suffer under the cruelty of Satan for another day than to see her healed on the day set aside for worship. Jesus saw through their hypocrisy. These men valued oxen and donkeys more than they valued people, and so He rebuked them. His keen insight humiliated the leadership of that synagogue, and hopefully, the rebuke brought about their repentance! Perhaps this week you could seek to help someone who is having a hard time. Maybe you could ask the Lord to give you eyes to notice those in distress and give you the compassion to help them?

## SCRIPTURE MEMORY

“So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.” Mark 8:28

## TUESDAY

## FRIDAY

