

GOD'S WORD TO WORKAHOLICS
Ten Values That Build Strong Families - Part 4
Exodus 20:8-9
Rick Warren

Do you ever get tired just thinking of what you've got to do? Do you ever find yourself as fatigued on Monday morning as you were on Friday afternoon? Do you ever bring home work in a briefcase and used the weekend to catch up on work you haven't got done? Do you ever feel guilty when you relax?

Today we're going to look at what God has to say about taking a day off. We're in this serious on the Ten Values that Build Strong Families. Would you agree that workaholism hurts families? It does. The fourth commandment is all about taking a day off.

It's interesting to me that God has more to say about taking a day off than He does about either murder or adultery. It's the longest of the ten commandments. It's as if He's saying, "I want you to take this serious, this is not a suggestion. I am commanding you to take a day off every week."

Exodus 20:8-9 "Observe the Sabbath and keep it holy. You have six days in which to do your work but the seventh day is a day of rest dedicated to me. On that day no one is to work." That's pretty clear. No one is to work.

I. THE SABBATH: ANTIDOTE TO BURNOUT

What is He talking about here? What does the word Sabbath mean? Sabbath means "Day of rest". God says every seventh day you are to take a day of rest. Why? Mark 2:27, Jesus said "The Sabbath was made to benefit man, and not man to benefit the Sabbath." God says "I'm doing this for your benefit." The purpose is to prevent burnout. Every seven days you need to get physically, emotionally, and spiritually recharged because your batteries run down every few days. So He says, I'm doing this for your benefit. It's the antidote to burnout, the prevention against the stress-filled world we live in. So He says, every seven days I want you to do this.

When is it? Saturday, Sunday, Friday. It doesn't matter. The answer is once a week. God doesn't care when you do it as long as you do it once a week. The three religions -- Islam, Judaism and Christianity -- the Muslims celebrate the Sabbath on Friday, the Jews celebrate the Sabbath on Saturday, and the Christians

celebrate the Sabbath on Sunday. But not one place in the Bible does God command you to worship on Sunday. Then why are we here?

In the New Testament the first Christians took the Jewish Sabbath and began to celebrate it on Sunday in honor of Jesus' resurrection. In the book of Revelation, John calls it the Lord's Day. So it became the custom of Christians, because Jesus rose on a Sunday to celebrate the day off, the Sabbath day, on Sunday.

But if you want to be clear about it Col 2:16-17 says as a Christian you're no longer tied down by what day you celebrate the Sabbath on.

Paul says in Romans 14:5-6 (LB) "Every day alike belongs to God.

On questions of this kind one must decide for himself. If you have special days for worshiping the Lord, you are trying to honor him." He says all days are God's days. You say, "Then every day is my Sabbath." No, that's like saying, this job is everybody's job. Everybody's job then becomes nobody's job. same thing is true with worship. If you say everyday I worship God, no, you should pick one specific day. God says, pick one specific day a week to use for rest and recreation and restoration and worship. Recharge yourself. God wants you to do it.

II. WHAT TO DO ON YOUR SABBATH

How do I "keep it holy"?

Do you think having a regular day off would do some good for your family? For you? God says, "keep it holy". What does it mean to be holy? Holy means "set apart", different. God says, I want you to set one day a week apart to do something different than you do the other six days of the week. On the seventh day, you're to have a change of pace. That's what it means -- unique, reserved, special.

How do I keep the day holy? By using it the way God intended. how do I do that? God wants you to use the Sabbath, your day, at least once a week, to rest, recharge and refocus.

1. God says use the day to rest my body.

Psalms 127:2 "God wants his loved ones to get their proper rest."

God says I want you to be rested, your body needs rest. This is so important that God used Himself as an example. When he

created the world, it says he took six days to create the world and on the seventh He rested. Was God tired? No, God does not get tired. So why did God rest on the seventh day? He was modeling something God says is an important principal of life -- every seven days you take a day off.

The supreme court of the United States has ruled that it's OK for people to have laws that businesses be closed on Sunday, not on religious grounds but on the grounds of the human being, built into our very fabric has the need for periodic rest.

Now you have a Biblical basis for a Sunday afternoon nap. It's interesting to me that terre are now more work saving devices than ever before yet people are working harder than ever before and longer hours. There's more stress, pressure and burnout. Inc. Magazine recently had a survey that said 62% of the people in America say "I have burned out or I am on the way." If you're burning the candle at both ends you're not as bright as you think you are. You can get so many irons in the fire that you put out the fire. You need to take a day off and rest. You can be consumed by your career. There are a lot of tempting things that pull you toward your work -- more money, more recognition, more promotion, more sense of fulfillment, achievement and accomplishment. All the powerful forces that say "work more". you can become addicted to your work. But our bodies were not built for non stop work.

Eccl. 10:15 "Only someone too stupid to find his way home would wear himself out with work!" Whatever you do for a living, you need to stop it one day a week. Don't bring home your briefcase. We think we get more done by keeping on driving. But actually what we do is put a kink in the system that throws us out of kilter. Efficiency experts now say that they've discovered that reasonably spaced rest periods increase productivity over the person who works continually and constantly.

The old Indian parable says, "You break the bow if it's always bent."

The first principle, the first thing you do, you rest your body on the Sabbath.

Ps. 23 "The Lord is my shepherd. He makes me lie down in green pastures." Has God ever had to make you lie down because you wouldn't do it on your own? I've discovered that workaholics who never take any days off, never observe this fourth commandment, end up observing it for two weeks in the hospital. It's accumulative sabbaths.

You say, "When I relax, I feel guilty." You don't need to feel guilty. Jesus relaxed and He never felt guilty about it. He took a day off every week. Nobody accomplished more than He did in the 3 1/2 years of His public ministry. Even God took a day off after creation. Who are you?

An unwillingness to take a day off is basically saying, "I've so much work to do, I'm so important, I'm holding up the world." You can resign as general manager of the universe; it's not going to fall apart. Actually a reluctance to rest is a sign of immaturity and insecurity. When you're immature you don't like to rest. Do your kids like to go to bed on time? They argue, they complain, they think of ways to get up for another drink of water, they don't want to go to bed because they're immature. but any wise parent knows if you don't get your proper sleep, you're worthless the next day. So you force them to go to bed. Sometimes God has to make you lie down in green pastures. You say, "I've got to get all of this done." God says "I don't care about the deadline. Every seventh day, you don't work."

But that's not all you do. You're not just physically tired. You're emotionally tired. There are two kinds of fatigue: physical fatigue when your muscles get tired and spiritual fatigue when your emotions get tired. Spiritual fatigue is a far greater problem in our society today because most of you don't do manual labor. You do things that drain your emotions. You can take the whole week end off and sleep the whole week end and still go back to work on Monday and still be emotionally drained even if you slept away the whole week end. Why? Because rest is not enough. Rest will take care of physical fatigue but it will not take care of emotional fatigue. That's why God says you do two other things on the Sabbath than just rest.

2. God wants me to recharge my emotions.

I use the day to recharge my emotions because work's stress drains you. Americans are always in a hurry and we need regular doses of inspiration and encouragement.

In the French Revolution they were trying to throw out all the old laws. One of the old laws was the Sunday day off. They said every day will now be a day of work, one of the laws they made in the French Revolution. Within months they had to rescind that law to establish again one day off a week. The health of the French people collapsed. It didn't work.

How do you do it? There are three things that are universal that you need to build into every Sunday (or whatever):

1. Include time for quietness.

Ps. 23:3 "He leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul." Quietness and soul restoration go together. We are in a world of noise pollution. It's really hard to find a place where you can be totally quiet. Yet the Bible says, in quietness and confidence will be your strength. The Bible says, "Be still and know that I am God." You need to schedule quiet periods in your life and God says part of your Sabbath needs to be a quiet time. Get alone with God and you get quiet. Many people use the whole week end to relax and recreate but they never have any quiet and they don't know why they're still stressed out when they go back to work.

Like the guys who go down to San Diego for the week end. Have you seen them coming back up on Sunday night on the freeway? Do they look rested? Not a chance. They're stressed out, they're grabbing the wheel, honking the horn. Why? Because Americans hate to wait. We're always in a hurry. We don't like to wait. That's why you hate red lights.

I got to thinking this week I wonder how many hours I'll set waiting at red lights my entire life. Then as I began to think, I thought, "Then one day I'm going to die. They're going to put me in a funeral procession and I get to run every light to the cemetery." You spend your entire life waiting on red lights. Once you die you get to go through them all. When you're dead you don't have to be on time.

Mark 6:31 "There were so many people coming and going Jesus said to His disciples, 'Let's go off by ourselves where we will be alone and you can rest for awhile.'" He says, there's so much going on in your life you need to get alone, get by yourself, you need a time of quietness. You need to come a part." If you don't come a part you'll come a part. He's saying you need time of quietness.

I read a book about a missionary one time. It said the jungle safari guide said, "We're going to rest today so that our souls can catch up with our bodies." Have you ever felt that way. You're so speeding down through life, I need to stop so my soul can catch up with my body. You do that in periods of quietness.

2. Include time for family.

In American history Sunday has historically been a day for two things: church and family. I think that's a good idea. God wants you to plan some special time with your family, to do thing with them that draw your family together.

Eccl. 9:9 "Enjoy life with your wife whom you love..."

"A relaxed attitude lengthens a man's life." Do you want to live a long time? Chill out! Relax, have some fun with your family. You're not wasting time, it's an important time. God says you need to do it.

"Being cheerful keeps you healthy. It's a slow death to be gloomy all the time." Proverbs 17:22

At Saddleback we are committed to strengthening families. One of our goals here in this church is we're committed to the success of our families. That is one of the reason we don't have Sunday night church services like a lot of churches do. Rather than you coming back for another Bible study on Sunday night I'd rather you stay home with your family and work on that. Most of the parents in our area, both the husband and wife have to work. A lot of single parents have to get up the next morning. You need some time with your families. Men, go home, talk to your wife and play with your kids or ... play with your wife and talk to your kids.

3. Include time for fellowship

You need time with other believers. We draw strength from being together.

Heb. 10:25 "Let us not give up the habit of meeting together, instead let us encourage one another." When we get together we encourage each other. That's why David says in Ps. 122, "I was glad when they said to me, let us go to the House of the Lord." He said I look forward to it. Why? There's a rejuvenation that comes by getting together with other believers. It's tough being a believer out there in the world. We need each other to encourage and uplift each other and inspire each other and challenge each other.

Rarely a week goes by that somebody doesn't say to me, "I wasn't going to come today. I was so tired, I didn't feel good, or I had so much work to catch up on, and I thought I

just don't have time to go to church. But I decided to go anyway and I'm sure glad I did." Any of you ever felt that way? You get rejuvenated, recharged, rebuilt by being around other people. In the New Testament it says the New Testament Christians ate their meals together; Christians ate with other Christians. Many of you grew up in churches where after Sunday church you had a family over for dinner. That is a lost art in our society today. I think that is the thing that's missing, the fellowship, the interaction, the relationships.

Steve mentioned earlier a ministry of our church "Good Food, Good Company". I would encourage every one of you to sign up for it. Eight people, couples and individuals, in a group together for five months. Once a month you go to somebody else's home for dinner. It's a great way to meet other people in the church. That is emotionally recharging.

The Bible says "He who refreshes others will himself be refreshed."

3. USE THE SABBATH TO REFOCUS MY SPIRIT.

Tune in to God. This is the most important part. Ps. 95:6 "Come let us bow down in worship [circle the word "worship"] before the Lord our Maker." Sunday is preeminently a day to worship, get a focus on God, a time to remember what's important, a time to get a spiritual tune up.

Those of you who are pilots know that on an airplane there is a gyro-compass and it's very important to keep the plane balanced.

Pilots know that thing has to be constantly recalibrated or it gets off. So you have to re-correct it. The body and your life has to be recalibrated every seven days. You need to be focused again and that's what worship does. It helps bring in to focus what's really important.

The tragedy is many people take the day off. They use it to take care of their physical needs and they rest and their emotional needs, they have recreation and relationships, and they ignore their most important need -- your spirit is empty and it needs to be refilled with God's presence and power and love and awareness that He's with you all the time. America has turned Sunday into Funday. We've taken a holy day and turned it into a holiday -- it's Miller time. Most people don't worship God on Sunday, they worship the sun on Sunday. They go down to the beach for the ceremonial baptisms. They anoint their body with oil. Then they lay prostrate before the sun god. That's their worship. The problem is if all you ever do is work and play then work and play, pretty soon you start think that all there is to life is work and play and there's a lot more to life than just work and play.

Mark 8:36 "What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? What can a man give in exchange for his soul?"

God wants you to ask that question every seven days, "What am I exchanging my life for? What did I give the last 7 days, the last 168 hours of my life for?" He wants you to stop and re examine your priorities, re evaluate, regroup, relax, tune into God, listen to Him, get your perspective right, get your priorities rebalanced and refocus on God. You need that every seven days.

I'm saying this third thing, Refocus My Spirit -- Worship, is the first thing you ought to do on your day off before you do the others. It is by far the most important.

Fathers, if you want a practical way of being the spiritual leader in your home, it's real simple. Your faithfulness at

worship is a good example that you can model to your kids. Of course, we're going to go to church, even when we're on vacation. We don't take a vacation from God. The Bible says, every seven days you worship. So we'll go find some local church and go worship.

You need to understand, you don't teach values to your kids, you model them. They catch them automatically. Every time you say, "We're not going to go to church this week end. Let's go up to the cabin. We're tired today, we've got some extra work so we're not going to go today." You are modeling inconsistency to your family. God says every seven days, you rest, recharge and refocus. Is my work or is my worship the most important thing in my life?

When you buy a car they give you a book that has a maintenance schedule in it. That maintenance schedule says if you do certain things at certain times then that car will last you a long time. The owner's manual for your life is the Bible. God says the maintenance schedule for living is every seventh day you slow down, stop, regroup, and you spend time in worship, and in things that recharge you emotionally and in physical rest. You do that you will be far more successful and you will last far longer than any other way.

The life style that Jesus offers is not a difficult life style. It's the most logical life style. He knows how you are made. He says, "I came that you might have life." When you do it God's way, you benefit -- physically, emotionally, spiritually, in every way.

When you don't follow God's principles and you didn't have Christ as the center of your life, the manager, calling the shots one of the clearest signs of that, that your priorities are out of order, is that you are chronically fatigued. I'm not talking about a physical ailment but an emotionally, physically fatigue all the time. You're out of balance.

What do I do when I'm that way? You come to Jesus Christ. Ask Him to help you. Say, take all of these parts of my life that are loading me down and help me to sort out what's really important. Become the manager of my life. Jesus said, "I will give you rest."

Matthew 11 "Come to me, all you who are weary and over-burdened, and I will give you rest! For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." Jesus said if you're carrying a heavy burden today, you're carrying one that I don't want you carrying. You're

trying to be God. Let God be God and you be you. Life will be a whole lot easier.

I want to challenge you to start taking this commandment seriously. It is not an option "I don't have time this week for church and recreation and for a day off." You're going to pay for it eventually. Do this for your own benefit. The Sabbath was made for man.

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I. THE SABBATH: ANTIDOTE TO BURNOUT

"Sabbath" means: _____

"Jesus said, `The Sabbath was made to benefit man, and not man to benefit the Sabbath." Mark 2:27

When is it? _____

"...every day alike belongs to God. On questions of this kind one must decide for himself. If you have special days for worshiping the Lord, you are trying to honor him"

Rom. 14:5-6 (LB)

Col 2:16-17

"the Lord's Day" Rev. 1:10

II. WHAT TO DO ON YOUR SABBATH

How do I "keep it holy"?

1. USE THE DAY TO _____

"...God wants his loved ones to get their proper rest."

Ps. 127:2 (LB)

"Only someone too stupid to find his way home would wear himself out with work!"

Eccl. 10:15 (GN)

2. USE THE DAY TO _____

3 Ways

• Include time for _____

"He leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul." Ps. 23:3

"There were so many people coming and going ... Jesus said to his disciples, `Let us go off by ourselves where we will be alone and you can rest for awhile."

Mark 6:31 (GN)

- Include time for _____

"Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love ..."

"A relaxed attitude lengthens a man's life." Pr. 14:30 (LB)

"Being cheerful keeps you healthy. If is a slow death to be gloomy all the time."

Pr. 17:22 (GN)

- Include time for _____

"Let us not give up the habit of meeting together... Instead let us encourage one another ..."

Heb. 10:25

"I was glad when they said to me: Let us go to the House of the Lord."

Ps. 122:1

3. USE THE DAY TO _____

"Come let us bow down in worship... before the Lord our Maker."

Ps. 95:6

"What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? What can a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Mark 8:36

Jesus Says:

"Come to me, all you who are weary and over-burdened, and I will give you rest! ...For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Matt. 11:28-29 (Ph)