

**Christ Community Covenant Church**  
**Thou Shalt Relax**  
**Pastor Scott Parr – May 17, 2015 Youth Sunday**

Thou shalt relax. Isn't that an awesome commandment? THOU SHALTō RELAXō

This is a message that I believe is life-changing for students who are often prone to being over busy, and over stressed.

And this is a message that I know is life-changing for adults who are over busy, over worked, and over stressed.

Thou shalt relax.

This is an epilogue to our Simplicity series . and may just be God's first and best plan for us to enjoy the goodness of simplicity.

We all know that life can be way too busy, stressful, and complex. We know that school can be so stressful; work can be so worrisome, and money worries can drive us mad.

Have you ever wished for more hours in a day? If there were just 2 hours more, I could actually get everything done that I need to. If there were one more day in the week, I could get caught up.

Well God wants to give you a gift that he's planned since the beginning of creation.

It's called the Sabbath. If you will just begin the habit of keeping the Sabbath, you will be amazed to see how your life has more peace, more rest, more connection with God, and more trust with God.

What is the Sabbath and why is it important to God?

Exodus 20:8-10

<sup>8</sup>Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. <sup>9</sup>Six days you shall labor and do all your work, <sup>10</sup>but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. <sup>11</sup>For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Can you imagine what this would have been like in that agrarian society? Don't milk your goats. Don't go out and plow, plant, or harvest on the Sabbath. Don't fix your plow. Don't even gather firewood or cook. Just rest. WHAT?? I can do that and still survive? Whoa, I can. It takes faith. But it makes life much better.

Exodus 31 . put to death for working on the Sabbath. So this was a huge deal. Also, it's a lasting COVENANT (31:16).

They got so consumed about creating laws and tradition, about what was okay and what was not okay to do on the Sabbath.

Jesus came on the scene and He doesn't negate the Sabbath, but he set people free from trying to get right with God by getting all the rules right.

He said whoa, whoa, whoa . you're missing the heart of the Sabbath. Sabbath was made for people, not people made for the Sabbath (Mark 2:27).

So the Sabbath is a gift for you. Why and how do you use it?

Gifts the Sabbath offers:

- You are not a slave
- You are a human being, not a human doing
- Stop and worship
- Rest
- Be present to God, people, and yourself

Words of advice as you start practicing keeping the Sabbath (It's going to take trust . and that's really good).

- Dare to ignore work for a day . and dare them to fire you for observing your religious convictions. Turn off your phone and email for a day and rest with God and the people you love.
- Pick a day that works best for you. Some believe it must be Saturday, some Sunday, but if you're not taking a day of rest, and if you HAVE to work on Sunday, then you're taking a huge step in the right direction to work 6 days and rest ONE.
- You have to define what is work, what is rest. Don't overthink that . but you'd know in your heart. It might be delightfully restful and God-honoring to cook a great meal. Or you may need to declare your Sabbath cooking free.
- Don't do homework on your Sabbath.
- Don't do the bills.
- Don't do anything that's advancing your position, your career, or your finances.
- Just be. Just be. Just rest and be a beloved child of God.
- Go slower, don't rush . appreciate people, take a nap.
- A movie might be a great Sabbath activity . or if you're always glued to a screen, you might need to power everything down and take a Sabbath from technology. Is it giving you rest or is it distracting you from God and people?
- GET OUTSIDE. You are Coloradans. You don't need a lecture on that. But have you noticed what it does for your soul to be outdoors? My kids would like to watch TV all day, but when I force them to get out and explore with me, they come alive, and I do too. Stress melts in the beauty of God's creation. Fire up the barbecue and watch the sunset and remember that God is good.
- Make the Sabbath a non-negotiable. Your family will get used to it and thank you. Your body will get used to it and love you for it. Your work will respect you and get used to it. If they don't, I know some great lawyers.
- Worshiping here is probably a part of Sabbath for you . great!
- Do you want to simplify? God wants that for you too. And it doesn't get simpler than this: keep the Sabbath.

### Questions for Study/Discussion:

1. What do you think Jesus meant when he said "The Sabbath was made for people, not people for the Sabbath?" (Mark 2:27)
2. What benefits would practicing the Sabbath give you?
3. What steps can you take toward establishing a habit of practicing Sabbath?