

# The Fourth Word: The Rest of the LORD

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ] Please turn with me your Bible to Exodus chapter 20. I'm only going to preach on the fourth commandment, which is verses 8 through 11.
- Let me read it out loud for us. Can you guys stand if you're able for the reading of God's Word? Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.
- Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work.
- You or your son or your daughter, your male servant or your female servant or your livestock or the sojourner who is within your gates. 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. This is God's holy and authoritative word. May be seated. Pastor Tim Hester begins his book, The Busy Christian's Guide to Busyness, with this imaginary dialogue.
- [ 1 : 3 0 ] Do you regularly work 30 minutes a day longer than your contracted hours? What does that have to do with anything? I have a lot to do, so I have to work a lot of hours.
- Do you check work emails and phone messages at home? Are you serious? Have you been around much this millennium? Has anyone ever said to you, I didn't want to trouble you because I know how busy you are?
- Of course, and I'm glad they have the decency to respect my time. Do your family or friends complain about not getting time with you? Well, I wouldn't call it complaining per se.
- They're still learning that quality is more important than quantity time. If tomorrow evening were unexpectedly fed up, would you use it to do work or a household chore?
- Uh, yeah. Were you going to do it for me? Do you often feel tired during the day or do you find your neck and shoulders aching?
- [ 2 : 3 5 ] I wouldn't do. Ibuprofen, not a problem. Do you often exceed the speed limit while driving? Well, it depends on whether I'm trying to eat French fries at the same time.
- Do you make use of any flexible working arrangements offered by your employers? Definitely. I work at home. I work in the car. I work on vacation.
- I can work pretty much anywhere. Do you pray with your children regularly? Well, I never turn them down when they ask. Do you have enough time to pray?
- Well, I'm more a pray continually kind of person. I don't need to set aside specific time to pray because I'm always in communion with God. Do you have a hobby in which you are actively involved?
- Does Pinterest count? Does Pinterest count? Do you eat together as a family, as a household, at least once a day? More or less, when one person is eating, someone else is usually in the house at the same time.

[ 3 : 41 ] Do you have a hobby in which you are also in the house at the same time? It's too close to home, doesn't it? So anyway. It's too close to home, doesn't it? In so many ways. If you have answers similarly to any of these questions, you suffer from what Chester calls hurry sickness.

Especially here in Cambridge, and by many people in a perpetual hurry, carried by busyness and an ever-growing list of to-dos, we tend to work too much.

It's almost unbelievable now that this happened in 1967, but in 1967, there was a testimony before a Senate subcommittee that claimed that by 1985, Americans would be working an average 22 hours a week, or a total of 27 weeks out of the year, and that they would retire by the age of 38.

This is what they genuinely predicted would happen with the advancement of technologies and whatnot, the rise of computers. They were obviously wrong. An average worker in 1967 worked 1,716 hours per year, but according to Gallup's annual work and education survey from 2021, on average, employed adults in the U.S., including both part-time and full-time workers, worked 44.1 hours per week.

Remember, that's including part-time workers, so imagine how high that number is if you exclude all part-time workers to get the average. Now, that average multiplied by 260 working days comes out to 2,293 hours per year.

[ 5 : 14 ] So we're working way more, 577 hours more per year than people used to do 50 years ago. Technology cannot cure our overwork and hurry sickness because these are sicknesses of heart.

We have a hard time resting because we do not trust God to provide and seek to provide for ourselves. We have a hard time resting because to counteract the emptiness of our own lives, we surround ourselves with diversions and distractions that require more time and attention and provide no rest.

We have a hard time resting because we find our identity in our successive accomplishments and in people's approval rather than in Christ. So the fourth word of the Decalogue brings us back to the God who alone can cure us.

And this passage ultimately points us to Jesus who fulfilled this command and gives us rest for our souls. So the main point that I want to drive home is this, we should work and rest like those who have found rest for our souls in Christ.

So we're going to talk about remembrance and we're going to talk about rest and we're going to talk about the rationale of this fourth word in the 10th Amendment. It begins this way in verse 8, remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

[ 6 : 39 ] God tells the Israelites to remember it because He had already given them the command to keep the Sabbath earlier in Exodus 16. In Exodus 16, if you recall, God started raining down manna, bread from heaven for the Israelites to eat.

He sent the manna daily so that they might gather it and eat it for each day. They can't save it for the next day because the manna expired. It went bad.

It rotted. However, on the sixth day of the week, God rained down two days portion of manna and He instructed them to save half of it for the seventh day because He wanted them to observe a day of solemn rest, a holy Sabbath to the Lord on the seventh day.

And on the seventh day, the manna that they saved up overnight from the sixth day did not go bad. And the whole point of this exercise was to cultivate dependence and trust among God's people.

The Sabbath was God's way of saying to Israel, don't worry about your next meal. Rest from your labors because I will take care of you.

[ 7 : 55 ] In his book, *Adopted for Life*, Russell Moore writes about he and his wife's experience with two boys from Russia. He says, quote, we knew the boys had acclimated to our home that they trusted us when they stopped hiding food in their high chairs.

They knew there would be another meal coming and they wouldn't have to fight for the scraps. This was the new normal. Moore's adopted sons were stashing away food in their high chairs because they feared that they might not be fed the next time they're hungry.

But when they finally learned to trust their adopted parents, when they finally realized that they are not orphans anymore, but that they are sons, they stopped hiding food and started depending on their father to provide for them.

That's the lesson that God gave to the Israelites with the Sabbath. You are not orphans anymore. You are my children.

I will provide for you. So look to me. Depend on me. And don't work like everything depends on you. This is the kind of trusting relationship that God calls us to as well.

[ 9 : 20 ] Are you wracked with anxiety because you believe that you are solely responsible for your life and future? God's inviting you.

I am your father. I am your provider. Depend on me. Philip Melancthon, who is one of the greatest theologians of the Protestant Reformation, is said to have said to his friend Martin Luther one day, Brother, this day, you and I will discuss the governance of the universe.

very lofty invitation to theological discourse. He wanted to spend the day in serious, intense theological discussion of divine providence.

How does it work? What's the relationship between God's governance of the world and our responsibility in the world? But Melancthon was totally taken aback by his friend Luther's simple response.

This day, you and I will go fishing. And leave the governance of the universe to God. That really captures the spirit of the Sabbath.

[ 10 : 34 ] No, it's not about fishing. But it's about rest born out of trust in God. It's about leaving the governance of the universe and our lives to God.

So the Israelites were to remember the Sabbath so that they might keep it holy because the Lord had blessed it and made it holy. To keep it holy is to keep it set apart, special, not the other days.

So Israelites were not to treat their Saturday, the Sabbath, like a Monday. They were not to do the same regular activity and work that they did on Thursday on the Sabbath.

And by setting apart the seventh day, the Israelites were themselves being set apart from the other nations, being set apart as belongings to the Lord.

I mentioned this two months ago, I think, when I preached on Exodus 16, that Israelites were the only ancient people that observed a strict weekly day of rest.

[ 11 : 39 ] year is a natural unit of time because that's how long it takes for the earth to spin around the sun.

A month is a natural unit of time because that's how long the lunar cycle is. And a day is a natural unit of time because that's how long it takes for the earth to spin around its axis. But a week, where do you get a week?

It's an unnatural unit of time because it only exists on the basis of divine fiat. It exists because God sets them. So, following this weekly rhythm that no other nation around, and by resting on the seventh day, Israelites, the Israelites are setting themselves apart as a nation belonging to God.

They're saying, no, we don't take orders from creation. No, we take orders directly from the Creator. We belong to Him. This is why Exodus 1 says that the Sabbath is the sign of the Mosaic covenant between God and His people.

It was what marked Israel as God's own natural possession. And so, to profane the Sabbath, to violate it, was tantamount to disowning the Lord because that was the chosen covenant sign.

[ 13 : 00 ] That's why there's a death penalty in the Old Testament prescribed for high-handed violation of the Sabbath. That's the meaning of the first command within this fourth word of the Decalade.

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Then verses 9 to 10 get into the specifics of the fourth word, namely the command to rest. But before we get to the command about resting, it says in verse 9, six days you shall labor and do all your work.

This is also an imperative command though it is assumed in the context of the Sabbath command. Adam was commanded to work the garden in Genesis 2 before he ever sinned.

While the toilsomeness of work and the pain involved in all forms of labor is the result of the fall, work itself is not a consequence of the fall. As we see in Genesis 1 to 2 and as we see here in Exodus 20 verse 11, our six days of work is patterned after God's six days of work in creation.

This is why hard work is commended all throughout Scripture. 2 Thessalonians 3 tells us, if anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat. For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busy bodies.

[ 14 : 22 ] Now such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living. So the fourth command to rest and to observe a Sabbath is not an excuse to spurn work and to live the rest of our lives for relaxation and recreation.

The cure for busyness is not laziness. Some of us think that work is bad and leisure is good.

We think of work as a necessary evil. We work in order to rest. We get through the work in order to get to the weekend of fun and partying. We work hard and earn a lot of money in order to spend it on jewels and gadgets and restaurants and vacations and retirements.

We work in order to rest. But that's not a biblical mindset. Work is not merely a means to an end. Thou, self.

We're meant to follow the pattern of God's work and glorify God in our work. Not only that, Daniel Doriani writes in his book entitled Work that work is the chief place where we love our neighbors as ourselves.

[ 15 : 38 ] Why? Because he says at work we have the greatest skill and training. We spend the most time and we can bring the greatest resources to bear. If we take up that average annual work hours of 2,293 hours per year that we calculated earlier and then multiply that by 40 years assuming that people start work at 21 although in here it's probably more like 26 and then you go to work to 61 which is the average retirement age for Americans.

So that's trending up as well. That's over 90,000 hours that we spend doing work in our lifetime. 90,000 hours. The primary way in which you love your neighbor is not in the volunteer work you do in your neighborhood on the side but it's in the work that you do where you will spend 90,000 hours of your waking hours because that's where you have the greatest expertise because that's where you spend the most of your time.

The work is significant but work is not everything. work is not all various for Christians to do. We still have the greatest the great commission to fulfill of making disciples of all nations.

Work whether that's in the office or at home it's a human calling but disciple making is a Christian calling. we're not merely fishermen we're fishers of men.

So I'm not saying that if you're a faithful worker that you're obeying God fully no there's still much else to do as a Christian but I am saying that there is dignity and value in the work that you do if it's honest work.

[ 17 : 24 ] The Bible does not teach you that work is bad that work is a necessary evil that enables us to rest and relax and recreate. We do not work in order to rest we work to glorify God.

So the fourth word commends six days of labor but its main point is not work but rest because it's rest that sets God's people apart from the rest of the world.

People in every society and culture work but God's people are not only to work but also to rest. Just as there are people who work in order to rest there are people who rest in order to work.

Maybe some of you are more like that. To such people rest is bad and work is good. To them rest is necessary evil. Recuperation that is needed only so that they can start working again.

But this is an unbiblical perspective as well. Rest is not merely a means to an end. It too is a way to imitate and glorify God because it says in verse 11 God rested on the seventh day.

[ 18 : 35 ] We're following the pattern that he set for us. So there's a contrast in verse 9 and verse 10. Verse 9 says do all your work in sixth day but then verse 10 says on the seventh day you shall not do any work.

So we set apart the seventh day from the rest of the days by ceasing from the work that we do. Is this economically costly? Yes, it certainly is. Does this make us less productive?

Of course it does. But that's the point. As we will see when we get to the rationale in verse 11 we are not commanded to keep the Sabbath because we work better and are more productive if we take time to rest.

Well that's certainly possible. The point of the Sabbath is not more productivity. You do not rest in order to work. The point of the Sabbath is dependence and trust.

Rest born out of trusting God. It's about honoring God and setting apart the day as holy. The Sabbath was so important for the Israelites that here in Exodus 34 verse 21 they are specifically commanded not to work even in the busiest months of the agricultural calendar.

[ 19 : 48 ] It says six days you shall work but on the seventh day you shall rest. In plowing time and in harvest time you shall rest. Those are the two busiest times for a farmer.

They are time sensitive in a sense of urgency you might miss something and yet God commands them even during those times to observe the Sabbath and rest. we live in an age of endless pings and notifications.

Our lives are run by our calendars and clocks that seem always to be ticking down and threatening to run out. It pressures us always to be doing something to squeeze every ounce of utility out of every second we have.

An interesting dialogue in the movie it's kind of old now I guess Wonder Woman where Diana sees a handheld watch for the very first time and asks Steve Trevor what it's for and he replies it tells time what to eat when to eat sleep wake up work at which point Diana just chuckles and asks you let this little thing tell you what to do?

It seems silly when put that way but that's really how we live sometimes. It's as if the clock is our foreman in the slavery of life.

[ 21 : 25 ] But the Sabbath is a reset when we cease from our quest for maximal efficiency and productivity and simply rest.

And this Sabbath rest is not only for us but also for others under our charge and in our care so it says in verse 10 on it you shall not do any work you or your son or your daughter or your male servant or female servant or your livestock or the sojourner who is within your gates.

God doesn't want us to find loopholes and find way around the Sabbath well I'm not doing any work but I've got these ten people doing all my work for me no that's not what he wants either. Sabbath is not only about getting rest for ourselves but also giving rest to others has a social humanitarian function.

It's necessary because if you're working people under your charge have no choice but to work. work. So you have to think about giving rest to others. We seize from work altogether as a way of trusting God to provide for us.

Let me use a famous example that I think you are all aware of. I'm going to see if any of you can finish this line from a song for me. Sungmin, I might need your one. Closed on Sunday.

[ 22 : 44 ] Yes. Chick-fil-A was a cultural phenomenon long before Kanye West said anything about them. And in his book Eat More Chicken, Inspire More People by Chick-fil-A founder Truett Cathy, he writes, closing our business on Sunday, the Lord's Day, is our way of honoring God and showing our loyalty to Him.

He wanted all Chick-fil-A employees to have one day to rest and worship if they chose. Do you think that's an easy decision?

That's not a costly decision. According to 24-7 Wall Street, based on standard traffic pattern of fast food chains making 15% of their sales on Sunday, Chick-fil-A loses out on \$1.2 billion every single year.

That's not an easy decision. When Truett Cathy opened the first Chick-fil-A restaurant in 1946, he closed it on the first Sunday after the opening. That must not have been an easy decision either.

Imagine, you just opened your first restaurant. Surely there is much work to do. But he closed it. And it's because he closed that shop on that first Sunday that he's now able to close it still, and even when that means \$1.2 billion a year.

[ 24 : 15 ] There's people who are faithful with little that are faithful with much. Of course, business experts have now jumped on the bandwagon after the fact to talk about what a brilliant business decision that was.

It improves employee morale and conveys a family-friendly, community-oriented value, and it creates a sense of urgency so that people prioritize going to it when they know it's open.

But that's not why Truett Cathy decided to close on Saturdays. He did not do it to make Chick-fil-A a more successful and productive company. He did it to honor God and express his trust in God.

So should we, as New Covenant serve the Sabbath? The observance of the Sabbath on Saturdays is no longer a sign of covenant for us because God has enacted a new covenant in Christ.

Prophesied of in Jeremiah 31, Ezekiel 36, and Hebrews 8, 13 makes it abundantly clear. It says, by saying a new covenant, God has declared that the first is obsolete.

[ 25 : 23 ] We are no longer under the law, but led by the Spirit because as Romans 10, 4 says, Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

Jesus has fulfilled the law so that we as Christians are no longer under the legal demands of the old covenant. The law, as Galatians says, is a guardian, our babysitter, only there in the meantime until Christ came, until we are adopted fully by the Heavenly Father.

God, like a prism that receives white light and then disperses it into a colorful spectrum, Jesus brings the law of God into himself, fulfills it, transforms it, and reveals all of his true colors.

Jesus fulfills the first commandment, which we spoke of a few weeks ago, you shall have no other before me, by revealing that the one true God is in fact the triune God and that Jesus is himself the incarnate Son, the Word made flesh.

Jesus fulfills the second commandment, you shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or bow down to them, serve them, because Jesus took on human flesh as the image of the invisible God, so we might behold the glory of God in the face of Christ and be transformed into his image.

[ 26 : 50 ] Jesus fulfills the third commandment, you shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, that it is his name, the Lord Jesus Christ, which we must honor and call upon, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.

And finally, that brings up the fourth commandment, Jesus fulfills the fourth commandment as well, to remember the Sabbath day, by freeing us from our slavery to sin through his death and resurrection, and by ushering us into the eternal rest found in him.

We see this in Hebrews 4, 9-11, which we have for the assurance of pardon, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God that Jesus invites us to enter into.

And we have a foretaste of it in the here and now. A weekly physical day of rest was intended to point to the eternal Sabbath rest we have in Christ.

That's why Colossians 2 16-17 says explicitly, For no one passed judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath.

[ 27 : 59 ] These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. Jesus is the real thing. Jesus is the substance that casts a shadow over the old covenant, and the Sabbath was a part of that shadow.

and approaching shadow over the corner alerts us that there is a person walking behind it. But when you have met the person, you don't continue to preoccupy yourself with the shadow.

Now you can engage face to face. Jesus is the substance, he's the real thing, he's the reality that the Sabbath was pointing to, that was foreshadowing.

And it is for this reason that Christians are not legally required to keep the Sabbath. Well, then you might ask, Sean, why are you even preaching on the Sabbath then?

What's the point? Because the fourth word about the Sabbath has an abiding significance and relevant in its Christ transformed form.

[ 29 : 09 ] Because the fourth commandment is still part of the God breathed that is profitable for teaching, for reproof, and correction, and for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

I think there are two misguided reactions that we need to avoid to the Sabbath. First response is legalism, which is to follow the Pharisees who designated 39 different forms of labor that were prohibited on the Sabbath.

In John 5, they're up in arms because Jesus healed a paralytic and told him, hey, pick up your mat and walk to show a miracle has taken place. And they're like, hey, no, that's not legal.

He shouldn't be picking up his mat. It's a Sabbath. And Jesus says in Mark 2, 27, the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.

So if you find yourself savishly observing the Sabbath and stressing out over thinking about what exactly you can and cannot do, then you're getting this backwards. The Sabbath was made for man, not the other way around.

[ 30 : 17 ] It's supposed to be a blessing and a gift for you to enjoy. It's not something you have to do, it's something you get to do. The second incorrect response is lawlessness, where we flout the Sabbath principle all together as if it doesn't have anything to teach us, as if there are no helpful applications of it whatsoever.

We treat it just like another day off. Whatever you want to do, prep day for Monday. But I don't think that's an appropriate response either. There are practical implications of the fourth word even for us today.

For one, there is evidence of an ongoing weekly rhythm in the New Testament church around the Lord's day, the Sunday. The Sabbath was on a Saturday, but this is muted in the New Testament times into the Lord's day on Sunday because that's when God's people started to gather for worship.

And that's because every gospel account tells us that Jesus was raised on the first day of the week. He makes all things new. For the last two millennia, Christians have dedicated Sundays to worship and to rest.

And we see examples of this throughout the New Testament. In Acts 20, verse 7, 1 Corinthians 16, verse 2, they always gather on the first day of the week for worship, on the Lord's day as Revelation 1, 10 calls it.

[ 31 : 35 ] And we're explicitly commended in Hebrews 10, 25, not to neglect the meeting together. I'm not saying that the Sunday is the new Christian Sabbath that we should observe in the same way that the Jews observed the Sabbath.

That's not what I'm saying. But I am saying that the Lord's day represents the fulfillment of the Sabbath because it is a celebration of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus and the eternal rest that he has won for us.

And there's a precedent in the New Testament for observing that weekly rhythm starting with the Lord's day. So do you treat Sunday like the rest of the world does?

Or do you set it apart to honor God and worship him? The worship of God and the fellowship with the people of God on Sunday is not something we do when we don't have anything better or more exciting to do.

It's something we put before other things, something we set apart for God. 18th century pastor John Newton, famous for writing the hymn Amazing Grace, wrote a lesser known hymn called Safely Through Another Week.

[ 32 : 45 ] And he's a man after my own heart because he says what I often say, day of all the week the best, emblem of eternal rest.

That's what the Lord sings. It is indeed the best day of the week. The worship of God is a fellowship with the saints, is a foretaste of the eternal rest and eternal feast that we have at the wedding supper of the Lamb.

Why would we miss it? There's a quote that is often attributed to Martin Luther but it's probably not actually him that said it but it still expresses the true sentiment.

It says, At home in my own house there is no warmth or vigor in me but in the church when the multitude is gathered together a fire is kindled in my heart and it breaks its way through.

We do have some warmth and vigor of course at home too but certainly a difference when we are gathered as a body of Christ.



[ 33 : 56 ] Why? Because in Ephesians that tells us that we are filled with the spirit as we are worshipping with the gathered body of Christ. As we sing songs of worship in one place together the words that might ring a hollow at other points.

we pierce our hearts and swell up with faith and hope and love. As we confess our sins together as the body of Christ the spirit of God convicts us and hardened hearts are melted into repentance.

As we greet and embrace one another in the name of Christ we who have felt isolated during the week in the world realize anew that we are not alone and we exclaim here are my kindred in this alien land.

Here are my comrades spiritual war. As we listen to the reading and preaching of God's word the lies of the enemy that seems so loud and real during the week fade as the truths of God's word brace us and uphold us.

If you partake in the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's supper remember with gratitude that Christ is our spiritual food and the church is our spiritual family and we look forward to the feast that awaits us.

[ 35 : 14 ] When we are weary and stressed by work and by our continual battle with the world and the flesh and the devil we come together to be refreshed and get a foretaste of our eternal rest in Jesus.

So don't give in to the temptation to sleep in or make other plans.

Set apart the Lord's day. That's not the only practical application of the Sabbath for today. The principle has manifold applications when you look at the rationale given in verse 11.

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. As we know God himself needs no rest.

He is one who never faints nor is weary according to Isaiah. But God sets this pattern of work and rest for our benefit because we need to rest. Think of it this way.

[ 36 : 17 ] When the president of the university takes a day off to rest. Is it reasonable for the teachers to insist, oh no I can't take a day off.

I have too much work to do. Too many important tasks to finish. When the president of the university is taking a day off. Likewise it doesn't matter if you're the CEO or the CFO or the COO or the CIO.

I don't even know what all those are. Your work is not more important than that of the creator of the universe. He sustains all things by the word of his.

What's on your resume? I mean I created the world. And I rested on the seventh day. Really?

You can't rest? Too much to do? The world will not stop spinning when we stop working. We're indispensable to everyone until we tell them no I can't do that.

[ 37 : 36 ] Then they'll find someone else to do the job or find that it can go undone. Ceasing from work serves to remind us of our relative insignificance and of our absolute dependence on God.

It is a hedge against our over-heaving pride. So take some time to reflect with what it looks like for you to rest in God.

What practical measures you can take in your life. Seize and rest whether that's a literal day of rest or not. Create some time and space knowledge your affinity to and fling yourselves upon God's providence and provision.

There's a parallel passage in Deuteronomy 5 that also reiterates this Ten Commandments and it gives this rationale for the fourth commandment.

It says, You shall remember that you are a slave in the land of Egypt. And the Lord your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore, the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath.

- [ 38 : 46 ] So here's a second rationale given in Scripture for the Sabbath. You are no longer slaves in Egypt. Earlier in Exodus 5, when the Lord commanded Pharaoh to let my people go and make me hold a feast for me in the wilderness, Pharaoh refused to let them go and he said to Moses and Aaron, Why do you take the people away from their work?

Go get back to your burdens. You hold the people of the land and you make them rest from their burdens. The Hebrew word rest here is Shabbat.

It means to seize. And the word is most likely related to the Hebrew noun Shabbat, which is translated Sabbath. The king of Egypt was a tyrant, a slave driver, who demanded that these make bricks without straw.

He refused to let Israel cease from their work to rest. But Yahweh, our king, the Lord is a gracious king who commands his servants to cease from their work and rest.

You are no longer a servant of Pharaoh. You are a servant of the Lord God, the rest-giving God. God, so why are you working like you are still under the bondage of slavery in Egypt?

- [ 40 : 17 ] Who are you serving? The Lord or someone else? Some of us can't rest because we do too many things. And we do too many things because we say yes to too many people.

And we say yes to too many people because we seek their approval and desire to please them. But Paul reminds us in Galatians 1.10, For am I now seeking the approval of man or of God?

Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ. If you're trying to please people, you will be restless because sinful people like Pharaoh are cruel masters.

But you are not a servant of man. You are a servant of King Jesus, our gracious, rest-giving Lord. So stop working like you're still a slave and you have no choice.

Most importantly, as Romans 6 teaches us, we are all once slaves to sin and condemned to death. But God sent His only Son, Jesus, to pay the penalty of death on the cross in our state so we might be freed from our slavery and receive eternal life.

- [ 41 : 35 ] And so now, we have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God. That's Romans 6.22. This is the fulfillment of what the Sabbath foreshadowed.

So as Christians, we can rest because we are no longer slaves to sin, but slaves of our gracious, rest-giving God. Jesus came to give us eternal Sabbath rest.

When Jesus offered up His life on the cross as an atoning sacrifice, what did He say as He breathed His last? It is finished. I wonder what He's echoing there.

Genesis 2, He says, God finished the work, rested on the seventh day. Because Christ finished His redemptive work and because in Him we are now new creation and the old is gone.

As God's new creation, we too can rest in the finished work of Christ. This is the most important application of the fourth commandment for us as Christians. Are you resting in the finished work of Christ?

- [ 42 : 50 ] Or are you still living like you need to atone for your own sins? Through penance, do you walk in your guilt and punish yourself for your sins by withdrawing from God and isolating yourself from the church community?

Do you work hard not out of faith in the sufficiency of Christ, but out of fear of your own inadequacy? Are you working to earn your standing with God or are you receiving it as a free gift in Christ?

Do you know what it's like to rest in Christ in His grace so that fears are stilled and strivings cease?

if you don't hear this invitation this morning from Jesus, come to me all who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.

take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle and lowly in heart and you will find rest for your souls.

[ 44 : 10 ] Heavenly Father, we ask that you so move among us this morning that there will not be a single person left here who has not found rest for his or her soul in Christ.

Teach us, guide us by your Spirit, show us, Lord, what it looks like for us to work and rest as those who are resting in Jesus.

It's in His precious name we pray. Amen.