

Carey BC Sabbath Talk August 2026

Reading before I speak - Exodus 20 v 8-11 (New Living Translation)

"**Remember to observe the Sabbath** day by keeping it holy. You have six days each week for your ordinary work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath **day of rest** dedicated to the Lord your God. On that day no one in your household may do any work. This includes you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, your livestock, and any foreigners living among you. For in six days the Lord made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything in them; but on the seventh day he rested. That is why the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart as holy.

SLIDE – Sabbath Rest (title)

SLIDE Sabbath / Shabbat / Shalom – 3 Hebrew words in Scripture linked together

Sabbath = God's idea. A day of rest and worship. Sabbath is a gift, 24 hours freedom from work and break in routine. I find it odd that this is one of the 10 commandments as we just read. God is **commanding** us to take a day of rest! It's like commanding us to have fun, to eat ice cream, to go the beach! In Hebrews 4 v9-11 it says:

"There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God. For those who enter God's rest, also rest from their own work, just as God did from His. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest." Hard for us to rest!

Shabbat (Hebrew = God rested). Not that he was tired, but God exemplified a pattern of 6 days work and one day rest. Our minds and bodies need regular rest. We are designed to be active in the daylight and sleep at night. God does give us strength for each day but he is not like a vending machine for energy drinks! He is more of a nutritionist offering us a plan of 3 healthy meals a day, along with wisdom of **how to live** so our strength lasts.

Jesus said in Mark 2 "The Sabbath was made for people, not people for the Sabbath".

Shalom – often translated 'peace.' But it's true meaning is so much deeper, so much richer than the absence of violence. It means wholeness, fairness, justice, nurturing. To be safe, valued and rested.

SLIDE – Good idea but when??!! Who was thinking that? Hands up!!

We say “Yes, I’ll rest when...” the kids are grown up / I’ve got a new job / I retire. We put off resting because we are too busy – driven. I’ve often heard retired people say I don’t know when I had the time to go to work!! Be careful - Avoid having regrets later. No one on their death bed ever said ‘I wish I’d spent more time at the office!’

There is a saying that ‘People **make** time for what they **want** time for.’ So, it is down to **our** choice. What are our priorities? Sometimes our choices are limited so we have choose within boundaries.

Rest is when you say – I’m not going to achieve everything in my timescale. I’m choosing to let go of control and breathe and leave my work in God’s hands, even though it is not finished today. Some things are time critical but most things we do, if they are not done today, the world will not end! We need to listen our bodies more and not push them to the limit.

We all need to organise ourselves a regular break. What 24-hour period is best for you? For Jewish people, their sabbath is sunset Friday to sunset Saturday. Yours may not be a Sunday. Organise ways to rest and play. Limit the things that cause stress.

SLIDE – When was the last time you said wow? **ASK??** Red arrows – photo NI

SLIDE – Northern Lights (picture taken in Hemel!!) **seen them???**

Psalms 19 Praises God for creation in v1-2 “The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship. Day after day they continue to speak; night after night they make him known.”

SLIDE - Time out –We are so distracted by life in general and technology in particular, that we forget to look up! Our phones and computers are amazing and enhance our lives, especially helpful during Covid. But as with all things, we need to use them wisely. **Try an experiment** – decide to rest and put your phone away on a high shelf and see how long it takes before your fingers get itchy! Average iphone user touches their phone 2,500 times a day! Here a few ways to tame your device:

App purge – delete the apps that you don’t really need. Maybe use an analogue watch so you don’t need to turn on your phone to see the time. Unless, like my son, you have an iWatch!!

Separate work from personal – It's too easy to let work slide into your rest and social time, we are never off duty in evenings, during meals or days off. Adds to stress

Switch off phone / silent and switch off TV regularly –go and enjoy the great outdoors, read a book, enjoy a face-to-face conversation, play music, dance or just rest in silence. (Christine rest = songs flow) If your phone is your only camera, turn it on silent. When meeting someone or having family time, turn your phone to silent and give them your full attention. (sad - family in café)

Spend time alone. Be still and rest in God. Let Him speak. (Silent is anagram of **listen!**). Know you are loved by Him, significant to Him, accepted by Him and secure in Him. Ideally go to some green pastures or still waters and refresh your soul (Ps 23) or just go outside for a walk in lunch breaks...

SLIDE READ TOGETHER - Matt 11:28-30 NLT on screen

THEN...The Message version "Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me — watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."

Do you live freely and lightly? Or do you feel trapped and weighed down?

Does this church move freely and lightly? Or do people feel the responsibility is heavy?

Sundays are a weird day. It's traditionally a Sabbath, a day of rest, but for some, it's a work day, a busy day with family etc. In church life, Sundays are both a joy and tiring.

The rest that Jesus is promising in Matthew 11 is found in being in His presence. Although we hopefully spend intentional time with Jesus every day, there is something special about the church family meeting together for worship, learning, praying and fellowship. It's an interesting balance to be resting while worshipping, resting while preaching, resting while teaching the children. Hopefully through our time together, comes joy and empowering, re-energising to face another busy week in the world. There are 168 hours in a week. 48 of them we are asleep. This leaves 120 hours. How many of them do you spend as gathered church? Maybe 10, maybe even 5? The remainder of the hours (110 or 115) we are scattered church.

So...what we do on a Sunday is really important to prepare us for the week ahead. A minister once likened the sermon to a half time team talk. The players have been out on the pitch (that's you!), giving their all, tired and a bit deflated if they are not winning. They come together at half time and hear the coach building them up, refreshing them with water and reminding them who they are, that they have the skills to win, maybe gives them a few tips on strategy, then sends them back out to the second half to try their best. I hope you feel refreshed and empowered by the Sunday gatherings here.

Being in God's presence is where we find rest. Many times, Jesus went away on his own to pray and rest so we certainly need to! Jesus' life was busy but unhurried.

SLIDE – Give way – Yield In UK, we have 'Give Way' signs – **ASK??** where? What? instruct the driver to slow down and give priority to other traffic at a junction. In USA, the same of signs say 'Yield.'

To Give Way or Yield means giving someone else priority, to accept their right of way. To acknowledge that God is in control and has our best interests at heart. 'Not **my** will but yours be done.' He knows we need to rest. The word 'Yield' is also used at harvest time when the fields produce a yield of crops. So, yielding to God can be fruitful for us.

Summary - What has resonated with you...?

- When **do** we rest? & The phone challenge!
- Live freely & lightly says Jesus, know 'Shalom'
- Be in His presence together
- Give way and yield to God's plan
- Recharge/refresh, Enjoy, Sabbath and Trust God (REST)

PRAY / Breathe

Drop Thy still dews of quietness, till all our strivings cease; Take from our souls the strain and stress, and let our ordered lives confess the beauty of Thy peace.

Song – 'Lord may our resting' to tune of Be thou my Vision