

Lesson Plan & Study Guide



# Spiritual Disciplines: Sabbath Keeping

**iFOLLOW**

Walking with Jesus

The iFollow Discipleship Series

Version 1.0 - 11/17/10



## About the iFollow Discipleship Series Pastor's Edition

### Categories

The iFollow Discipleship Series is designed to be used in congregations to assist people in their pursuit of God. This assumes that individuals are in unique places in their journey and there is no perfect set of lessons that everyone must complete to become a disciple—in fact discipleship is an eternal journey. Therefore the iFollow curriculum is a menu of milestones that an individual, small group, or even an entire church can choose from. The lessons can be placed in three general categories: **Meeting with Jesus** (does not assume a commitment to Jesus Christ); **Walking with Jesus** (assumes an acceptance of Jesus Christ); and **Working with Jesus** (assumes a desire to serve Jesus Christ).

### Components

Each lesson has a presenter's manuscript which can be read word for word, but will be stronger if the presenter puts it in his/her own words and uses personal illustrations. The graphic slides can be played directly from the Pastor's DVD or customized and played from a computer. There are also several group activities and discussion questions to choose from as well as printable student handouts.

### Usage

The lessons are designed to be used in small groups, pastor's Bible classes, prayer meetings, seminars, retreats, training sessions, discussion groups, and some lessons may be appropriate sermon outlines.

### Credits

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# The Spiritual Discipline of Sabbath Keeping

*This presentation is designed for people who have decided to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior.*

## Learning Objectives

1. Discover why we keep the Sabbath
2. Find personal delight in the Sabbath
3. Look at the reason for the Sabbath
4. Opportunity to examine your own approach to the Sabbath

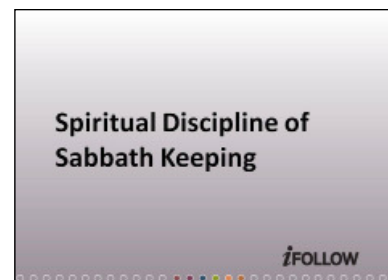
## Content Outline

1. What's in a day?
2. A Palace in Time
3. Traditions
4. A Scientific Approach
5. A Sabbath Blessing
6. What you bind on earth ...

## Background Information for the Presenter

In a modern world where time is money, businesses operate twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, personal worth is defined as net or gross, happiness is bought and sold in the form of pills and worship is a phenomenon studied in anthropology classes, the concept of taking a Sabbath rest is foreign.

What is in a day? What is the purpose of stopping our money-making and pausing to reflect, when lost time equals lost money? What does it do for us physically and psychologically? Why should we bother with it? Why does God bother with it? These are the questions we will be trying to answer in this unit. The Sabbath, instituted at creation and carefully preserved over six thousand years through the Jewish faith, has all but



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Walking with  
Jesus

Action Plan  
& Presenter  
Notes

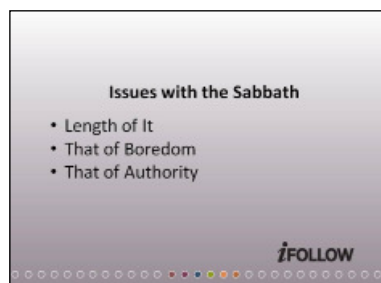
**Spiritual  
Disciplines:**  
Sabbath  
Keeping

1

died out in our modern society. Is it possible to get back to the original beauty of the Sabbath? Does it even fit into our modern world?

The Sabbath has long been associated with legalism and the stern observance of archaic laws. Modern Christians discredit the idea of one day being holy over another. People brush aside the idea of taking an entire day for God, not just an hour or so to go to church. In our money and work-driven society, the Sabbath seems to be more of an inconvenience than anything else. A morning at church seems ample when we compare it to everything we need to keep up with.

We, as modern people, have several issues with the Sabbath. The first is the length of it. Twenty-four hours just seems absurd in this day of 22-minute sitcoms and five minute news breaks. Too much can happen in twenty-four hours! People need to reach you! Your boss might need you to drop in! Deals can fall apart! Sales can be lost! When your time off is limited, shopping time, precious errand-running minutes, mustn't be lost! Life is way too full of exclamation marks!!



The second issue is that of boredom. What on earth are we supposed to do with twenty-four solid hours with no TV, no work, no shopping, no worry? About three hours of that is used up in church, if we go for Sabbath school, etc. But then what? What are we supposed to do with ourselves? We are programmed to expect flashing colors, 22-minute storylines and fast-paced commercials. We expect constant entertainment. From background TV noise to the radio in the car and the DVD player in the back seat for the kids, we expect to be entertained every waking hour. The thought of twenty-four hours with none of the pulsing stimulus is daunting.

The third issue we take is that of authority. We've never liked authority. We don't like it now. Someone tells us we have to do something and it puts a sour taste in our mouths. We have quite enough of that, thank you! All day long at work there is your boss giving you instructions and expectations. The government has their own mandates about taxes and other such legalities. Driving, we must follow the rules, obviously, but speed limits can grate on your last nerve. So can speeding tickets! Everywhere we turn in life, someone is telling us what to do. On our weekends, can't we just be left alone? Can't we just relax and do what we please for a change? The last thing we want to do is conform to another set of rules for a full twenty-four hours! The Sabbath, it would seem, does not fit into our modern mindset. It seems to fall under the category of archaic absurdity along with horse-drawn carriages and corsets—somewhat pretty, quaint for a tourist, and entirely impractical and outdated. It is all

too easy to rationalize our way out of it and move on. But are we missing something in our hurry to swipe the Sabbath aside?

When we take a closer look at the Sabbath... a closer, quieter look at the day that God made holy, we get a much different view. The Sabbath becomes something beautiful... something to be envied! Yes, it is ancient, established over six thousand years ago. The first record we have of it is at the creation of our world, but considering that it will continue in Heaven, according to Isaiah 66:23, it stands to reason that it existed out into the stretches of eternity. Something that old, begun by God Himself, must have some wisdom and value. When we begin to glimpse that value, we realize that the way we've always seen it has missed the essence of the Sabbath entirely.

## A Palace in Time

Time is the language of the Bible. The Bible was not concerned with geography or things so much as time and events. The first thing to be called “holy” was a Day. “The mythical mind would expect that after heaven and earth have been established, God would create a holy place—a holy mountain or a holy spring—whereupon a sanctuary is to be established. Yet it seems as if to the Bible it is a *holiness* in time, the Sabbath, which comes first.” (Heschel, p 9) The Sabbath is a holy time, not a holy place. The hours come every week, enveloping us in God’s blessing. Instead of a magnificent physical building, the Sabbath is a “palace in time.” (*ibid.*, p 15)



In our modern world, things have the utmost priority. We accumulate things endlessly. It is our skill at accumulation that tells others about our value and worth. The Bible, however, focuses on time. Moments matter. Events matter. From the first event, the creation of our world, to the last event, the coming of Jesus. Even Jesus’ first coming was foretold using a time prophecy—the seventy-week prophecy of Daniel. With things, we clumsily try to show our value to each other. It is with Time that God shows us our value to Him. Jesus put it this way: “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.” (Mark 2:27) Sabbath was a gift from God to mankind, to show us our immense value to Him.

Oftentimes we associate the Sabbath with all the things we cannot do. We cannot work. We cannot toil. We cannot call the office. We cannot watch TV. Sometimes we say, “It’s a rest. We don’t work on Sabbath so that we can rest and then work harder and do better later.” However, Heschel reminds us that “[m]an is not a beast of burden, and the Sabbath is not for the purpose of enhancing the efficiency of his

work.” (*ibid.*, p. 14) The Sabbath does provide rest, but it is not about making people that much better at accumulating wealth. That goes against the spirit of the day. No, the Sabbath is about something much deeper and richer than simply resting up for another week of paper-pushing and emailing at the office. “The Sabbath is not for the sake of the weekdays, the weekdays are for the sake of the Sabbath. It is not an interlude, but the climax of living.” (*ibid.*, p. 14)

The Sabbath was the climax of the creation week. After God had created the world and even humankind, He rested. He stopped. He took a pause. And in that pause, He made the time holy. The Sabbath is the celebration of the week of creation! It is the deep sigh of satisfaction coming from the lips of God Himself. We don’t just “keep” the Sabbath. We celebrate it! We join God as He looks over creation and says, “It is good.” In that celebration, God comes close to us. While churches can be demolished and sacred sites desecrated, time marches on. No one can take away the Sabbath. It comes again and again, “independent of the month and unrelated to the moon.” (*ibid.*, p. 10) It comes because God breathed it. It comes, holy hours, different hours, sacred hours, to bless us regardless of where we are, what we have, or what our circumstances are.

But what makes the Sabbath a blessing? Besides the holiness that God breathes into the Sabbath, what about it makes it special to us? Like a palace, it must be built. We do not just stand there and let it descend on us, expecting some sort of magical tingling. When the Sabbath comes in, we are ready for it. We’ve prepared. We’ve made everything special for the celebration! We build the Sabbath experience from the ground up, like a palace in time. We have the food prepared, the house cleaned, the traditions ready to begin. We enjoy the hours of the Sabbath. We don’t just call it a delight, we make it a delight! We eat the best food of the week, wear the best clothes for the occasion and enjoy the happy hum of a home in celebration. We allow God to bless us, and we honor God by striving to celebrate with Him. It is not our rituals or observances that make that palace special. It is God’s blessing on us for taking part in His pleasure on that holy day.

The emphasis for many people seems to be on what they cannot do. The fourth commandment says, “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping 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, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. 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.” (Exodus 20:8-11) We cannot do any work. No one in our home may do any work, or even anyone on our property. But the negative does not define the Sabbath. If there is one thing we cannot do, how many things may we do? In the Garden of Eden, there was one tree they could not eat from, but every other tree was available

for their pleasure. It is the same with the Sabbath. We may not work, but the holy hours are open for a much deeper kind of pleasure. We may talk, laugh, socialize, visit, help, listen, love, share, eat, drink, enjoy, celebrate, think, rest, walk, discuss, play... The Sabbath, like a palace, is what we make it to be. We can choose to be somber and taxing, or we can choose to make it lively and joyful. What brings more glory to God? What the Sabbath becomes depends on what we put into it.



## Tradition

For the past six thousand years, the Jews have been celebrating the Sabbath, while Seventh-day Adventist Christians have only been celebrating the Sabbath for the last one hundred and fifty years. The Jews have six millennia on us. While we picked up the seventh day, the day God has blessed, and while we discovered the requirement for not doing work, we have much to learn about creating a Sabbath celebration!

Tradition: Is it a bad thing? The Pharisees in the New Testament were hampered by their tradition because they treated it like the law of God, when it really was only something they built themselves. They lost sight of why they had built the palace and paid more attention to making everyone conform to their etiquette. They forgot that it was not their effort that made the day holy, but God's blessing on it. God's blessing was God's choice, not a response to their "proper" manners. Their intentions had been pure, but they got lost along the way, and forgot that the Sabbath was a celebration, not a burden.

However, regardless of some pitfalls along the way, the Jewish people have kept the celebration of the Sabbath... they have loved the Sabbath... ever since the beginning of time. In the same way we build up traditions around important days to us. There are Christmas traditions that families celebrate. Easter traditions. Birthday traditions. Holiday traditions. Traditions for the first day of school and Thanksgiving. Tradition is not a bad thing. It is a human thing. Tradition marks off that day to make it special, enjoyable, recognizable. Traditions are a part of celebrations! Perhaps there is something we can learn from some of the traditions that they have created over the centuries to celebrate the Sabbath.

In a traditional Jewish family, the Sabbath is welcomed before sunset. At least twenty minutes, and for some families, a few hours before the sun sets, the family stops all their preparations and comes together to welcome in the Sabbath. A special meal is part of the celebration. For a Jewish family, that meal includes two challah bread loaves, an egg bread made in a braid, and grape juice. (Please see a hand out for a

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Action Plan  
& Presenter  
Notes

**Spiritual  
Disciplines:**  
Sabbath  
Keeping

5



simple challah bread recipe that is easy to follow and makes perfect challah every time!) The rest of the meal is whatever appeals to the family. You might have popcorn and fruit salad every Friday night. The tradition depends on your family, but the point is to have a tradition.

Another tradition that the Jewish faith treasures is that of blessings. The father of a home blesses his children individually. He prays for them, specifically asking God to protect them and care for them. In the authorized Jewish prayer book, the traditional blessing for children includes the passage from Numbers 6:24-26: “The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.”

Not only the children receive blessings, however. The husband and wife also bless each other. The husband might read from Song of Solomon or Proverbs 31, and the wife might read something like Psalm 112. They then pray specifically for each other, asking God to bless their spouse and keep them. They might also add something personal, like telling their spouse how much they love them and how thankful they are God gave them someone so special. For children to see their parents appreciating each other is important. It is a special memory to build a young life on, that of parents blessing each other. It is also a reminder to the family as a whole how important that unit is. Every week, as the Sabbath comes near, the family comes together and remembers how important each of them are to each other and to God.

A very pretty tradition held in Jewish families is that of lighting the Sabbath candles. Twenty minutes before sunset, the wife of the home lights the candles for Sabbath. Traditionally, this was a special time for the woman to pray for her family, and she would do so either aloud or in her heart. There is something beautiful about candlelight. It is restful and creates a special ambiance. Many women cover their heads, often with a special, perhaps heirloom, lace shawl for this prayer, in honor of 1 Corinthians 11:2-5, which talks of the “traditions” (vs. 2) and women covering their head for prayer (vs. 5).

The type of traditions that a family holds for the Sabbath hours is not as important as having special traditions. The Jewish traditions are beautiful and steeped in history. They remind us Christians of where we came from ... it does not matter what cultural background we might have, our lineage goes back all the way to Adam! However, there is no magic in this particular way of welcoming the Sabbath. God wants us to join with Him honestly and sincerely. Whatever makes the Sabbath a delight to your family and reminds you that you are entering into holy time is what is important to God. Your traditions,





whether they be a special meal, a worship with singing, a family walk, or just sitting together and enjoying each other's company without the TV, homework, phone calls and the rest of life getting in the way ... your traditions will make the Sabbath something special to look forward to every week!

## A Scientific Approach

While the Sabbath is not about making us better laborers, it does benefit us in some very measurable, scientific ways. Our bodies were designed to function with a seven day week. When that week is interrupted, we don't function as well as when we are left on a seven day cycle.

There have been attempts to change the length of week, but none have worked. Between 1793 and 1805, France attempted to create a logical ten day week, with ten hour days, one hundred minute hours and one hundred second minutes. It made logical sense. Churches were allowed to open on the tenth day only. However, it did not work. Russia tried to change the length of the week as well, in an attempt to increase productivity between 1929 and 1940. The new week was five days long, with one day off. People's day off was rotated so that only twenty percent of the workforce was on weekend at once. Production dropped considerably and irresponsibility in the workplace rose. Finally the attempt was abandoned. It seemed that the seven day week was the natural rhythm of human beings. (Westby)

There are different types of rhythms in the human body. Some are daily, or circadian, like body temperature, waking and sleeping cycles, blood pressure and cell division. Some are monthly, or circatrigintan, like the menstrual cycle. Some are yearly, or circannual, like seasonal depression and susceptibility to some diseases. But the most interesting to us is the circaseptan cycle, or the weekly cycle. In the weekly cycle, we have the rejection of organ transplants, an immune response to infection, blood and urine chemicals, the common cold, and coping hormones. The bodily response to malaria and pneumonia peaks at seven days. The ratio between the neurotransmitters, norepinephrine and epinephrine as well as the rise and fall of the stress coping hormone cortisol all are on a seven day cycle. Even in the animal world, a microscopic algae cell could not be tricked in its weekly cycles by artificially changing light and dark periods over many days. A weekly cycle, it seems, is not a response to a seven-day week, but is instead an autonomous biorhythm. (*ibid.*)

When you look at many training regiments for athletes, one day of complete rest per week is not only advised, but absolutely necessary. (McDonald) When you don't rest, you burn out. It's simple! Over-trained athletes, or athletes who work out six or more days per week, tend to have lowered immune systems and often suffer from chronic colds and other illnesses.

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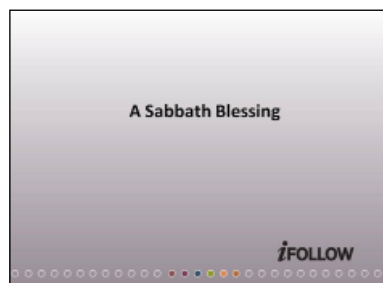
Action Plan  
& Presenter  
Notes

**Spiritual  
Disciplines:**  
Sabbath  
Keeping

7

Rest is good for your mind as well. “Idleness is often frowned upon in modern society, yet it is an important part of human mental health. It allows people to gather thoughts, to gain perspective, and to relieve stress. A certain amount of being idle is essential to a happy, fulfilled life.” (Hayes) We need down time. We need time to just think. Oftentimes, when we are incredibly stressed, when we take time to unwind and relax, we notice that the problems that we thought were so large are actually quite manageable. Your mind and your emotions need time to make sense of your situation first.

Rest is an important part of human health, as is the seven day cycle. God created us with an internal clock, ticking away in a seven-day cycle. We are not accidents. We were designed to function this way, as was the rest of creation. We have been set to God’s time, and God’s time includes a Sabbath. God created us to *need* the Sabbath. And God created the Sabbath not only for our benefit, but also for our delight.



## A Sabbath Blessing

We have talked about a Sabbath blessing, but what exactly is it? Is it just a warm feeling, or is it something more than that? When God made those twenty-four hours sacred, what exactly did that do?

First of all, God tells us exactly why He gave us the Sabbath: “Also I gave them my Sabbaths as a sign between us, so they would know that I the Lord made them holy.” (Ezekiel 20:12) These words are echoes of God’s instructions to the Israelites from the mountain: “Say to the Israelites, ‘You must observe my Sabbaths. This will be a sign between me and you for the generations to come, so you may know that I am the Lord, who makes you holy.’” (Exodus 31:13) The word “holy” means to be set apart. God gave us the Sabbath so that we would know that God sets us apart. God believes we are special, and He sets us apart from the rest of creation for a purpose. He loves us. The Sabbath is a weekly reminder that it is God who protects and cares for us. It is God who created us. It is God who looked down on us and said, “It is good.”

When we join with God in His celebration of creation, God promises us a special blessing: “If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight and the Lord’s holy day honorable, and if you honor it by not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words, then you will find your joy in the Lord, and I will cause you to ride on the heights of the land and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob.

The mouth of the Lord has spoken.” (Isaiah 58:13-14) God wants to bless us, but there is a special blessing waiting for us when we join in God’s Sabbath celebration.

God takes the Sabbath seriously. It isn’t an option, or a suggestion, it’s part of our make-up. It’s part of our systems. He built it into our biological cycles. The Sabbath is part of God’s infinite, perfect kingdom, and when we celebrate Sabbath, we are taking a step closer to God. The closer we come to God, we can’t help but be blessed! But in order to celebrate the Sabbath in a way that will bring us closer to God, we have to do it God’s way. We have to take the Sabbath seriously, too.

Let us use the analogy of North America’s Christmas. When everyone is celebrating Christmas, Christmas doesn’t just descend on us. We must prepare for it! There is shopping to be done, decorating of the house, baking goodies and setting up the Christmas tree. We have to write our Christmas cards, plan the dinner and arrange what meal will be with whom. Even after the preparations are complete, if we sit in somber silence during the festivities, we will completely miss out on the Christmas blessing! We won’t enjoy ourselves. We won’t feel the warmth of family and friends coming together. If we refuse to join in with the Christmas carols, opt out of the gift exchange and sit by ourselves, we won’t enjoy the holidays in the least. It is the same with the Sabbath. We cannot enjoy the Sabbath blessing unless we join in on the celebration with God. We have to take the Sabbath as seriously as we take Christmas. That doesn’t mean that we must spend large amounts of money. We need to choose to enjoy the Sabbath. We need to choose to make it a delight. We can’t allow ourselves to miss out! When we do that, when we make it as pleasant and beautiful as possible, God’s blessings will be ours.

## What You Bind on Earth

The Sabbath gives us a little taste of Heaven on earth. It is our chance to celebrate with the God of the Universe over His creation. The Kingdom of Heaven is the entire universe that God created ... the whole beautiful, perfect expanse of space, planets, stars and marvels. The Sabbath gives us a chance to touch the Kingdom of Heaven.

When Jesus was on earth, He gave us a very important lesson. He said, “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” (Matthew 16:19) There is no punctuation in the original Greek, so the semi-colon may have been a mistake. I suggest that the “key” to the Kingdom is this lesson: what we bind on earth will be bound in heaven.



The Sabbath brings us a blessing. It brings us closer to God's perfect Kingdom. It allows us to celebrate and join in on God's joy in His creation. The Sabbath also does something for our lives in earth. It binds us together in families and in communities.

When a family comes together in prayer and in celebration of the Sabbath, each member of that family is reminded how important they are. They feel loved and cherished. They feel like they are a part of something important—a family that appreciates them. Time spent together as a family gives the children security and a place to belong. It builds relationships. It teaches values. It binds the family closer together as they worship and celebrate, enjoying the best of the family's preparations.

When a community comes together to celebrate the Sabbath, a similar thing happens. The community is united in a common goal, a common enjoyment. Worshiping together and appreciating family together gives strength to everyone involved. Not only is their strength in united worship, but there is strength in reaffirming values and beliefs. "A cord of three strands is not quickly broken." (Eccl. 4:12)

What we choose to bind on earth is very important. Where do our priorities lie? Are we more interested in our career advancement, accumulation of wealth and status symbols and keeping up appearances? What is most important to us? What gets our time and energy? What we choose to bind on earth is what will be bound in Heaven. But there is a catch. Our careers won't go with us to Heaven. Our money will not make that trip, either. So if we are binding things that will only be burned, what use is that? It is a waste of time! However, if we bind the things that will last into eternity—our families and our relationships—then we have discovered the keys to the Kingdom.

Jesus told a parable about the man going on a journey in Matthew 25:14-30. He gave his servants certain amounts of money, or talents, and asked them to care for them. While we know that money will not follow us to Heaven, relationships and people will! So what if we replace the talents with relationships in that parable?

The Master gave His servants people. To some He gave many relationships, to others He gave few. And when He returned, as He promised He would, what did they do with the relationships He had given them? Those who nurtured their relationships and made them grow were praised. "Come and share your Master's happiness!" (Matt. 25:23) Isn't that what the Sabbath is all about? Sharing in our Master's happiness?

The people in our lives are the most important responsibility God has given us. Relationships are the most complicated treasures that we have been given to care for. Our families, the people we love and protect, are our first responsibility. Sabbath gives us the opportunity to bind our relationships close so that our homes are a little taste of Heaven on earth.

When Jesus comes and we go to Heaven to live for eternity, our families, we pray, will

come with us. And what we bound on earth will be finally bound in Heaven. We will be together with the people we love, for eternity. It all began when God paused and breathed a sigh of happiness over all He had made.

## Handouts in this Package

1. Challah Bread Recipe
2. Sabbath Blessings from the Bible
3. Traditional Jewish Sabbath Blessings
4. Adventist Church Standards on Sabbath Keeping



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Series:  
Walking with  
Jesus

Action Plan  
& Presenter  
Notes

**Spiritual  
Disciplines:**  
Sabbath  
Keeping

## Additional Resources

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iFollow  
Discipleship  
Series:  
Walking with  
Jesus

Action Plan  
& Presenter  
Notes

**Spiritual  
Disciplines:**  
Sabbath  
Keeping

12

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Action Plan  
& Presenter  
Notes

**Spiritual  
Disciplines:**  
Sabbath  
Keeping



## Discussion Questions

1. Is Sabbath ever boring and dull? For what reasons might we find Sabbath a burden?
2. How can the Sabbath **be** a delight, and not just be **called** a delight?
3. Share some Sabbath traditions your family has enjoyed. What new kinds of traditions might be meaningful to you and your family?
4. Is it possible to be reverent and joyful at the same time? How close are we to finding the right balance?
5. What does a Sabbath rest mean to you?
6. What can the Sabbath bind in your life?

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Walking with  
Jesus

Discussion  
Questions

**Spiritual  
Disciplines:**  
Sabbath  
Keeping

## Group Activity

**Purpose:** Compose some prayer of your own to celebrate the Sabbath.

**Preparation:** If this activity can be done outdoors, it would be a benefit. If not, try to be in a space decorated invitingly, perhaps including plants, even a fish tank or birds. You will need tables or desks. On each table, put creative materials such as decorative stationery (along with plain scratch paper to begin on), crayons, markers, glitter, glue, etc. Musical instruments would be helpful, too.

**Assignment:** There is no need to divide into particular groups, but have participants go to a table if they are not already at one. Tell them they may work together or alone, but each person will compose a special Sabbath prayer, copy it on nice paper when they are ready, and decorate them in whatever way pleases them. Some ideas might include (1) Incorporate a favorite Psalm; (2) Try to describe what the Sabbath means to you; (3) Attempt to join with God in His celebration of creation; (4) Include some favorite Bible passages or stories; (5) Think of all the things you can thank God for; (6) It could also be a song or poem.

**Debrief:** Those who wish may share their prayers. Share feelings and reactions to this activity. Do they feel more personally connected to the Sabbath? Do they find you look forward to their own personal contribution to the Sabbath celebration? At the next meeting or another time, some may also share what the reaction was when they and their family shared this prayer at the beginning of the Sabbath.

**Time:** Allow as much time as you can, perhaps even a whole 30 minutes, but a minimum of 15 minutes, for writing the prayers and decorating them. Allow another 15 or more for sharing.

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Jesus

Group  
Activities

Spiritual  
Disciplines:  
Sabbath  
Keeping

15

# Handout 1

## Challah Bread

### Traditional Jewish Sabbath Bread

#### Ingredients

Wet:

2 eggs

½ cup oil

½ cup warm water

Yeast mix:

1 T. granulated sugar

1 cup water

1 package of dry yeast

Dry:

3-4 cups of white flour

½ cup of granulated sugar

2 tsp. salt

Topping:

1 egg yolk

2 T. water

2 T. sesame seeds

#### Directions

In a bowl, beat all wet ingredients (eggs, water and oil) until well mixed.

In a cup, combine the tablespoon of sugar, yeast and warm water together. Let stand for ten minutes to allow the yeast to proof. You will know that the yeast is good when it begins to foam. When the mixture has doubled its size, it is ready.

In a separate bowl, combine the salt, then the sugar, then three cups of flour. Add the wet ingredients (egg, water and oil mixture) to the dry and mix together well. After it is well mixed, add the proofed yeast mixture. The dough will be very wet. Add the remaining flour, and a little extra, if need be, to the bowl and knead with your hands. The dough should be soft. Add extra oil onto the top of the dough as you work it.

Knead for ten minutes.

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Jesus

HANDOUT

**Spiritual  
Disciplines:**  
Sabbath  
Keeping

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.

Cover the dough with a cloth and let rise on the top of the stove until it doubles in size. Then knead the dough down again, and let rise once more. When it has risen to double the size the second time, knead the dough and separate into six equal pieces and roll them into ropes. Take three ropes and braid them into one loaf. Braid the remaining three ropes into a second loaf on two separate cookie sheets. Cover both loaves and allow them to rise until doubled in size.

Mix the egg yolk together with the two tablespoons of water. Brush onto the top of both loaves, and then sprinkle with sesame seeds.

Bake at 350 degrees Fahrenheit for 30-35 minutes. Remove and let cool.

Serve bread cool.

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**Spiritual  
Disciplines:**  
Sabbath  
Keeping

## Handout 2

### Sabbath Blessings from the Bible

“If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight and the Lord’s holy day honorable, and if you honor it by not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words, then you will find your joy in the Lord, and I will cause you to ride on the heights of the land and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob. The mouth of the Lord has spoken.” (Isaiah 58:13-14)

“Let no foreigner who has bound himself to the Lord say, ‘The Lord will surely exclude me from his people.’ And let not any eunuch complain, ‘I am only a dry tree.’ For this is what the Lord says: ‘To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose what pleases me and hold fast to my covenant—to them I will give within my temple and its walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that will not be cut off. And foreigners who bind themselves to the Lord to serve him, to love the name of the Lord, and to worship him, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant—these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.’” (Isaiah 56:3-7)

“Observe my Sabbaths and have reverence for my sanctuary. I am the Lord. If you follow my decrees and are careful to obey my commands, I will send you rain in its season, and the ground will yield its crops and the trees of the field their fruit. Your threshing will continue until grape harvest and the grape harvest will continue until planting, and you will eat all the food you want and live in safety in your land.

“I will grant peace in the land, and you will lie down and no one will make you afraid. I will remove savage beasts from the land, and the sword will not pass through your country. You will pursue your enemies, and they will fall by the sword before you. Five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand, and your enemies will fall by the sword before you.

“I will look on you with favor and make you fruitful and increase your numbers, and I will keep my covenant with you. You will still be eating last year’s harvest when you will have to move it out to make room for the new. I will put my dwelling place among you, and I will not abhor you. I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people. I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt so that you would no longer be slaves to the Egyptians; I broke the bars of your yoke and enabled you to walk with heads held high.” (Lev. 26:2-13)

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Walking with  
Jesus

HANDOUT

**Spiritual  
Disciplines:**  
Sabbath  
Keeping

## Handout 3

### Traditional Sabbath Blessings

These are taken from the Authorized Jewish Prayer Book and do not in any way conflict with the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

### Shabbat Eve Zemirot

Master of all worlds, our God, adored, King of kings, over all Lord: your wondrous deeds to applaud, we sing to You with one accord.

God of all worlds, our God, adored; King of kings, over all the Lord.

Early and late my praise shall ring, to You, Holy Author of everything: Beasts of the field, birds that take wing. Angels and mortals to You shall sing.

God of all worlds, our God, adored; King of kings, over all the Lord.

Come back to Your temple, Your sacred shrine, that there in joy our souls may entwine. In song our voices to combine, when Jerusalem's beauty again will shine.

God of all worlds, our God, adored; King of kings, over all the Lord.

### From Morning Service for Shabbat

To You alone we give thanks;  
If our mouths were as full of song as the sea,  
And our tongue with jubilation as its myriad waves,  
If our lips were full of praise like the spacious heavens,  
And our eyes shone like the sun and moon,  
If our hands were outstretched like eagles of the sky,  
And our feet as swift as hinds—  
Still we could not thank you enough,  
Lord our God and God of our ancestors,  
Or bless your name for even one of the thousand thousands  
And myriad myriads of favors you did for our ancestors and for us.

### From the Service to Conclude Shabbat

**Psalm 67:** May God be gracious to us and bless us. May He make His face shine upon us, Selah, that Your ways be known on earth, Your salvation among all nations. May peoples praise You, God, may all the peoples praise You. May the nations rejoice and sing for joy, for You judge the peoples justly, and guide the nations of the earth, Selah. May peoples praise You, God, may all the peoples praise You. The earth has yielded its produce; God, our God, will bless us. May God bless us, and all the ends of the earth fear Him.

## Handout 4

### Sabbathkeeping

The sacred institution of the Sabbath is a token of God's love to humanity. It is a memorial of God's power in the original creation and also a sign of His power to re-create and sanctify the life (Eze. 20:12), and its observance is an evidence of our loyalty to Him. The proper observance of the Sabbath is an evidence of our fidelity to our Creator and of fellowship with our Redeemer. In a special sense the observance of the Sabbath is a test of obedience. Unless we can pass that test as individuals, how can we adequately present the Sabbath message to the world?

The Sabbath holds a very special place in the lives of Seventh-day Adventists. The seventh day of the week, from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday (Lev. 23:32), is a gift from God, a sign of His grace in time. It is a privilege, a special appointment with the One who loves us and whom we love, a sacred time set aside by God's eternal law, a day of delight for worshiping God and sharing with others (Isa. 58:13). The believer welcomes the Sabbath with joy and gratitude. "God's love has set a limit to the demands of toil. Over the Sabbath He places His merciful hand. In His own day He preserves for the family opportunity for communion with Him, with nature, and with one another."—*Education*, p. 251.

The Sabbath hours belong to God, and are to be used for Him alone. Our own pleasure, our own words, our own business, our own thoughts, should find no place in the observance of the Lord's day (Isa. 58:13). Let us gather round the family circle at sunset and welcome the holy Sabbath with prayer and song, and let us close the day with prayer and expressions of gratitude for His wondrous love. The Sabbath is a special day for worship in the home and in the church, a day of joy to ourselves and our children, a day in which to learn more of God through the Bible and the great lesson book of nature. It is a time to visit the sick and to work for the salvation of souls. The ordinary affairs of the six working days should be laid aside. No unnecessary work should be performed. Secular reading or secular broadcasts should not occupy our time on God's holy day.

"The Sabbath is not intended to be a period of useless inactivity. The law forbids secular labor on the rest day of the Lord; the toil that gains a livelihood must cease; no labor for worldly pleasure or profit is lawful upon that day; but as God ceased His labor of creating, and rested upon the Sabbath and blessed it, so man is to leave the occupations of his daily life, and devote those sacred hours to healthful rest, to worship, and to holy deeds."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 207.

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Series:  
Walking with  
Jesus

HANDOUT

**Spiritual  
Disciplines:**  
Sabbath  
Keeping



A rightly directed program of activities in harmony with the spirit of true Sabbath-keeping will make this blessed day the happiest and best of all the week, for ourselves and for our children—a veritable foretaste of our heavenly rest.

*Statement from Chapter 13 of the **Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual**, “Standards of Christian Living,” the official description of the minimum spiritual disciplines of the denomination.*

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Sabbath  
Keeping