

## ENTERING INTO GOD'S REST

LUKE 6:1-11

Vintage Jesus

Dr. Roger Barrier

S-1425

The last half of this century has seen a non-stop flow of innovations that allow us to do more in less time than ever before. Unfortunately, we have not used the extra time to rest. We use it to cram more and more into shorter and shorter time periods.

- SLIDE #1: Think how we've compressed food preparation to seconds.
  - We can have oven rising pizza in 21 min.
  - Microwave lasagna from the freezer to the table in 18 min.
  - We can have a cup of soup in 30 seconds.
  - We can even start our morning by simply unwrapping a breakfast bar.
- SLIDE #2: Think how we've compressed travel.
  - In the last century a business traveler might spend 3 months travelling on a horse or train across the country.
  - In the 1950's we could travel across the entire country in a Chevy in 5 days
  - And now, we fly coast to coast in 5 hours

Where has it gotten us? Glenn's (Story) of Paris flight. On airplane with exhausted man. Flying from Paris back to Phoenix. "I bet you had a wonderful time in Paris. What did you see?"

"Nothing. I left Phoenix yesterday. Flew to Paris. Meeting for three hours in the airport and got on the plane to fly home. I never saw a thing!"

We continue to compress more and more into life; but, I don't believe we are getting more or better out of it!

Funny thing about the natural laws of compression and expansion. Compress something like a gas or a liquid and it becomes very hot. Decompressing something has the opposite effect. Decompress a gas and you cause it to cool.

- SLIDE #3: Have you ever noticed on a hot day that when you turn your gas grill on high, the propane tank gets cold? It's because the tank is being decompressed, and when they fill the tank... it gets hot.

How an air conditioner works in the car: compressor and condenser. Life works the same way: the more you compress into life the more heat it produces in our lives, and that heat comes in the form of stress and anxiety. We have a country of stressed out people—filled with anxiety.

- SLIDE #4: We live our lives online. cell phones, federal express, e-mail, auto re-dial, lap top computers, and cordless phones.
- SLIDE #6: “If you have more than three ways people can get in touch with you, you are a really sick person.”
- SLIDE #5: If you really want to do someone a real favor, buy him or her a phoneless cord! Think about it.
- SLIDE #7: No one really enjoys the pace. Satellite pagers went out this week. Newspaper article: “Don’t Bug Me!” People called it a mini-vacation.
- SLIDE #8: Jesus did not live like this. And we don’t have to, either. Walked for weeks and phone never rang. He got along just fine. He got everything done he needed to do.

Yeah, but that is Jesus. Does God have an answer for us? You bet He does. The answer can be summed up in two words:

- SLIDE #9: “The Sabbath.”

There is a principle in Luke 6 as we study the life of Christ that can be live changing.

- SLIDE #10: READ Luke 6:1-2: One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grain fields, and his disciples began to pick some heads of grain, rub them in their hands and eat the kernels. Some of the Pharisees asked, “Why are your disciples doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath to do?”

The Sabbath was one of the Ten Commandments: Read Exodus 20:4-7. “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.” How do you make a day holy? By making it unpleasant, restrictive, and boring--or joyous? By making it as much as possible like Hell? Or as much as possible like Heaven?

Jesus hated what the doctors of religion had done to the Sabbath. They made it a miserably unpleasant day.

The law said not to work on the Sabbath. So they wrote volumes defining work. If a person was bitten by a flea, he had to permit the flea to keep on biting. If he tried to catch the flea, he would be guilty of the sin of hunting on the Sabbath. Couldn't light nor quench a flame on the Sabbath. Recently a group of orthodox Jews stoned a fire engine for putting out a fire in Jerusalem on the Sabbath. Couldn't cook on the Sabbath.

Couldn't carry a burden. Anything that weighed more than two dried figs was a burden.

Couldn't spit on the Sabbath. If spittle hit dirt and made a little row, that was plowing.

Couldn't heal on the Sabbath. That was work. Could put a bandage on to keep it from getting worse, but not medicated bandage because that was healing.

Jesus hated what the Pharisees did to the Sabbath. I believe He hates just as much what we have done to the Sabbath. Our society has ruined the Sabbath ever so much as the Pharisees—only in a different way.

The Pharisees made the day of rest so restrictive that no one could enjoy it.

•SLIDE #38: We have made it so ordinary that it is just as busy, stressed filled and exhausting as every other day of the week.

By the way, the word, "Sabbath," means "seventh." The Sabbath ran from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday.

It was not unlawful to pluck the grain. It was all right for the poor to take some food to eat. He was not stealing. He was just poor.

•SLIDE #11: READ Luke 6:3-5: Jesus answered them, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? He entered the house of God, and taking the consecrated bread, he ate what is lawful only for the priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions." Then Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

David was the anointed and therefore it was all right to transcend the rules and eat holy bread when he was hungry.

Jesus claimed that He is also the Lord's anointed so He transcended the Sabbath rules to meet His personal needs. In fact, He is Lord over the Sabbath.

Then He said something that Luke doesn't record, but Mark does. Jesus said,

- SLIDE #12: MARK 2:27 “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.”
- SLIDE #13: READ Luke 6:6-7: On another Sabbath he went into the synagogue and was teaching, and a man was there whose right hand was shriveled. The Pharisees and the teachers of the Law were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal on the Sabbath.
- SLIDE #14: READ Luke 6:8: “But Jesus knew what they were thinking and said to the man with the shriveled hand, ‘Get up and stand in front of everyone.’ So he got up and stood there.
- SLIDE #15: READ Luke 6:9: Then Jesus said to them, “I ask you, which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save a life or destroy it?”
- SLIDE #16: READ Luke 6:10-11: He looked around at them all and then said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” He did so, and his hand was completely restored. But they were furious and began to discuss with one another what they might do to Jesus.
- BUILD SLIDE #18A: Fundamentally Christ saw the Sabbath (and by extension, all of life) as being a day of restoration and connectedness with God.
- BUILD SLIDE #18B: The Pharisees viewed the Sabbath as a day to prove ones spiritual prowess by adhering to the very difficult riggers of the Sabbath laws.
- BUILD SLIDE #18C: Jesus’ view was based on grace. God’s grace is meant to restore people back to God.
- BUILD SLIDE #18D: The Pharisees’ idea was based on merit. Our connection with God comes from what we do. “I must perform spiritually so that I may earn God’s affection.
- SLIDE #19: MARK 2:27 “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.”

This pronouncement has profound implications for us and for our society.

- BUILD SLIDE #20A: Do we still observe the Old Testament Sabbath?
  - BUILD SLIDE #20B: NO: The formal specifics of the Jewish laws are not binding. Jesus instituted a new covenant. We are no longer under the Mosaic Law. The only commandment of the ten not repeated in the New Testament is “Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy...”
- Paul criticizes those who say we have to worship on any particular day. When did we begin worshipping on Sunday? At resurrection on Easter Sunday.
- BUILD SLIDE #20C: YES: There is an eternal principle here that goes right back to

the creation. God created and worked for six days and then rested on the seventh. If resting one day out of seven is good enough for God it ought to be good enough for us!

SO, LET ME MAKE SOME PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS.

•SLIDE #21: 1. TAKE A FULL TWENTY-FOUR HOURS OFF EVERY SEVEN DAYS.

The original purpose of the Sabbath was twofold. Collect all the TO verses and find two themes describing what the Sabbath is for. The Sabbath was for REST and for WORSHIP. The idea of rest is emphasized more than worship.

•SLIDE #23: Exodus 23:12.

The idea is refreshment, recharge your batteries, rest for you, your animals, and your servants.

•SLIDE #24: Sometimes we think we can be like the Energizer Bunny—and just keep going and going and going. But you do realize that the bunny is a fraud. They have to keep putting new batteries in.

•SLIDE #22: We think we can just take 20 min every day at Starbucks and be fine – not.

•SLIDE #25: God says we need to stop every six days for 24 solid hours.

Illustration: Masters students at MIT sleep deprived for 48 hours have brain scans of schizophrenics.

Steve tells us that after 50 hours of work our efficiency decreases dramatically. Steve tells us not to take off at noon on one day and go back to work at noon on the next. Need full day where no work occurs.

For most of us this means five days at our job, one day working at home to get all the chores done, and one day with no work whatsoever.

•SLIDE #26: 2. THE SABBATH IS NOT A CATCH-UP DAY FOR WHAT'S UNDONE, IT'S A REST-UP DAY FOR EVERYTHING TO COME.

Sabbath begins with the nights sleep and rest. We rest in order to work. We must

rid ourselves of the idea that we work hard and thus earn the right to rest.

Bishop Gerald Kennedy of California's Methodist church told of two groups crossing plains during migrations to California during gold rush days.

One group led by a Christian who stopped every Lord's day for worship and rest.

The other party was led by a non Christian who was so motivated with gold fever that he refused to let them stop and rest (first come first served in gold fields).

Amazing thing is that the wagon train that rested and worshipped every seventh day arrived first in the gold fields.

Today's society is arranged for most of us so that work is never finished.

Today many have jobs that are never done.

Jesus on the Cross: "It is finished."

Jesus worked hard and then called it quits for the day. Lepers still needed healing; but, He had done all He was going to do, and it was time to rest. So He did.

Rest is a duty. I must stop and Rest.

Most of us spend our time off running errands, getting license plates, car inspected.

•SLIDE #27: 3. THE SABBATH OUGHT TO BE THE MOST ENJOYABLE DAY OF OUR WEEK.

In first century Sunday worship was a time of great joy!

Romans suspected that Christians were guilty of orgies on Sunday - on ground that they enjoyed worship so much.

Youth spaghetti party fed hundreds several Sundays ago.

Family visited Casas and went to the luncheon. Next Sunday one of their children overheard the parents discussing where to go to church the next Sunday: "I want to go to the spaghetti church!" And so they did."

Do what restores. For some it is mow the grass.

Go on a hike. Couldn't do that with Pharisees. On Sabbath only walk ½ mile. Could not start a fire. No smores. No cook out.

- SLIDE #28: 4. THERE IS A DIVINE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EXPERIENCING GOD AND REST.

Oliver Wendel Holmes: “I have in my heart a small, shy plant called reverence; I cultivate that on Sundays.

Include worship--don't secularize it totally.

- SLIDE #29: Compare the godly line of Seth in Genesis 5 with the ungodly line of Cain in Genesis 4.

Busy Cain and Resting Seth.

- SLIDE #30: Isaiah 30:15: This is what the Sovereign Lord, the Holy One of Israel says,

“In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it.”

Rest must precede worship. Must leave activities to create enough space in the mind in order to be able to worship.

Illustration: First Easter service at Casas: Dogs ate parakeet (feathers on ground, other parakeet shaking on the curtain); Julie dropped dozen eggs on kitchen floor; dogs got out in the confusion, chased them all over the neighborhood; then had people over for Sunday lunch

Did I worship that morning? No. Have no idea what I preached on. Just remember bird, eggs, dog, and lunch.

True worship is very restful! You don't get rest just from stopping activity.

In worship come into contact with the living God and lots of cares, problems, troubles, and anxieties of life disappear.

Take time for Julie to sit at the table and talk and interact.

- SLIDE #31: THE SABBATH PROVIDES A GOSPEL PICTURE OF HOW TO ENTER INTO GOD'S REST.

Salvation is not something we do. It is done. We rest in what was done for us.

- SLIDE #33: Hebrews 4:9-10: “There remains, then, a Sabbath rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from His.”

- SLIDE #32: You can't work your way into Heaven. You rest your way into Heaven—leaning on the back of the cross.

Let me illustrate this.

- SLIDE #34: Frank Sinatra. Great voice. Shady character.

- SLIDE #35: Frank Sinatra in Hell cartoon.

- SLIDE #36: Some here today need to get the message of Christianity straight and then give your life to Christ. Make a clear-cut call to come to Christ.