

Rest in a Busy World

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[0 : 0 0] for those of you that are here visiting this morning we want to welcome you of course but also let you know we're in the middle of a ongoing conversation about the 10 commandments and one of the challenges that i kind of had for myself at some point in preparing for this series was i wanted to communicate to some degree just how revolutionary especially the first four commandments are in the development of what we would think of as western civilization they've become so ingrained in our society and culture that it's difficult for us as we interact with them to understand how radical and maybe even subversive certainly revolutionary the first four commandments were to the people who originally heard them i don't know if you've ever heard the name joy davidman that's the wife of c.s lewis and she wrote a book about the 10 commandments called smoke on the mountain and she is especially keyed in on this notion that what was happening in the 10 commandments especially the first four was extraordinarily new disruptive and revolutionary listen to what she writes everyone knew that the universe was a wild and chaotic thing a jungle of warring powers wind against water sun against moon male against female life against death there was a god of the spring planting and another god of the harvest a spirit who put fish into fishermen's nets and a being who specialized in the care of women in childbirth and at best there was an easy truce among all these things and at worst a battle now along comes a fool from an insignificant tribe of desert wanderers and shouts that all these processes are one process from a single source that the obvious many are the unthinkable one that's monotheism that's the revolution of the notion that all of this all of the processes are one process overseen by one god whom we are called in the first four commandments to love and serve only it's a it really is a revolutionary thing and the revolution continues this morning as we talk about rest and sabbath we're in exodus chapter 20 verse 8 through 11 this morning and i again i take great pains to let you know that everything appearing here to us as normal and the only thing we've ever known our whole lives was radical at the time it was spoken verse 8 of exodus 20 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 day 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 again just about everything said there is controversial to this original audience for instance i just i just listed four of them first one the modern week these people didn't even know what a week was not really there you do realize that there's no natural reason

why we divide time by weeks there's a there's a natural reason for dividing time by days and because of the lunar cycle there's relatively a natural reason for dividing time by months but weeks is a bit of a seemingly arbitrary division the romans practiced an eight-day cycle so they had an eight-day week the french revolutionary calendar that lasted oh gosh probably what 50 years ran on a 10-day cycle the han dynasty the communism by the way it's it's always it's always harder than they say it's going to be they're like they took they took seven days and they gave us 10 aesthetics the han dynasty ran on a five-day cycle and most relevantly to our discussion this morning the egyptians the ancient egyptians had a nine-day cycle with one day of rest so just even the notion six days shall you work and on the seventh you shall rest like just that we hear that like yeah it's called the weekend no no not until recently was it called the weekend indeed the historical norm don't want to get too sidetracked here is six days you shall work uh the historical norm in christendom is six days you shall work and on the seventh you shall rest henry ford and other industrialists realized we need a day where people do only one thing spend money to increase demand uh and and and and to drive ultimately women in the workforce and so on and so forth and so added uh saturday as a day of rest which has really just been traditionally in america day of spending a lot of people have jobs motivated mostly for spending on saturday and sunday so

anyway this this idea of a week it's it's kind of a new thing it was certainly radical to the people who listen to this text this idea for them would have come off this way the Egyptians are doing this differently they're doing nine days of work and a tenth day of rest uh so for them there was an automatic upgrade under the lord's guidance under the lord's authority suddenly there's a lot more rest days conceptually i say conceptually because these Hebrew slaves weren't getting any rest days anyway uh but just conceptually they would have been aware of 10 9 9 days work one day rest and now they're hearing six days work one day rest but of course that's the second kind of revolutionary thing in this passage the text says look at verse 10 again but the seventh day is a sabbath to the lord your god and on it you shall not do any work you your son your daughter your male servant your female servant your livestock or the sojourner who is within your gate so the second revolutionary thing here is like equal rights the notion that everyone regardless of gender age citizenship status and so on and so forth would have equal access to the same day of rest this was a brand new idea see what you do in Egypt if you were resting on your 10th day is you would rest as the servants waited on you you yourself would enjoy the social distance between you and the the bottom half and the bottom half would work while you rested so just this notion that everybody gets off that that's new here's here's a third thing that is revolutionary and that's just this idea of of religiously carving out rest um every every six days that's crazy so let's understand where we are we are in a place where

we do not have to work more most of us more than five days a week to not only eat survive but also accrue enough money for retirement so on and so forth like it's a completely different world and and many of you don't actually work that much at work so God bless you uh so so you may be working five days but how many hours in the five days are you actually working think of where we have come from because of the cross of Jesus Christ because of Christendom we have climbed out of the pagan swamps that joy Davidman's talking about and moved into a world in which it is possible for people like us to work five days and actually have quite a comfortable life that's new historically we have a problem of hyperabundance of calories and we have a problem of calorically dense foods historically it's exactly the opposite you would have to work 12 hours in a day every day just to put the food you needed on the table so one thing not to miss in this is that God's calling them to take a risk and i thought maybe we'd just park here for just a brief moment as we describe just a particular aspect of how God does things and i would describe it as this let's just think about this ratio six days you shall work and one day you shall rest here's i think this is important just as a general sense of how God does things most of the time God is going to call you to be very practical and to just do the logical thing he's just going to call you to be very pragmatic and to work hard and so on and so forth most of the time God's going to call you to be very boring and practical but then every once in a while he's going to call you to do something that appears to be impractical and if you get the ratio wrong like your life isn't going to flourish some of you think that most of it's supposed to be impractical and then like a couple times you know like practical no like six days you shall work one day you shall rest the the notion here are you getting the vibe it's like for the most part act like everybody else do the reasonable thing do the practical thing but i want you to take some risks for me too the way this kind of computes for me biblically is similar to the tithe there's a ratio there as well be be practical be pragmatic with a significant amount of your funds but also you have to take a slice of this and do the thing that depends on God in a more explicit way than the rest of your behaviors do and this is God's will for us so that we could consistently teach ourselves that we are fundamentally and ultimately dependent on God and of course for us it doesn't feel like a risk at all to take a day off we might have other personality reasons for why we don't want to do that but most of us can afford it it doesn't feel like a risk at all but for these folks there was like an actual like caloric risk you know like like i don't know if i can do this i i think i need to hustle and grind seven days a week just to feed my kids so on and so forth so so this is this is controversial in that respect too God's asking them to risk their means of production to some extent in just trusting that he will provide and again i think it's kind of very similar to the tithe and i think this is just a way that we should think about how we live our lives for the most part be reasonable practical thoughtful logical people and every once in a while in God-ordained ways some of which are explicit some of which are left to you and your discernment put all the chips in and just say i need a miracle today that seems to be the way that God calls people to live our lives and of course you know the Bible is a book of miracles they're not describing all of the mundane normalcies right so so you can't necessarily say well i just i you know i'm gonna be David's like well yeah David probably like had to do his taxes you know and stuff probably not but you get my point so this third radical

thing could just be summarized as life is really hard and i want you to do nothing to take care of yourself for a day which is very exposing and very vulnerable but the fourth reason and i think this is really the the reason that is the the most radical and it sticks throughout the entire scriptures in the most consistent way is what theologians call god's aseity god's aseity it comes from the latin from self it's a compound from self here's here's a way to think about this what kind of god asks you to serve him by doing nothing think about how strange that is what kind of god asks you to serve him by doing nothing what kind of god asks you to worship him commands that you worship him by doing nothing and that it would the answer to that question is the god with aseity what does that mean we were all created uh we all came from somewhere god did not god does not have a beginning or an end he is not dependent on anybody god simply is and that's what theologians mean when they talk about the aseity of god and so what god's doing just to be clear when he asks you when he commands you to rest one day out of the week is he's drawing your attention to this most fundamental attribute that distinguishes him in many ways from everything else and that is he doesn't need you he doesn't need you now i don't have this in my notes but i've i've shared this many times and it's very disturbing for some people to realize that these two things are true god does not need you and god loves you because for some of us all we've really known is transactional love all we've really known even in our romantic relationships perhaps even with our children even in our love for our children there is a performance there's a tie to performance and affection there's there's a tie to contribution men i think we've all felt this there's a tie to your contribution and the respect and love that you receive from even the people that you know really do love you and i would just say this we need to stop trying to make our human relationships uh laden with divine features because the truth is is that like i can't love my wife like god loves my wife i do need her and to some degree my love is tied up in that and her love for me is tied up in that and i'm just so glad that there's this one being the being who made me who needs nothing and he loves me and it does feel uncomfortable when you first begin to realize that god doesn't need you he doesn't need you in any respect and that he loves you that's it's it takes some time to get to to get to know this but god's very keen and i think that this is key to the sabbath because god's revealing himself through these commandments i think he's very keen to help us to remember that he is self-sufficient i think he's very keen to help us to see that he has this aseity i mean the psalm of moses which we've been meditating i've been meditating on for a few months now psalm 90 this is we sang a piece of this before the mountains were brought forth wherever you had formed the earth and the world from everlasting to everlasting you are god i remember we're asking we're answering a question what kind of god asks us to worship him once a week by doing nothing and it's like the god who does everything the god who glories in proving that he doesn't need us act 17 this is the key problem with the hedonistic and pagan religions of athens and paul corrects them he says the god who made the world and everything in it being lord of heaven and earth does not live in temples made by man nor is he served by human hands as though he needed anything since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything in isaiah 66 a passage that we read this morning i don't believe i covered this piece in isaiah 66 verses one through two god says heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool what is the house that you would build for me and what is the place of my rest all these things my hand has made and so all these things came back came to me to come to be declares the lord but this is the one to whom i will look he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word god is not looking for business partners friends he's not looking for votes even he's looking for people who as we sang in the first song nothing in my hand i bring simply to thy cross i cling and so what what is god doing with the sabbath he is he is every time god reveals something about himself there's a there's a responsibility that ensues on our part and so god's saying i am everything i'm i'm all self-sufficient i don't need you what's the responsibility we have in that revelation rest rest you big dummy rest and of course this is very very unlike any of the other gods of that age it's in stark contrast to the pagan deities of that day their idols the people the idols that people worship they believe that they relied on these sacrifices i mean the the gods have got to eat after all and this is something that joy david joy davidman brings up she says belief in one god slew a host of horrors malignant storm demons evil gin of sickness bliders of the harvest unholy tyrants over life and death belief in god destroyed the fetishes the totems the beast-headed bullies of old time it laid the axe to sacred trees watered by the blood of virgins it smashed the child-eating furnaces of moloch and toppled the gym-encrusted statues of the peevish divinities half-heartedly served by greece and rome the old gods fought among themselves loved and hated without reason demanded unspeakable bribes and meaningless flatteries while they were worshiped a moral law

was impossible for what pleased one deity would offend another then came the knowledge of god an almost unimaginable person a single being creator of heaven and earth not to be bribed with golden images or children burned alive loving only righteousness a being who demanded your whole heart what's god doing with the sabbath he's saying i am all sufficient i do not want you to do anything that is your that is your offering to me on on this day do nothing no labor so we're at the point now we're going to talk about the gospel implications of this in a moment we're at the point now where we should just talk about some basic sabbath keeping principles what i would point out to you just logically is go to the ten commandments and find any of the ten

[20 : 27] commandments that have expired or been fulfilled by christ in a way where you don't have to observe them any longer did the death of jesus mean that murder is okay did the death of jesus mean that you don't have to uh that you can worship idols now no of course not so just in just basic kind of literary categories we wouldn't go through the ten commandments and say on the fourth well i don't have to keep this it's like that would be strange that's not what that that would that would just not be handling the text well uh so so we want to know how to keep it because it seems pretty obvious just by the basic structure that we should well the reason why i started where i did was i wanted you to see like well what is god trying to do with the sabbath because if you understand what he's trying to do with the sabbath then not only is there a motivation to keep it but there's also some clarity about like the spirit and the letter you know jesus is really keen to say uh the sabbath is made for man not man for the sabbath right and and and if you want to know kind of where the wiggle room is so to speak look at look at jesus like just study how jesus interacts on the sabbath but the key thing i think we need to take away is it actually is something we need to obey and now that we know what it's for and why it's important maybe we kind of have some clarity on applying these standards wisely in our own lives with with a sense of wisdom uh you want to see the exact opposite of wisdom like go watch those tiktok videos of i don't know the guy's name but he's a conservative jewish guy and he shows all the sabbath keeping loopholes that they have like coffee on a timer so it goes off and you know refrigerators on sabbath mode and all this kind of stuff there's absolutely no wisdom there it's a it's a i would call essentially like you know i kind of uh like uh just this this wooden sense of interpretation no wisdom at all now that you know what it's for you can go out and say i i gotta observe the sabbath i gotta cooperate with god in this call uh how do i do that well let me think through that now some of this is stuff that i'm still working through uh but but i would just give you let's do four things that seem to work out of this text that as good guiding principles for how you and i should observe the sabbath so the first one is the sabbath is a day which means it's a full 24 hours um some of you come in occasionally on sunday morning look like you were road hard put away wet because you saturday'd max you maximize saturday so here's what i would counsel you do uh come home get home at a decent hour on saturday and start your sabbath on saturday night that's very simple traditional so forth get yourself in a position to begin leaning in on god as he's called us to in this sabbath observance number two the sabbath is for everybody we see that in the text not just believers the sabbath is for everybody even the sojourner among you you need to think about whether or not your rest on sunday is built on the backs of anyone else not having rest i will leave that to you i'm i'm sorting through this no judgment here friends like let's just let's just think well and if we wind up in like slightly different places in practice i don't care who cares like that's that's fine uh but let's just take god's word seriously and try to be responsible with it so number one sabbath is a full day you need 24 hours and there's a reason why you need 24 hours like all of us dads

who go on vacation know you know it's got to be at least a week because the first three days i'm still going to be thinking about work you know you need an unwind time okay so 24 hours number two even believers are called to enjoy the sabbath we don't have to wait until a law is passed to rearrange our behaviors number three the sabbath is a kind of stewardship where you deliberately choose to be impractical it's a lot like tithing in that regard uh one of the things i would argue for is the sabbath is not for you to act like a little god who gets all of the pleasures handed to you once a week the sabbath is not for you to do things that make that fulfill your soul the sabbath is not for not for you to do things that you find fun it's unto the lord it's not unto you so there's another guiding principle i think the best way to think about this is you are and i are terrible at being alone with our own thoughts but what if that's actually important what if that's actually important what if we need to be alone in our own thoughts what if at the very least we just need to slow down um i think that this has also got an implication i just wanted i don't know where this fits exactly but i did observe in the

text just in the hebrew and so forth this is not a prohibition against walking against playing uh you know outside or anything like that this is literally a prohibition that don't do stuff that you need to do in order to maintain your life like so so uh rest from all your labors labors is not just activity it's it's um the work that you need to do on the other hand it's under the lord and so you want to kind of think through am i just distracting myself through a day that's not a sabbath that's just you watching more tv than usual right okay and number four the sabbath is meant to teach you most importantly about god's self-sufficiency so go to church go the sabbath is mostly meant to teach you so go to church on the sabbath and and learn about god that seems like a pretty good one all right so that's a that's a bit about just i i guess one layer which would be the ten commandments are quite revolutionary the sabbath itself is quite revolutionary and a few thoughts about kind of why and then how we should respond to what we've learned now i want to shift in another direction that i i want to take this in and that's just another way of looking at the ten commandments in general is that the ten commandments reveal the nature of conversion which is kind of an interesting thing it's like what happens when a person is converted what happens when a person is saved what's the difference between believing in god and being converted when jesus says in john 3 you must be born again what's he talking about well in jeremiah 31 and this actually appears in multiple places god starts promising that he is going to write his law on people's hearts and that becomes synonymous with conversion that's what he's talking about there and when he starts talking about this what we need to understand is is that when we look at the ten commandments we can say god picture this moses is standing on a mountain he's got the tablets god engraves them on on the stones right what conversion is is each one of you who has been saved stood before god almighty smoke and lightning and everything and he wrote his law on your heart so now when we read the law we actually can kind of go back and say well this is what happened to me when i was saved i think that's important and we're going to talk about why that's important for rest in particular but take the first commandment you know you shall have no other gods before me you know god has done something if you're saved god's done something on your heart where you actually don't want to worship idols you actually do love god and and that's something that's coming not just because you've been told to do it but because there's something going on in your heart the second commandment forbids idols and forbids making images of god and this was a huge problem for the for the unregenerate in the old testament but god when he saves us he does this miraculous thing and and and peter talks about it in first peter he says though you have not seen him you love him suddenly the invisibility of god becomes less of an issue and this is all just because god saved you he changed your heart regarding the third we talked about that in our prayer this crazy thing happens where suddenly you not only uh don't want to take the name the name of the lord in vain but you begin to realize that you've been given the name father you can you get to call on the god of the universe as father so there's these contours that are happening in your conversion where the law has been written on your hearts and you can figure out like what did god do to me when he saved me well go through the ten commandments and see these little artifacts like he's done these things in you he's made you love him he he's made you love him even though you can't see him he's made you revere his name these things that needed to be commanded are now they need still need to be taught but they've they've been a part of your conversion and the reason i started thinking about this is because of sabbath god god's commanding these people rest rest rest rest rest and the bible says that one of the fundamental things that happens when we're saved is that we have a peace that passes all understanding as jesus says in matthew 11 come unto me all who are weary and i will give you rest you know uh when i was a kid we would we would get really proficient with our bikes we'd ride our bikes a lot like many hours in the day and at some point when you're a gangly boy you know riding in your cutoff jeans shorts and your no no shirt you know around the the mean streets of jeff city missouri you learn how to ride without your hands on the on the handlebars and uh you know so you the move there is to get so good that you can look absolutely nonchalant as you're riding you guys have seen little boys do this riding down the road with your hands off the bars and you're just like you're like flexing relaxation you're like i'm just so chill right now i'm just just riding my bike i don't even need my hands i'm just just riding my bike now reality is you're using a ton of muscles that uh your body's actually really really active in making sure that that bike uh manages not to crash you just look relaxed another example would be a duck i think it was michael cain who said like the key to his whole like charisma and vibe is is to be a duck calm above the water and paddling like heck below the water you know and i i meet a lot of people who do way more recreation than i do who are way more concerned about self-care and what i'm

