

Sabbath

Prayer Morning, 7 February 2011
Silvia Purdie, with help from Lynne Baab, 'Sabbath Keeping'

Big ideas about Sabbath ...

Sabbath is every week

It is a routine, a commandment, a ritual, a discipline.

"Remember the sabbath day and keep it holy. Six days you shall labour and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work ... therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it." Exodus 20: 8-11

How do we feel about structure and routines in your life?

What would you like to change about the pattern of your life this year?

How do you understand the 4th Commandment's relevance for 2011?

Sabbath is modelled by God

As God rested on the seventh day of creation, so we are to rest.

As Jesus healed on the Sabbath, so we are to respect our own need for healing.

"Jesus taught through his actions that the Sabbath is a day of liberation, a day when people return to the joy of the world as God created it." (Baab, p.46)

Rest and restoration are part of God's own character and being. Sabbath is an invitation to share more fully in who God is and how God operates.

Keeping Sabbath 'holy' is about a regular focus on God.

Sabbath is about freedom from oppression

BECAUSE you were once slaves in Egypt ... Deuteronomy 5:12-15

The choice to stop working confronts the points of addiction and control in our lives. What exerts bondage over us, pushes us to keep on going?

"Sabbath teaches us grace because it connects us experientially to the basic truth that nothing we do will earn God's love." (Baab, p.17)

BUT not another slavery to law.

Sabbath is about rest

Physical and mental rest. Gratitude. Peace. Prayer. Fun. Guilt-free. No lists. Focus.

What stops you relaxing?

How do you respond to the voice that says that you don't deserve to rest?

How do you calm the anxieties and stresses that rise up and refuse to allow us to relax?

Sabbath is about rediscovering who you are

In refusing to 'work' for part of each week we reconnect again to who we are apart from our roles and tasks.

"On that day I am beloved, simply beloved... Being a child of God, and only a child of God" (Baab, p. 16)

Sabbath is time for family and friends, as well as us and God

Leviticus 23:3

How do you nurture relationships and community without these becoming burdens and yet more tasks to accomplish?

What would you like to plan to do in 'sabbath time' each week? When and how?

What might you decide to NOT do in your sabbath time?