

## Good News #5 - What Will Sabbath Rest Be Like in Heaven

- All righty. Well, it's Memorial Day weekend for those that are joining us from around the world online, it's a holiday here in the United States of America. That started primarily right after the civil war. But it's actually a holiday that goes all the way back to the ancient Greek and Roman empires, where after a battle, they would take a time to remember, to commemorate those who had made the ultimate sacrifice so that others could enjoy their freedoms. And in the United States of America, what we talk about is when someone dies in particular, but when a soldier dies in battle, what we say is that they've been laid to what? They've been laid to rest, laid to rest. Another way to say it is, they've been laid to Sabbath. And what that means is that they have labored and worked very hard and now they have earned an eternal rest. And that's exactly what I wanna talk about today and next week, as we finished the good news series on heaven, what does it look like to rest? And what does it look like to work? What does it look like to labor in this life and then enter into the eternal rest? And I was thinking about it. These really are the two primary categories that we spend most of our life. Most of our life is spent working and sleeping, working and sleeping. And it used to be that there was a bit of a balance. Most people worked about eight hours a day and they slept, 100 years ago, just hear me in this, nine hours a day. how many of you don't sleep nine hours a day? I sleep nine hours a day cause I'm pushing 50. But for what happens for many of us is, it used to be eight hours of work, nine hours of sleep. Now what it is, it's seven hours of sleep and it's nine or 10 hours of work. And the more we get out of balance with the rhythm that God intended for us, the less healthy we become. And so what I wanna look at is creation. How God made us and made the world for these rhythms of rest and work and how we are to live within those rhythms, not breaking ourselves, and preparing ourselves instead for heaven, the kingdom of God, the resurrection of the dead, and ultimately what will it look like, to both rest and work in the kingdom of God? So if you've got a Bible, we'll be in Hebrews 4, that's where we're gonna spend most of our time today. And we'll start in Hebrews 4:1-3 where we learn that going to heaven is for us, a bit like it was leaving Egypt for God's people in the Old Testament. So Hebrews 4 says, "Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest." Or Sabbath, same concept, same language. "Still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. For good news," There's the theme and title of our entire series. "Came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them because they were not united by faith with those who listened. For we who have believed enter that rest as he said, 'As I swore in my wrath. They shall not enter my rest.' Although his works were finished from the foundation of the world." Maybe a little bit confusing for us. Let me clarify it for you. He's referencing back to the old Testament. Hebrews is written largely to Jewish believers, Hebrew people, their ancestry knew their history. Just like if you grow up in a country, you know the history of your nation and people, they grew up knowing the old Testament. And what he's referring to here is an event in the old Testament called the Exodus. And so what happened there was at the end of Genesis, the first book of the Bible, God's people were a family of 60some people and a famine hit and crisis hit. And they relocated to another nation called Egypt. This was under the leadership of a man named Joseph. And as a result, they were blessed and they had a privileged status and they flourished. Wait a few hundred years and they

have turned into a nation, wait 400 plus years, they're now a nation of millions. So you go from a family to a nation. This is why we believe legacy, and children, and grandchildren are so important. You go from a family to a nation, that's what happens. What political leadership in that day changed some 400 years after they had been in Egypt, and it decided that it would take away basically their human rights, that it would enslave them, that the government would take away their freedoms. And as a result, God's people spent the latter years in Egypt as slaves. What this means for day-off and rest, let me ask you, how many days off do people give their slaves? Zero. Because slaves are considered property, they have no legal rights. So now God's people have been away from home for 400 years. They have been living far away from home and they're struggling and suffering as slaves, no day off. God does something supernatural to deliver them. He really crushes Egypt. He takes down their leader, named the Pharaoh. He sends a succession of plagues. God's people are no longer slaves. They're set free. He parts the Red Sea. He kills the army in their wake and he liberates them. So that two things can happen. Number one, they can go home, and number two, they can finally rest and get a day off. For those of you that know this story, how long did it take them to get home and to enjoy that rest? 40 years. And in the middle, they're walking around the desert. We live in the desert. Sometimes we can look at the people of God in the old Testament and say, "It's just really sad that they grumbled for 40 years." How many of you, if your new lifestyle was camping with children in Arizona for 40 years? At some point would arrive at grumbling. Amen? How many of you, if there's four cars in the line at Starbucks, you hit the horn. 'Cause you're not that patient, right? For us, what happens is we can look at them and say, "It's just really sad that they grumbled." Think of their lifestyle. Everyday you take your family, you take your kids. Many of you are homeschooling now. Imagine homeschooling while homeless and camping, walking. I'm just telling you, you'd be grumbling. Amen. We'd all be grumbling. And so they're grumbling against God. They're frustrated with God because they've heard that there's this amazing home for them, and they'll be able to rest there, but they've not gotten to that home, and then they've not been able to rest. What the author of Hebrews is doing is he's saying that our life is just like that. That God has done something supernatural to deliver us. He sent his son, Jesus. He conquered Satan, sin, and death, the Pharaoh, and the Egypt that was against us. He has delivered us supernaturally as His people. And now we are destined toward home and a rest that never ends. The point is simply this, we're not there yet. How many of you have heard of heaven and you're like, "When do we get to go? Can we please go fast? I heard there's no mask. There's no taxes and governors. Can we please go as soon as possible." That ultimately we want to get to the place that God tells us about, but we're not there yet. And it seems like the journey there is very frustrating. Well, their 40 years in the wilderness is like our decades on planet earth. We're not yet home. We've heard of home. We're looking forward to home. We're not yet able to fully enter into that perfect eternal rest, but we know that it is waiting for us. And what he's talking about here is a couple of things that make this ancient story very current for us. And that is that number one, we all start off as slaves. Some of you are a slave to drugs, alcohol, to achievement. Some of you are a slave to your job. How do you know that you're a slave to your job? Well, one way you know you're a slave to your job, is you never get a day off. Slaves never got a day off. And some people, they enslave themselves by never taking a day off. In addition, God has delivered you, but you need to live within that deliverance just as God

delivered them. But they needed to walk forward in faith. And what He says is, the reason that they have not entered into His rest is that he's provided an opportunity, but they have not availed themselves to it through faith. Let me say this. One of the ways that you and I live by faith is by taking a day off. If you don't think that anything can get done, unless you're doing it, you lack faith in God. If you think that God has given you more to do than you can do in the time that he's given you to do it, you lack faith in God. Sometimes faith in God is tested with the day off. It's saying, "Even if I'm not working, God still is. Even if I'm not in control, God still is. I have done the things that God has given me to do and the time that he's given me to do them, the rest I will leave for God to do, or I will get to them when I have time on the other side of the rest that God has given me. One of the great tests of whether or not we actually have faith in God is our ability to Sabbath, to rest, to replenish, and to recover. A couple of things I wanna say about this is that also this concept of rest and home are absolutely connected together. I would encourage you to make your home environment, a place of rest. And what they were longing for was home and a place of rest. And what the kingdom of God is, it's home and it's a place of rest. If your home is disorganized, if it is frantic, if the phone is always ringing, if the dog is always barking, if the news is always playing, that ultimately, the environment of your home will not be restful. And so you want to have this concept of home and rest be connected together, that's the way the kingdom of God is and that's why the people of God were frustrated. They didn't have a home to go to. And as a result, they didn't have a place to rest. And even people who don't know God get sampling this concept. How many of you after a long, hard day at work, you're like, "I just wanna get home." Some of you have traveled for business back in the old days and we got on things called airplanes. Back in the old days when we would travel and you'd be away for business, you just wanted to get where? Just get home. Let me sit in my chair. Let me just sit out by the pool. Let me just sleep in my bed. Home is to be a place of rest. And when we have a place that is our home and we set up the environment as a place of rest, what we are doing is we're preparing ourselves for the kingdom of God. That God has a home for us and it's a home in which we will be able to rest. That's all that is happening here in Hebrews 4, as he's referencing back to the case study of the Exodus. Now here's the problem he says for them, number one, they want heaven, but they don't want God. That's the problem. God says, "You've not entered into my rest." Because this rest, this Sabbath, it's not just a day externally, it's a heart condition internally. Not only do we need a Sabbath environment where we can rest, not only do we need a Sabbath day in which we can rest, we need to internally have a peace that allows us to rest. How many of you have had a day off, but your soul is troubled? Your mind is racing. Your spirit is anxious. Sabbath is not just a day and it's not just a place. It's an internal condition that God gives by faith. What I'm saying is you can have a great home and a day off and still not get any rest or recovery because the problem is internal, not external. When he talks about faith, that's what he's talking about. An internal piece and a rest that knows that God loves you, that Jesus forgives you, that heaven is awaiting you. And that even if you don't get everything done, that God is a portion for you to do. God is gracious and he will be working even when you're resting, doing the things that you've been unable to get to. And ultimately where he's going with his argument here in Hebrews 4 is that people who don't understand the kingdom of God and the resurrection of the dead, and heaven that is to come, we all try and create heaven on earth. This is why the people were grumbling. They kept trying to establish

their version of heaven on earth and it didn't come to pass. So they were very frustrated and disappointed. You and I from homebuying to vacation homebuying to home improvements. We are constantly including vacations and travel. We're always trying to create heaven on earth. For those of you that go to the grocery store. Next time you're in line, look at the magazine covers near the grocery store checkout line. The cover on the front of every one of those is someone's picture or portrait of heaven on earth. So here's, wedding day, husband and wife, for somebody that's their heaven wedding day. For some people here, they are husband, wife, kids, heaven. For others, it's getting your home organized. 'Cause now you actually have kids and you need this. And all of a sudden organized home is heaven. I live in disorganized hell. I'm gonna go to organized heaven. Car stereo heaven, fishing heaven, hunting heaven, interior design heaven, gardening heaven. Everyone has their little snapshot. If heaven came to earth for me, this is what it would look like, and as a result, we pursue it. And this is what we do on social media as well. Social media is where people lie and try and get you to believe that they've already gone to heaven. Here I am eating the perfect meal. Here's my home, very organized. Here I am with my hair and makeup on, here we are. Dog is obeying. Our house is clean. Our waffles were not burned. We all know it's quarantine your home in your underwear and that's not how it's going. But we pretend like we've already arrived in heaven. And even what we tend to post on social media tends to be our concept of what it would be like if heaven came to earth and we could live in heaven right now. All of that is to say that apart from God, there is no real heaven. That you can have an amazing home. This is why there are people who are miserable in Scottsdale, Arizona. You drove by a sign on the way in that said, "America's most livable city." Let me translate that for you. As close to heaven as you can afford. That's what it means. That people come here and people move here because they're looking for heaven. They're looking for golf heaven, pool heaven, retirement heaven, auto-auction heaven, spring training heaven. The reason everybody's frustrated right now, it all kind of went to not heaven. Amen. I didn't say the naughty word. I gave you an option. So the point is that, is there a way to enjoy this life but to know that this life is preparing us for the eternal life and that the pursuit of heaven ultimately is not fully satisfied until we get to God's eternal state? And so then he continues by telling us that, rest is God's unchanged designed plan. He says this in Hebrews 4:4, "For he has somewhere spoken to the seventh day in this way. 'And God rested on the seventh day from all of his works.'" How many of you think it's funny that the guy who wrote the Bible didn't even look up the reference? You find that funny? How many of you ever read the Bible like it says somewhere in one of the intricacies about, something and you're like, "But I can't find it." Don't feel bad. The guy who wrote the Bible is like, "It's somewhere back there to the left." And he quotes, what book does he quote for those of you who know? Genesis, famous verse. He goes all the way back. Why is it that God designed our lives to have work and rest in a rhythm that is productive and healthy? It's because God wants us to flourish and He wants human society to flourish. He wants us to be healthy, have healthy relationships, families, churches, businesses, and nations. There was a researcher some years ago. I think he came from France. It was Alexis de Tocqueville. And he did sort of a case study on the United States of America. And his question was, "What is the secret to American flourishing and success?" We're the greatest country in the history of the world. And what he determined the cause was is something called the Protestant work ethic. And he said, "Man, for six days, they work. And then on the seventh day, they rest."

And as a result, they have been more productive than any other nation in the history of the world." That was his summation. Well, where did we get that? We got that from God. What he's quoting here is Genesis 1 and 2. And what he's saying is that before God, excuse me, before God gave us work to do, God himself was working. And the Bible says that six days, God worked. And on the seventh day, God rested or Sabbath from his labors. And then God sets in motion a seven-day work week. And here's what you need to know. God made you to live within those creation rhythms. G.K. Chesterton, he had an interesting quote. He said that, "We don't really break the commandments, instead when we break them, we break ourselves." A commandment is something that God has given to protect you. And when you break the commandment, you break yourself. If all you ever do is rest and get lazy, that's not healthy for you. It's not a sin to retire, but this is why some people, as soon as they start retiring, they start dying. Their health deteriorates because they're no longer productive. And just because you retired from your job, doesn't mean you should retire from your life. Still find something to do. For those who break the commandment in the other way, and all they ever do is work, eventually they don't take a break, they just break. This is where rather than laying in a hammock, you're laying in a hospital bed. Because you've extended yourself beyond the ability that God has given you to live within the rhythms of work and rest within the six days of work and the seventh day of rest. So he's going back and he's saying that God's original design plan was work hard, take a day off. You need to know that those are still the principles that God wants to govern your life. And that when we enter into the eternal kingdom of God, Jesus returns, we rise from the dead, heaven and earth come together. This rhythm will continue. We'll still have a seven-day week, six days a week. You'll have some very important things to do. And one day a week, you'll have a day off. We'll talk about the work next week, and the Sabbath this week. A read where he's quoting to you from Genesis 2:2. "On the seventh day, God finished his work that He had done. And He rested on the seventh day from all the work that He had done." This then becomes one of the 10 commandments in Exodus 20. All of this is going back to the book of Exodus. Not only were they slaves that were delivered, they were slaves that hadn't had a day off. God delivered them. And then God spoke to them in Exodus 20, and He gives them the 10 commandments. Some people who were slaves and never had a day off. Some of you are slaves, you've never had a day off. You've never had a day off. And as a result, God needs to teach you what Sabbath rest is because He loves you. God is a father, He's not a slave driver. Every father wants their children to be productive. And when it's time to take a break, wants them to rest, and recover, and replenish. God is a father, not a slave driver. Some of you think of God as a slave driver because you have driven yourself as a slave, but I'm telling you that's not God. And I'm a guy who's, I'm very productive. I struggle with this to be totally honest with you. Here's my favorite three things, results, results, results. Those are my favorite three things. I am a planner, I am a sequencer. I am a driver, I am a builder, I am a doer. So for me, the hard thing is not working, for some of you the hard thing is working. We've each got an area that we're strong and an area that we're weak. And this is where we can learn from one another. Those of you have a great work ethic, some people need to learn that. Some of you who know how to take a nap like Jesus, we need to learn from you. I don't know if you know this, Jesus took a nap. You know what that means? Be like Jesus, take a nap. He knew when it was time to work, and He knew when it was time to rest. This is what the 10 commandments

sets up. I'll read it to you from Exodus 20:8-11. "Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor do all your work. But on the seventh day, it is a Sabbath day to the Lord." That day belongs to God. It doesn't belong to you. It doesn't belong to your employer. It belongs to the Lord. So you ask the Lord, "What do you want me to do with this day that belongs to you?" "On it, you shall not do any work. You, your son, your daughter." Why does he include the family? 'Cause sometimes on the day off, mom or dad likes to sit in a chair and then give all the chores to the kids. It's not just a day off for the leader. It's a day off for everyone. He extends it. He says, "To your male and female servant." To those who are employees or otherwise wouldn't have an opportunity to negotiate their days off. "Or your livestock." Even the animals got a day off. "Or the sojourner." The person who's visiting you. They're not even from your nation. They're not even part of your religion. "For six days, the Lord made heaven in the earth and all that is in them. On the seventh day, He rested. Therefore the Lord blessed the seventh day and made it Holy." Holy means different. So on the Sabbath day, you do things differently than you did during your work days. Six days you work, the seventh day is Holy. That means it's different. It's distinct from the work days. Now, what happens here is God sets in motion a seven-day week. And atheistic nations that don't like the Bible and especially don't like the Jewish people. They have sought to change a seven-day week. They try to come up with an alternative. So during the French revolution, they tried to come up with something other than a seven-day week. Not shockingly, it failed. Turn of the century as well, early 1900s in Russia, atheistic communistic government tried to come up with something other than a seven-day work week. And then in the history of the world, they've tried five days, 10 days, just different days. Every single effort has what? It's failed. Why? Because like gravity, God made the world with certain rhythms. And whether you believe in God or not, you find yourself falling into the rhythms because that's the way God designed the world. That's the way God made you. And so everyone for the most part, follows this seven-day precedent and pattern of a week. Now the question then becomes, what day of the week is the Sabbath? Have you ever had this argument? If not, we'll have it right now. What day was the Jewish day off? Saturday, sundown on Friday night till sundown on Saturday night. It was that 24-hour period. What day are we meeting for church? Sunday. So what's our Sabbath? Sunday. Well, why is it not Saturday? It's because Sunday was the day that Jesus Christ rose from the dead. So in the Bible, the resurrection of Jesus we are told was on the first day of the week. For them, Sunday was a Monday. What that meant for the early church, getting together on Sunday was very hard because for them it was a work day. So it's likely that the early church met before work or after work, if their jobs required that they continue working on what was now their new Sabbath. It's also called the Lord's Day in Revelation. Sunday, it's the day of Jesus' resurrection. Well, what happens then is that there is a debate. Do we meet on Saturday or do we meet on Sunday? Do we go with the old Jewish Sabbath or the new one after Jesus rose from the dead? When it came to the founding of the United States of America, they actually had a big argument. And there are whole groups that are very dedicated to a Saturday Sabbath. There's a whole group called the Seventh Day Adventists. They put it in the name. That's how committed they are to the Sabbath being on Saturday. When it came to the founding of America, the argument was, do we take the Jewish day of Saturday? Do we take the Christian day of Sunday? We don't know. So we took both. That's how we got a two-day weekend. That's why we have a five-day work

week and a two-day work end in theory. Amen. Most of you know, we don't actually take a full two days off in America. We take our laptops on vacation. Because we're always working. That's part of our problem and dysfunction. But the reason that we have these disagreements is because of the resurrection of Jesus. Now here's the problem. Over time, legalism sets in motion. So in the old Testament, God's people are supposed to have a day off. They don't get it because they are slaves. God delivers them, gives them the 10 commandments says, "I got to teach the kids. This is the pattern, you're gonna work six days and take a day off." What happens then is for many, many, many generations until the coming of Jesus, every generation, religious people take the words that God spoke in Genesis and in Exodus, and they keep adding tradition and additional fine print to the contract. We call this legalism. Legalism is where people think God made a rule or a law and He left out a few things. So thankfully, I'm here to help Him and add some more. That's what legalistic people do. They add to what God has already written. And what happens is then by the time Jesus comes, there is so much legalism on top of the Sabbath that you can't even find the Sabbath. Some years ago, we were staying at a beach house and there was a boat that had been sitting in the dock for, I don't know how long, nobody had ever scrubbed the hole. It was just covered with barnacles. Literally, if you stood back, you couldn't even tell it was a boat. It looked like a reef. Legalism is like that. God gives us His laws. And then we keep attaching all of our traditions, and rules, and preferences, and legalisms. Next thing you know, there's more barnacles than boat and it sinks the whole thing. That's what happens when Jesus comes along. Jesus comes along and He intentionally seems to violate some of their legalisms about the Sabbath. Not God's laws, man-made legalisms. One of their legalisms was, you can't heal anyone on the Sabbath. Let me just say, if you're sick, you're hoping there's an exception to that. Amen. If it's your mom, who's on her death bed, you're hoping that it's possible to heal on the Sabbath. So Jesus intentionally heals on the Sabbath and then they rebuke Him. The religious leaders do. "Hey, you can't heal on the Sabbath, that's work." And it's funny that they're arguing with Jesus as if He doesn't know what the Bible says. Legalistic people end up arguing with Jesus thinking that He's close to being biblical, but not quite close enough. He also taught on the Sabbath. They said that was wrong. He promoted evangelism on the Sabbath. And then also His disciples got into real trouble because they were walking through a field. They plucked the head of grain. They rubbed it in their hands to produce food for themselves. This got Him in lots of trouble with the religious leaders, the guys with the clipboards who were walking around, taking attendance. Those guys got very frustrated because they actually had 39 point checklist for what qualified as work on the Sabbath. And Jesus' disciples had four violations. And this is where we get the HOA concept, by the way, for housing. So if you don't know what legalism means, it means HOA. That's what it means. They had four violations. They were reaping, threshing, winnowing, and by rubbing the grain, they were preparing food. So they come along. But Jesus like, "We've got four citations here." And Jesus says, "Man was not made for the Sabbath. Sabbath was made for man." What He's saying is this, it's not that Sabbath is here and believers are here and that it rules over them because then the Sabbath just becomes the new Pharaoh. Then life, as God's people just becomes the new Egypt. We're now slaves under a dictatorial, lifeless, authority. Instead, what He says is the Sabbath is here and believers are here that we have authority over the Sabbath, not necessarily that the Sabbath has authority over us. It is to be honored and respected, but it

is a gift to be enjoyed. It is not a master to be obeyed. Now within this, what Jesus is doing is He's causing a lot of conflict. And let me just say that these legalisms about the Sabbath, they continue. Some years ago, our family, when the kids were little, we went to Israel. Greece, Israel, Turkey, the lands of the New Testament. I led it to her, I was teaching and brought the kids. And it was really crazy to see a Sabbath up-close in Israel. Because they have their God-given rules. And then they've added a lot of rules to the rules, to the point where they're obeying the letter of the law and completely missing what Jesus calls the spirit of the law, the heart, the intent motive, the end zone. And so they had some rules like, you are not allowed to transmit electricity. So literally everybody would be out having a good time. Friday night would hit sundown, Jewish Sabbath, all the businesses close, everybody goes home, everything shuts down for 24 hours. We're staying in a hotel and there's obviously some Jewish people in there. And let's say, you're in a room. Literally this happened. They were like, "Hey, could you turn that light on?" I was like, "Well, why can't you turn the light on?" "Well, it's a sin." "Well then why should I turn it on?" "Cause you're a Gentile, which apparently means kindling." So I'm already done. So I was like, "So if you flip the switch, that's work. It's conducting electricity. It's a sin. We can't do it. You're a Gentile, could you please turn the light?" "Yeah, Jesus is the light of the world. I don't care, I'll turn the light on." And I'm a big boy. I'm going to heaven, whatever. So there's another one where they said, you're not allowed to push a button on an elevator because it's conducting electricity, therefore it qualifies as work. So if you're staying in a Jewish hotel on the Sabbath, they have a Shabbat elevator, a Sabbath elevator, and it has to stop on every floor so that no one ever has to push a button. So guess what? Next to it is the Gentile elevator. I call it the gentivator. So they have the gentivator next to the Shabbatovator. And I jumped in, we jumped into the gentivator. Next thing I know, we are flooded with Orthodox Jewish people. And guess what they ask, "Could you please push the button?" Because they don't wanna be on the Shabbatovator that automatically stops on every floor. They'd rather be on the Gentile, new covenant, grace-based, much faster elevator, headed toward Jesus in the third heaven. And so they're asking, "Could you please push the button?" I'm like, "Yup. Jesus loves you, we're going up. You're welcome to come with us, but you're going to need Jesus." So it's just kind of funny. There was one Jewish guy I talked to and what he said was he said, "Yeah, my rabbi teaches were not allowed to travel more than I think it was a mile or two. Because that would be considered travel or work on the Sabbath." I was like, okay. I said, "Do you guys ever come up with exceptions to the rules? 'Cause every legalism there's a workaround." And he laughed, he's like, "Well, yeah. The rabbis also say that the exception to traveling a few miles is if you travel over water. because if you're out at sea on a boat and your boat drifts, let's say in a storm or a high wind, there's nothing you can do about that. So that's the exception." I said, "So how do you work around that?" He says, "Well, on the Sabbath, I'll go for long drives or jump on the subway or whatever it takes." And he said, "But I always take a bottle of water and I put it under my seat. So technically I'm traveling over water." That's a genius way to get cuts in the line to hell if you think that's how that works. The point is, all these crazy silly rules come into existence. All these crazy silly-- I'll never forget too. I'm stuck at a Jewish friend some years ago. He said, "Yeah, we're not allowed to transmit electricity or work on the Sabbath. So we have to prepare all of our food the day before." I said, "Okay, so you're not allowed to prepare your food on the Sabbath. So where do you put your food?" He said, "We

put it in the fridge." "But if you open the fridge, doesn't the light turn on." He said, "Not at our house, we took the bulb out so we don't sin against the Lord." See? And what seems weird is we hear of other people's legalisms and they sound crazy. They hear about our legalisms and ours are just as crazy. We've all got legalisms. We've all got them. "These are my rules that everybody should abide by, because if they did the world would be a better place." That's what we think. So what happens is, God creates the Sabbath. The Sabbath is to prepare us for what? Heaven, a day off, a break. What do we turn it into? Hell on earth. That's what we do. We take this gift that God gives and we use it to be the new Pharaoh, that is a master that rules over us and robs us of actually enjoying our day off. Next section in Hebrews continues. But first I wanna deal with nine problems with religious legalism. And the reason I tell you this is that your home and your life, it is to have the culture, the atmosphere of heaven, the kingdom of God. When Jesus says, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." That should be how we live life with our spouse. That should be how we live life with our kids. This should be the environment of our home. It should be borrowing and inviting the culture and the environment of the Father's house. And then as people come into that environment, they should be given life. It should be a joyful environment. A life-giving, cheerful environment should be, "Wow, this environment is so wonderful. Where did you get it?" We borrowed it from eternity. We've invited the kingdom of God into our life. And as a result, we are practicing for heaven and it's only gonna get better. And when we Sabbath, we're preparing ourselves for the eternal rest. Would you like to know the God who provides the internal peace so that we could have the external piece so that we could prepare for the eternal peace? It's all evangelistic. If our environment is legalistic religious, it is off-putting and repelling to people who don't know our God. If you ask the average person, do you want to go to heaven and be with Christians forever? What's their answer? "No." Because they have a full sense of the kind of environment that eternity will be. And part of that is people tend to associate heaven with religious people and religious environments, which are contrary to the environment of Jesus. And there's always a conflict between Jesus and religious leaders, because the environment that He brings is an offense to the environment that they bring. So let me deal with this. Jesus talks about religious legalism. And let me say this to you. Children who grow up in legalistic, rule-based, non-relational, punitive, fear-based environments they don't want your God, and they don't wanna be in His presence forever. The best way to evangelize people, especially your children, is to create an environment that reminds them of the kingdom and the father, heart of God, so that they are enjoying what God gives in this life, and looking forward to that life. Here's what Jesus says about religious legalism. They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on people's shoulders. And you're like, "I can't even carry all of these rules, and responsibilities and regulations. All of these duties, all of this drudgery, all of this difficulty." What that is, is that's the lifestyle of a slave. That's not the lifestyle of a son. But they themselves are not willing to move them with their finger. What He says is that people get into positions of power and they put burdens on you and they don't lift a finger to help you carry those burdens. This is the boss who says, "Here's the hundred thousand things I need for you to do." Meanwhile, that boss isn't really doing much of anything. This is the parent who works their kids to the bone, but they themselves make sure to get lots of leisure and recreation. It's a hypocrisy that leads to lots of problems. Let me deal with nine of them. Number one, what legalism does, it turns a blessing

into a burden. Let me ask you this. The day off, the Sabbath, this gift that God gives, is it a blessing or a burden? It's supposed to be a blessing. All of a sudden it becomes a burden. All of a sudden it becomes a burden. In addition, we turn a "get to" into a "have to". The "get to" is, you get to have a day off, the "have to" is you have to do all these things and not do these other things on your day off. I always told my kids growing up, "You don't have to pray, you get to pray. You don't have to read your Bible, you get to read your Bible. You don't have to be part of a church, you get to be part of a church." These are not burdens, these are blessings. These are not things that we have to do. These are things that we get to do. Because I believe if the Holy Spirit gives you a new nature, that ultimately you have new desires. You wanna learn the Bible. You wanna pray. You wanna meet God's people. You wanna take a day off. You wanna make memories. These are the deep given desires from the spirit of God. And the person who doesn't know the Lord doesn't have the same desires of the person that does know the Lord. So for the person who doesn't know the Lord, reading the Bible, praying, taking a day off, enjoying your family, being with God's people, even things like tithing and worshiping, it sounds quite frankly like a burden that you have to do. Yet when the Holy spirit gives you a new nature with new desires, these are not things that are a burden. They're a blessing. They're not things that you have to do. There are things that you get to do. I got saved at age 19. I'm 49. I'll be 50 this fall. I have been studying the Bible almost constantly. I don't even know if I've ever taken a day, let alone a week off. And I've had people ask me like, "Well, how do you discipline yourself to do that?" I don't know. I got a friend of mine. He eats ice cream every night and you know what he doesn't have? A checklist to obey. He just really likes ice cream. And if you ask him, "How do you get so disciplined so that you can do the unthinkable and eat ice cream every night at bedtime?" And he's skinny 'cause God blesses it. So how do you do that? That would be a crazy conversation. It's not like, well, I read a bunch of books and I took a class and then I put together a checklist and just like any highly-trained athlete, I have really worked up to a full bowl. I started with a spoon and then I went to two spoons and I put on the Rocky soundtrack, and I've gotten myself to a full bowl through discipline, hard work, perseverance, and effort. And I'm happy to report I can now eat a bowl of ice cream every night. What he's like is like, "I don't know. I just like it, and it happens." I want your life with God to be not a burden, but a blessing. Not something you have to do, but something you get to do. I want your Sabbath to be not a burden, but a blessing. Not something you have to do, something you get to do. I want your work to be not a burden, but a blessing. Not something you have to do, but something you get to do. Because in heaven, I'm telling you this, everything's going to be a blessing nothing will be a burden and all the things that you get to do are things that you're going to want to do because of the Holy spirit giving you a new nature. Number three. We confuse principles and methods. The Bible gives us a lot of principles and it gives us freedom and flexibility, according to conscious to have methods. So the Bible says, "Sing a new song to the Lord." Well, go ahead and write the new song. Pray without ceasing. That means a lifestyle of prayer. What does that look like for you? Study the word of God to show yourself approved. What methods do you use? Do you read in the morning? Do you read at night? Do you listen to an audio Bible? Do you go through an inductive Bible study? Do you listen to podcasts? All of these methods. What happens is, legalistic people put principles and methods together. They don't understand that God's principle is for all peoples, all times, all cultures, all places and the Holy spirit and

conscience allows you to decide what is best for you. One of the places that we see this most obviously is in the Sabbath. The Bible says, "Rest." We'll get to this a moment. True or false, different people rest differently. Any of you been married? Any of you been married and tried to go on vacation? Let's just be honest here. Let's just do a little marital counseling since we've got a few minutes. And if you've been on vacation with your spouse and got really frustrated, because what they thought would be replenishing and encouraging, for you was not. What that means is the principle is, you're both on vacation, but the methods are different. So you got to figure that out. And what legalism does, it puts principles and methods together. Number four. We then confuse house rules with God's laws. Let's say you're a parent, and your kid is jumping on the bed and drinking Mountain Dew at three o'clock in the morning. If you're single, you're like, "That's crazy." No, if you're a parent, you're like, "That's Tuesday." That's just what's gonna happen eventually. So let's say it's two o'clock in the morning. Your kid is jumping on the bed, drinking Mountain Dew. Can you walk in and quote a Bible verse? Is there any Bible verse? It's their first and second Mountain Dew, and you're like, "After midnight, it's a sin." There is no Bible verse about Mountain Dew and jumping on the bed. There is a verse about obeying your mother and father. That means your mother and father gets to make house rules. But those are not God's laws. What happens with legalism? We confuse house rules with God's laws. House rules with God's laws. And what we do then, we want more authority than God has given us, so we'll attach a Bible verse to everything. And then the people that are under us, they reject God and the Bible because they think that legalism is the heart of God when it's not. My kids when they were little-- Just so you know, if you're raising a child, you're raising a very small attorney. That's who you're raising. They're always ready for negotiation and the counterargument. Imagine my kids with this genetic contribution, we had some very exciting times at the Driscoll House. My kids would always be like, "Well, where does it say that in the word of God?" Cause they knew me. They're like, "I got them now." It was like, "It doesn't. It doesn't say you're not allowed to set off fireworks in the house. It doesn't say that." I check the Hebrew. I check the Greek. It doesn't say that. What it does say is honor and obey your mother and father. This is not God's law, this is mom and dad's house rule, This is how we do things in our house. These are the rules that we have made. But these are not God's laws. These are not God's laws. In addition, we create an environment that repels unbelievers. Non-Christians don't wanna be in a cheerless, legalistic rule-based environment because it feels like slavery in Egypt. When you're in a religious environment with religious people, law-based, rule-based, non-relational, punitive, nitpicking, it feels like slavery. Here's what slaves don't do. They don't smile. They don't laugh. They have nothing to look forward to. All it is, is duty, and drudgery, and difficulty. When you're in a religious environment, it's a cheerless environment. When you're in a religious environment, it's a joyless environment. There's nothing to look forward to. And no one is smiling and having fun. When you're in the presence of God, it's not going to be like that. The Bible says, "God in your presence, there is pleasures, forevermore." People that are in the presence of God, they're happy, they're cheerful, they're joyful. They've dealt with their past, they've healed up. They've looked forward to their future. They've had their burdens lifted. They've had their blessings given. It's a life-giving, not a life-taking environment. And when we have that kind of environment, it's attractive to lost people and non-Christians in a way that a religious environment repels them. I'll give you an example. Brand new Christian in college, or I was

somewhere in the journey of faith toward Jesus. There was a beautiful, wonderful family, had like a dozen kids. And they said, "Hey, do you wanna come over to our house for dinner?" "Okay." They loved each other, big family. I was like, "Okay, I'll come over." I came to their house. The environment of the house reminded me of the kingdom of God. There was a peace, kids were playing, laughing, being kids, having fun, not sitting, just being silly, dinner's getting cooked, everybody's visiting. We all sit down at the table. The kids grab my hands. They all sing a song together. Great family conversation, praying for each other, have dessert, hangout. I walked out of the house going, "I love that place." That was so fun. Grace and I were together in college at the time. We actually volunteered to start babysitting for them for free. Because we wanted to be in that home and figure out that environment. 'Cause one day when we got married and had kids, we wanted that kind of environment at our house. It wasn't repelling, it was attractive. There was a peace that was supernatural. There was a joy that was genuine. There was a fun. And there was a friendship between all the members of the family. Sometimes when we look at people and we say, "Accept Jesus, or you're gonna go to hell." It might be better to say, "Accept Jesus, you're gonna like heaven." It's not just who or what we're against, but it's who or what we're for. I believe in heaven and I believe in hell. But I believe the reason to go to heaven is not just to avoid hell, but because of the blessing that it is to be in the presence of God, with the people of God, singing the praises of God forever. Even if there was no hell, I'd still wanna go to heaven. Because I wanna be near God, and I wanna be in the environment that He creates. There is a hell, but the good news is that heaven is so great. I'll just be honest with you. I don't wake up every morning and walk with Jesus to avoid hell. I get up every morning and walk with Jesus because I'm excited about forever with Him. A couple other things about legalism. We create a judgmental atmosphere of social shaming and nitpicking. We now call this America. We're in a season of social shaming, and nitpicking and nitpicking. Literally, I was at the store and they have the six foot lines. So the Pharisees are alive and well. And you could protest on the internet, send an email, I'm happy to delete it. We're willing to serve that way. So there was a six foot line and my toes are on the line. Dude looks back, he's like, "Your toes are on the line." Oh gosh. I know, I know, I know, I know I'm rebellious, I know. You wanna take a photo, put it on social media, shame me? When you create rules, there are certain people that then are the rule enforcers. Some of you grew up with a sibling. That's why you don't talk to them. And what it leads to is social shaming and nitpicking, social shaming and nitpicking. And then what happens is, we create an environment that encourages religion or rebellion. Religion is everybody abides by the rules and the rules about the rules and the rules about the rules, about the rules of rebellion. And that's like, I quit. How many of you are more religious in nature? We could tell 'cause you're taking notes. For those of you who are more rebellious, is that you? We could tell because you're watching YouTube. So we just figured out the room. We all lean in one of these two directions. What legalism does, it causes the religious people to just get more religious, and judgmental, and less relational. And it causes the rebellious people to say, "Well, if all of that goes together, then I reject all of it." I want nothing to do with God or the Bible or church, because all of that for me was very unpleasant and painful. This is why some kids grow up and the more legalistic religious environment they're in, the more rebellion they demonstrate. And then we turn God's fence into our prison. My view of God's laws is that God is a loving father. And what a good parent does is they put a fence around the yard

when the kids are little, why? To protect them, so they could enjoy the fullness of their freedom. When our kids were little, we lived on a very, very busy street. And so the first thing I did before we moved in, I put in a fence and I told the kids, "Don't leave the yard." I mean, literally we're on a-- people are going 50 miles an hour, four lanes in front of our house. Dangerous. "I love you. This yard is to enjoy. Enjoy every inch of the yard, but please don't hop the fence or open the gate. You will get yourself in harm's way." I believe that God's heart is a father's heart. I believe that all of God's laws are like pickets in the fence and they create a yard for the children of God to enjoy themselves safely. What legalists do they say, "Okay, God's got these laws, but now we need these laws to protect us from disobeying these laws." And they keep adding laws until all of the sudden, all you've got is a fence and there's no yard left. You can't have any fun, you can't go anywhere, you can't do anything. Here's what I'm telling you. Quarantine is an internship for help. All you can do is just stay exactly where you're at. There's no fun or freedom. There's nowhere to go and there's nothing to do. This is what legalism does. It creates a spiritual quarantine. God's laws are great. It gives the kids a big yard. What religious people do, they'll make rules that restrict the freedom until it's all fence and no yard. Why do I tell you all of this? Because God wants the culture of your home, your life, your family, to be kingdom down. God wants the culture of the father's house to set the rhythms for your life. And legalism causes people to turn the gift of the Sabbath into a burden that is like being enslaved in Egypt, and it robs us of life and joy. It robs us of life and joy. And let me say this, this religious spirit, is it just in religion or does it exist in all places? All places. I'll give you an example. This is a beach in New Jersey. Beach access for exercise only. Permitted; walking, running, exercising, surfing and fishing, but no chairs. How does sitting in a chair spread a virus, at the beach by yourself? Now here's what's prohibited. Sunbathing, sitting in chairs. Somebody's really uptight about the chairs. Are like, "Hey, hit the chairs again, make sure they get this." Group sports. So the question immediately becomes what constitutes a group? We're gonna need another sign. This is how legalism happens. Prohibited groups of people. Once again, this is really anti-groups and chairs. This seems to be the secret. And swimming. So if I show up at the beach, first of all, with a chair, I'm like, "I didn't bring it, I don't know who brought that chair." 'Cause I don't wanna get in trouble. So then I want to surf. "Hey, question. How do I surf without swimming?" Cause I can't start by surfing. I need to get my board out." I do belong to Jesus. Maybe I could walk out and just try. Just try to walk on the water. But what if I'm on the board and I fall off the board? I'm not allowed to swim. So to keep myself from dying of a virus, I need to die of drowning. That's what I need to do. Religious spirit exists everywhere. Sometimes it's in the HOA, sometimes it's in the government. How about this? I'm not allowed to swim, but I can exercise. What if I swim as exercise, is that an exception? Any other questions you guys have got from that? Here's what I had. I'm not allowed to bring a chair, but what if I stack up the sand like a chair, I build a sandcastle chair and I sit in it to fish. Is that an exception? This is the heart that is absolutely opposed to the kingdom of God. This is why when Jesus comes along, He makes a little bit of fun of the religious people, because some people take themselves way too seriously and they don't take God seriously. Back to Hebrews, that was your free comedy. Rhythms of work and rest are heavenly. He goes back to Hebrews. And again, this passage he said, "They shall not enter my rest. Therefore it remains for some to enter it. And those who formerly received the good news, failed to enter it because of disobedience." Here's what he's saying. Good news is

the gateway to rest. The good news is called the Gospel. It's about Jesus Christ. The good news is that we have a God who's done all the work. All the work. He lived without sin, He died for our sin, He rose for our sin, He is our savior. When we stand before God, we don't say, "Okay, here's what I did say I'm with Jesus. And he did it, not me." Jesus did all the work so that I can enjoy the rest. Jesus did all the work so I could enjoy the rest. What He says is, the key to entering not only the eternal rest, but the internal rest is receiving the good news of Jesus Christ. So Jesus says, "Come to me all you who are weary and burdened and heavy laden, and I will give you rest for your soul. For my yoke is easy. My burden is light." For some of you, you're like, "What do I do?" Nothing, trust Jesus who's done everything. The key to your rest in here, out there and forever is faith in Jesus Christ. He goes on to say, "And he appoints a certain day saying, 'Today,' through the voice of David, as long as afterward in the word's already quoted. 'Today, if you hear his voice, don't harden your heart.'" What he's saying is this, the first priority of your life is receiving Jesus Christ. Some of you, you don't think about Jesus because you're so busy working. For some of you, you're not committed to Jesus because you're so distracted by your hobbies. It ultimately first priority has to be, don't harden your heart, hear his voice. Say, I am a sinner. I need a savior. All of my turmoil and struggle and strife, and all of my laboring is all ultimately only remedied by trusting in Jesus who did everything perfectly. And on the cross, He said it is what? Finished. All the work is done. And now I trust in Him and I receive from Him this internal rest that leads to an external rest. That leads to an eternal rest. It all starts in here. And let me say this, people who don't receive Jesus in His Sabbath, what we do in our culture, we exchange stimulants for Sabbath. Caffeine, energy drinks, adrenaline. You don't need stimulants, you need the spirit and you need the Sabbath. That's how God fuels us for life and energy. He goes on to say, "For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. So then, there remains," a what? "Sabbath rest for the people of God." What is it? Heaven. Talk about that in a moment. "For whoever has enter God's rest is also rested from his works as God did from his. Let us therefore strive to enter that rest so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience." Here's what he's saying. There is a Sabbath rest that awaits us. So as you take a Sabbath in this day, it's never going to be perfect, but it's preparing for that perfect Sabbath rest that God has for you forever. And the Sabbath rest that God has for you forever, it leaves all of the worst of this life and it takes all of the best of this life. So let me just in brief close, ask you to think about what the Sabbath will be like forever in the kingdom of God and your resurrected body when heaven and earth, the seen and the unseen realms come together. I'll close with these two verses. The question is when can you Sabbath? And what can you do on the Sabbath now and forever? Romans 14:5-6, "One person esteems one day better than another while another esteems, all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. The one who observes the day observes it in honor of the Lord." What is he saying? What's the Sabbath day? The principle is Sabbath day. The method is pick a day. How many of you have to work on Sunday? I do. Now, if you know this, I kind of work on Sunday. I always find it silly when the preacher gets up, he's like, "Sunday is a day of Sabbath." I'm like, "You're working, yelling at the people not to be working." And so it's okay, whatever day. And some of you, your work schedule, you're like, "I can't get the same day off every week." Well that's okay, just pick a day. Principle method. Principle is get a day. Method is pick a day. And don't let anybody judge you. 'Cause that's what

religious people do. "It's Tuesdays? That's not the right day." Or you don't have the right attitude. He says this in Colossians. How many people judge you? No one. We've all got somebody who thinks they're the exception to that rule. Amen? I know the Bible says not to judge, but you know I'm here. Sometimes I'm here. "Let no one pass judgment on you with regard to a Sabbath." That's not just the day, that's the activities. So let's close with this. What healthy things do you enjoy that connect you to God and replenish your energy? Permission to speak freely. What do you enjoy? Do you have a day off you're like, "I love that, that energizes me. I feel close to God, I really enjoy that." Some of you like to pray. Can you pray in heaven on your day off? Nobody's gonna get busted for that. What else do you like to do? You could be less spiritual than that by the way. Not to judge you, just an observation. What's that? You like to hike? Is it okay to go for a hike on the Sabbath? It has a lot to do with your heart. You're like, "You know what? I like to pray, I like to walk, I like to be outside, I like fresh air. That's me." One of my favorite things. There's a little Sabbath everyday that I like to enjoy with Grace, we hold hands and go for a walk. Last night sun was setting, I was like, "Hey, it's time baby. Let's go for a walk." I love to hold Grace's hand and go for a walk. To me, that's a daily Sabbath opportunity. Can Grace and I hold hands and go for a walk in heaven? Yeah, we're going to, by the way. Write that down, Grace. So what other things do you guys like to do on the Sabbath? You like to read a book? Will there be books in heaven? Yes. I believe some of the best literature from this life will make it into the kingdom of God. Furthermore, I believe that people will be writing books and creating literature, and storylines, and narratives in the kingdom of God. What else do you like to do on your day off? Art. What kind of art? Painting and creativity. Is that something that's okay to do on your day off to connect with the Lord? Absolutely. I tend to find that people who work with their minds, they Sabbath with their hands. They've got to do something in the kingdom of God, will there be artists? Will there be painting? Will there be other of art form? Yes or no? Yes. There will be. Again, it's this Sabbath that prepares for that Sabbath. The things that we get to enjoy here, we get to enjoy forever. Other things that you enjoy in the Sabbath. What's that? Socialize? So we found the extrovert in the room. The reading, praying, and painting people were more the introverts. How many of you are the extroverts? You're like, "I'm gonna cook a big meal. I like throwing a party. I like getting everybody together. It's super fun. Fill up the house. Everybody get together. I like being the host." Whoo. Can you do that in heaven? Absolutely. That's one of the major motifs of the kingdom of God is celebration and parties and fun. And food says in Isaiah, I think it's 28:16. It's around there. The choicest of meats and the finest of wines. Some of you are like, "I'm a vegetarian." Not forever. Jesus is gonna be like, "I grilled for you." You'll be like, "I don't eat that." He's like, "You're perfect now. There you go." So what else do you enjoy for the Sabbath? Playing with your grandkids? Is it okay to play with kids and grandkids? Yeah. Can you do that in the kingdom of God? Yeah. What else do you enjoy doing? Take a nap. When you reach a certain age, it becomes a super power that God gives you. I used to watch my dad and my grandpa, they'd lay in the chair and snore and I thought, "That's so weird." Now I'm like, "Those men are geniuses." That's amazing. Can you take a nap in heaven? Yeah, you can. What else do you enjoy doing? Play golf. Can you play golf in heaven? We're probably gonna split the room down the middle between men and women here. Some people love golf 'cause it's outside. It's in God's presence, it's with people, it's socializing. It's a recreational activity. Can you golf in the kingdom of heaven? Yes. And you'll golf better.

You will golf better. You will golf better. And the fees won't be nearly as high. What else do you enjoy doing? Going to the lake, going fishing. Can you go fishing in heaven? Yeah. Can you go to the lake in heaven? Yeah. Will there be sports in heaven? Yeah. Yeah. Will there be concerts, and music, and creativity in heaven? Yes. Will there be art in heaven? Yes. Will it be meals in heaven? Yes. Everything we don't get to do right now is so frustrating is this is how hell is gonna be. This is not how heaven is gonna be. So we want to remind ourselves that ultimately we are interning for eternity. I want you to work hard and I want you to rest well. I'll talk about work next week, but let me pray for you. Father God, thank you for an opportunity to study. God, work can sometimes seem like theological minutiae and trivia, and arguing, and what day, and what can we do? God, the spirit of it is that that ultimately we are to labor like you labored and we are to rest as you rested. And so God, I pray for these dear people that first of all, they would experience the internal rest that comes through faith and the good news of Jesus Christ. There is a God who made them. There is a God who loved them. There was a God who served them. There is a God who has completed all of the works required for salvation, that He gives His presence and peace as a gift for all eternity. God, I pray for that internal Sabbath, that settling of the heart, mind and soul that would allow us to create an environment around us, of both peace and productivity. And that God that the kingdom of your house would live at our house. And that we would enjoy being your kids, doing what kids like to do. And God pray that ultimately the environment of this great kingdom would live in our lives so that we could prepare for eternity, invite people into your presence and invite them to Jesus in whose name we pray. Amen.