

2020 Sabbath Year: Habits

THE BIG IDEA:

I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. – John 15:5, NRSV

Our strength and fruitfulness as children of God is directly connected to the depth of our relationship with Jesus. We invite you to join us this year as we spend some time investing in our relationship with Jesus. We will experience Sabbath by entering into four Rhythms—Worship, Prayer, Rest and Eating—in the expectation that our relationship with Jesus will be enriched and deepened as we learn the divine dance these Rhythms lead us into.

HABITS:

Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly. – Matthew 11:28-30, MSG

Two simple Habits will teach us the steps, the “unforced rhythms of grace” that are part of the divine dance with God. These two Habits engage all four of our Rhythms and are ancient and time-tested. As we establish these Habits, remember they are meant to be “unforced rhythms of grace.” They are “unforced” because our desire for God can help them become a joy even in the midst of the discipline required to establish them, and because no one is forcing us to practice them. It is our choice, and we will harvest according to what we have sown. They are “rhythms of grace” because they are means by which we connect with Jesus and receive the grace of his presence with us and his life in us by the Holy Spirit.

Daily - Quiet Time

- A daily time set aside to be silent and alone with God.
- Involves Rhythms of Worship, Prayer & Rest.

- May include ancient practices like Silence & Solitude, Prayer, Meditation, Reading Scripture and Memorizing Scripture.
- Can be done any time of the day or night. Find a time that works for you, your personality and your family life.
- Space and body language help. Find a place that is consistent; it will become a holy place for you and your body will learn to be attentive to God when you enter that space for your Quiet Time.
- Be kind to yourself. If you miss a day or a week, don't beat yourself up about it. God doesn't do that to you. Try again the next day.

Weekly - Sabbath Day

- A weekly day set aside to cease from work & delight in God.
- Involves Rhythms of Worship, Prayer, Rest & Eating.
- May include ancient practices like Slowing, Celebrating, Sleeping, Playing, Hospitality & Feasting.
- Has historically been practiced on Saturday or Sunday, but can be any day of the week that works in your schedule and family life.
- Consistency is helpful. Whichever day you choose, try to make it the same every week. It will become a day you look forward to as you learn to delight in God and the gifts he has given you.
- Be creative. Learn to experience prayer and worship as a walk in the woods or time practicing a favourite instrument. Make time to relax and be present with your children or to eat a leisurely meal with close friends. Take a nap knowing you are resting in God's presence.

TOGETHER:

When I think of all this, I fall to my knees and pray to the Father...May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God. – Ephesians 3:14-19, NLT

Our life in Jesus is bound up with our life with one another. Our growth in relationship with Jesus is dependent on our life together as the body of Christ. Make time this year to connect together around these Rhythms and Habits. Share your joys and struggles, successes and failures. Learn from one another. Pray for one another. Encourage and support one another. May the joy-filled rhythms of the divine dance enfold us all in the loving embrace of Jesus and his bride, the church.