



The Habits & Practices of Jesus (Week 3/3) Jesus & Rest

Small Group Discussion Questions

Connect *As we consider Jesus' rhythm of rest, what do you find beautiful or compelling about it?*

Warm-Up

1. When you hear the word rest, what comes to mind?
2. How is God's idea of rest different from simply taking a holiday or a day off?

Read Luke 4:13-19

3. What stands out to you about Jesus' description of his mission?
4. Jesus announces "good news to the poor," "freedom for the prisoners," "recovery of sight for the blind," and "freedom for the oppressed." What do these promises reveal about the kind of rest Jesus came to bring?
5. Jesus finishes by proclaiming "the year of the Lord's favour." How does this connect with the Old Testament idea of Jubilee (Leviticus 25), and why is that significant?
6. What kinds of burdens do people in our community carry today? Which of these do you think Jesus is addressing in this passage?
7. Why do you think people often look for rest in success, possessions, entertainment, or achievement? Why do these things ultimately leave us wanting more?

Read Luke 23:55-24:1-6

8. The women wanted to anoint Jesus' body but stopped to observe the Sabbath. What does their obedience teach us about trusting God, even when we don't understand what he is doing?
9. What emotions do you think the women have experienced during that day of waiting?
10. Jesus declared, "It is finished", before he died. How does the Sabbath rest in the tomb reinforce the truth that his saving work was complete?
11. Read Genesis 2:2-3. How does God's rest after creation help us understand Jesus' rest after completing the work of redemption?
12. The women rested without yet knowing that resurrection morning was coming. In what ways are Christians today also living in a season of waiting?
13. Jesus' resurrection confirms that death is not the end. How does the empty tomb give you confidence when facing uncertainty, suffering, or grief?
14. Jesus invites the weary to come to him for rest (Matthew 11:28-30). How do his death and resurrection make that invitation possible?
15. What burdens—such as guilt, anxiety, fear, striving, or disappointment—can prevent us from experiencing the rest Jesus offers? Which of these do you most relate to?
16. What habits help you rest in Christ's finished work?

Apply *Who is one person in your life who seems weary, burdened, or overwhelmed? How could you point them towards the hope and rest that Jesus offers?*

Pray *Heavenly Father, thank you that through Jesus we find true rest for our weary hearts, trusting in his finished work. Help us to lay our burdens at your feet so we can rest in your mercy and grace. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

GOING DEEPER

The Habits & Practices of Jesus (Week 3/3) Jesus & Rest

Small Group Discussion Questions

On Your Front Line this Week

What are your current habits of rest? Ask God to help you set a weekly pattern of rest that recharges you in him.

For Families

- Download: some of the family resources to use at home: stbartskids.org

Listen, Watch, and Read

- Listen (sermon): “Work and Rest” by Tim Keller:
<https://gospelinlife.com/sermon/work-and-rest/>
- Read (article): “Wisdom and Sabbath Rest” by Tim Keller:
<https://redeemercitytocity.com/articles-stories/wisdom-and-sabbath-rest?rq=sabbath%20rest>
- Watch (clip): “Sabbath” by The Bible Project:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PFTLvkb3JLM>
- Read (article): “Making the Most of Rest” by St Helen’s Bishopsgate:
<https://www.st-helens.org.uk/resources/article/178/>
- Read (devotion): “Busyness and Rest” by Kevin DeYoung:
<https://tabletalkmagazine.com/article/2019/07/busyness-and-rest/>
- Watch (interview): “When You’re Too Busy to Be Godly” by Kevin DeYoung:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7V0FIJfGriA>
- Read (journal article): “Jesus and the Sabbath in the Four Gospels” by D. A. Carson:
https://media.thegospelcoalition.org/documents/carson/1982_Jesus_and_the_Sabbath.pdf

Series Resources

- Read: “Common Rule: Habits of Purpose for an Age of Distraction” by Justin Whitmel Earley. 
- Read: “Celebration of Discipline” by Richard Foster. 
- Read: “Prayerfulness” by Peter Adam. 
- Read: “A Meal with Jesus: Discovering Grace, Community, & Mission Around the Table” Tim Chester.
- Read: “Extraordinary Hospitality (for ordinary people)” by Carolyn Lacey.
- Read: “Subversive Sabbath” by A. J. Swoboda.
- Read: “Sabbath as Resistance” by Walter Brueggemann.

 Available to borrow from the St Bart’s Library (Toowoomba): stbarts.com.au/library

For sermons and additional resources, visit stbarts.com.au

st bart's

HABITS & PRACTICES OF JESUS

Week 03/03 "Jesus & Rest"

예수님과 안식 | Yëcu ku Lööŋ | 耶稣与安息 | இயேசுவும் ஓய்வும்

by Dan Rouhead (12/07/2026)

Bible Passage: Luke 4:13-19 & 23:55-24:1-6

INTRODUCTION

Over the last three weeks we have been exploring the habits of Jesus.

In week one, we looked at prayer. We saw that Jesus regularly withdrew to be with his Father. Prayer wasn't an optional extra. It wasn't something Jesus squeezed into the gaps of life. It was central to his relationship with God. Last week, we looked at meals. We saw Jesus eating with sinners, disciples, friends, and strangers. Around tables, people experienced grace, forgiveness, community, and the welcome of God's kingdom.

Today we conclude with another habit of Jesus: rest. Now, if we're honest, rest is probably the habit many of us struggle with the most. We live in a culture that celebrates busyness. When someone asks, "How are you?" the common answer is, "Busy." We wear busyness almost like a badge of honour. Our calendars are full. Our phones never stop. Our minds keep racing long after our heads hit the pillow. Many of us are physically tired, emotionally exhausted, and spiritually drained.

Yet when we come to Jesus, we discover something remarkable. Jesus was purposeful. Jesus was active. Jesus was committed to God's mission. Yet Jesus also rested. He rested physically. He rested spiritually. He rested in the promises of God. And most importantly, through his death and resurrection he makes true rest available to us.

Today I want us to see three things:

1. Jesus proclaimed God's rest.
2. Jesus entered God's rest.
3. Jesus offers God's rest to us.

1. JESUS PROCLAIMED GOD'S REST \ LUKE 4:13-19

예수님은 하나님의 안식을 선포하셨습니다 | Yëcu ëë nyuöth wuak Lööŋ |
耶稣宣告了神的安息 | இயேசு தேவனுடைய ஓய்வை அறிவித்தார்

Luke 4 records the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. He enters the synagogue in Nazareth, stands up to read, and opens the scroll of Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor... freedom for the prisoners... recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour." (Luke 4:18-19)

At first glance, the word "rest" doesn't appear in this passage. Yet the entire passage is saturated with the Old Testament idea of God's rest. Jesus is announcing that the promises of Isaiah are being fulfilled in him. The poor, prisoners, the blind, and the oppressed are all people burdened by the effects of sin, brokenness, and life in a fallen world. Jesus declares that freedom, restoration, and release have arrived.

Particularly significant is the phrase "the year of the Lord's favour." This echoes the Year of Jubilee in Leviticus 25. Every fifty years debts were cancelled, slaves were freed, land was restored, and people were given a fresh start. It was a year of release and rest from economic, social, and personal burdens.

Jesus takes this ancient promise and declares that he himself is the fulfilment of it. Through his ministry, God is bringing a greater Jubilee. Not merely freedom from financial debt, but freedom from the debt of sin. Not merely release from earthly oppression, but release from spiritual bondage. Not merely temporary relief, but lasting peace with God.

Jesus proclaimed God's rest by announcing that weary, burdened people no longer needed to strive to save themselves. In him, forgiveness, freedom, and reconciliation with God were available. The rest he proclaimed was not primarily about taking a day off work; it was about entering a restored relationship with God and experiencing the peace, freedom, and wholeness that come through his kingdom.

In a world full of striving and exhaustion, Jesus' message was, and still is, an invitation to stop looking for rest in success, possessions, or achievement and to find true rest in him. From the very beginning of his ministry, Jesus proclaimed that God's promised rest had arrived because the King had come.

The deepest exhaustion is not physical but spiritual. People carry guilt, shame, fear, the need to prove themselves and wanting to earn God's approval. Jesus announces freedom.

Imagine a backpack full of bricks. Now I want you to visualize carrying that heavy backpack all day. Now, when you first put it on, it might not seem that heavy. But, by the end of the day, the bag will be pulling on your shoulders and putting pressure on your back. Many people carry invisible burdens: regret, failure and expectations. Jesus came to remove burdens, not add to them.

Where are you seeking rest?

- Holidays?
- Retirement?
- Financial security?
- Achievement?

These may help temporarily but cannot provide lasting rest. Only Jesus can.

Jesus didn't simply preach about rest. He demonstrated it. Most surprisingly, we see this in the tomb.

2. JESUS ENTERED GOD'S REST \ LUKE 23:55-24:1-6

예수님은 하나님의 안식에 들어가셨습니다 | Yēcu ēē lō nē lōjō dē Nhialic yic |

耶穌进入了神的安息 | இயேசு தேவனுடைய ஓய்விற்குள் பிரவேசித்தார்

After the agony of the cross, Luke records a quiet but deeply significant moment: "The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph and saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it. Then they went home and prepared spices and perfumes. But they rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment." (Luke 23:55–56)

Between Good Friday and Easter Sunday lies Holy Saturday—a day we often overlook. Yet it is a profound picture of Jesus entering God's rest.

On Friday, Jesus completed the work his Father had given him to do. Before his death he declared, "It is finished" (John 19:30). The price for sin had been paid. The sacrifice had been offered. The work of atonement was complete. Then came the Sabbath.

As Jesus' body lay in the tomb, he rested. Not because he was defeated, but because his saving work was finished. Just as God rested on the seventh day after completing creation (Genesis 2:2–3), Jesus rested after completing the work of redemption. The Creator rested after the first creation; the Saviour rested after securing the new creation.

The timing is significant. Jesus dies on the day of preparation and rests in the tomb throughout the Sabbath. This is no accident. It points to the truth that nothing more needed to be added to his sacrifice. No further work was required. The cross was sufficient.

The women rested on the Sabbath according to God's command, while Jesus rested in the tomb according to God's plan. Though all seemed silent, God was still at work. What looked like defeat was actually the pause before victory. What looked like the end was preparing the way for resurrection morning.

For Christians, the tomb teaches us an important lesson about rest. Jesus rested because the work was complete. We often struggle to rest because we feel there is always more to do, more to prove, more to achieve. Yet the gospel reminds us that our salvation does not depend on our effort but on Christ's finished work.

Holy Saturday declares that redemption is accomplished. Jesus entered God's rest because he had fully obeyed the Father and completely accomplished our salvation. The silence of the tomb becomes a powerful testimony that the work of the cross was enough. Before the triumph of Easter Sunday came the rest of Holy Saturday. Before resurrection came completion. Jesus entered God's rest because the mission was finished, and because it was finished, we can rest in him.

This is like a team of builders who have just finished constructing a home. Once the house is finished, the site is cleaned and the tools are packed away. The team of builders go home. No more work is needed. In the same way, Jesus rested because nothing more needed to be done.

Many Christians live as though Jesus said: "It has begun." But Jesus said: "It is finished." We often act as though we need to earn God's love, prove ourselves or add to Christ's work. The tomb reminds us: Jesus has already done what we could never do.

Jesus proclaimed rest.

Jesus entered rest.

Now Jesus offers rest.

3. JESUS OFFERS GOD'S REST TO US \\ LUKE 23:55-24:1-6

예수님은 하나님의 안식을 우리에게 주십니다 | Yēcu ää yin wuak̄ Lǝṛṛ wa ḏhiää |

耶穌將神的安息賜給我們 | இயேசு தேவனுடைய ஓய்வை நாமெல்லோர்க்கும்
தருகிரார்

The empty tomb changes everything. The rest Jesus offers is not found in a place. It is found in a person. Jesus does not say: come to religion, or come to performance, or come to self-improvement. He says you will experience rest when you come to him.

There are three dimensions of this rest Jesus offers.

First, there is rest from guilt: "There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." (Romans 8:1) We don't need to carry our pasts anymore.

Second, there is rest from striving. We are saved by grace, not works (Ephesians 2:8-9). We work from acceptance, not for acceptance.

Third, we rest in God's future. Because Jesus rose, we know death is defeated, eternity is secure, and our future is safe.

Tired and stressed parents often find peace when their children are asleep. Maybe you've even put your child in the car seat and taken them for a drive just to help them get to sleep. Now, the child asleep in the back seat of the car is not worried about traffic, fuel or directions. The child rests because someone trustworthy is driving.

The Christian life is learning to trust the one who is driving.
Whatever burden you are carrying today...Anxiety? Regret? Grief? Weariness? Self-reliance? Bring it to Jesus. Rest begins with surrender.

When we think about the Easter story, we often move quickly from the cross on Friday to the resurrection on Sunday. But Luke invites us to stop and notice Saturday.

Imagine what the women were feeling. Their hopes appeared shattered. Jesus was dead. The one they had followed, loved, and trusted had been crucified. They wanted to honour him properly. They wanted to go to the tomb. They wanted to do something. Yet they couldn't. The Sabbath arrived. And so, they waited. They rested.

Not because they understood what God was doing, but because they trusted God's command. There is something deeply profound here. The women are caught between what God has done and what God is about to do. The cross has happened, but the resurrection has not yet been revealed. They live for a day in the tension between death and new creation.

In many ways, that is where Christians live today. Jesus has died for our sins. Jesus has risen from the dead. Jesus has secured our salvation. Yet the fullness of God's new creation has not yet arrived. We still experience suffering. We still experience grief. We still experience sickness, disappointment, and death.

Like the women on that Sabbath, we live in the space between God's finished work and God's final renewal of all things. The Sabbath rest of the women becomes a picture of the Christian life. We are a waiting people.

We wait for Christ's return. We wait for every tear to be wiped away. We wait for the day when sin is no more. We wait for the resurrection of the dead. We wait for the new heavens and the new earth. And while we wait, God calls us into a rhythm of trust.

The women could not make Easter morning happen. Their task was not to create the resurrection but to wait for God to act. Likewise, we cannot bring about God's kingdom through our own effort. We cannot manufacture the new creation. We cannot earn eternal life. We wait in faith for the God who keeps his promises.

This is one of the great gifts of rest. It reminds us that we are not God. The world keeps turning while we rest. God's purposes continue while we sleep. His plans do not depend upon our constant activity. Every time we rest, we are making a declaration of faith: "God is in control. God is at work. God will fulfil his promises."

The writer of Hebrews picks up this same theme when he speaks of a greater rest still to come: "There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God." (Hebrews 4:9) The weekly rhythm of rest points beyond itself to the eternal rest that awaits God's people. It is a foretaste of the day when Christ returns and creation is finally renewed. The women rested on Saturday, not knowing that resurrection morning was coming. We rest today, knowing that resurrection morning has already begun in Jesus and that one day it will fill the whole creation.

Their Sabbath waiting became the bridge between the cross and the resurrection. Our Sabbath waiting becomes the bridge between Christ's resurrection and his return. So, rest is not merely about recovering energy for another week. It is an act of hope. It is a declaration that the story is not finished. It is a reminder that we belong to the God of

resurrection, and that one day our waiting will end in eternal rest and everlasting joy in the presence of Christ.

CONCLUSION

Three habits and practices of Jesus.

In prayer, Jesus withdrew to the Father. Through meals, Jesus welcomed people to the table. Jesus rested, because his work was completed and he invites us to trust him as we follow his example.

Prayer teaches us dependence. Meals teach us community. Rest teaches us trust. Ultimately, these habits are not ends in themselves. They all point us to Jesus. The one who prayed. The one who ate with sinners. The one who rested in the tomb. The one who rose again. And today he still says: “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30).

That invitation is not only for the tired body. It is also for the broken heart and the weary soul. Come to Jesus. And rest in his finished work.

Let us pray...

Heavenly Father, help us this week to slow down, to seek your presence, and remember that you are always at work, even when we are still. Teach us to trust you, to rest in your grace, and to live with hope as we await the day when Christ returns and all things are made new. May we know the peace of Christ, the strength of your Spirit, and the joy of resting in your promises. In Jesus' name, Amen.