

Thank you for joining Mission72 as we journey into a month of Sabbath during July. We believe God is wanting to do something new at Mission72 and is using the principles of Sabbath and Jubilee to prepare our hearts for what He is doing.



Sabbath is an opportunity to keep us from being hard-hearted and tight-fisted. It teaches us to be generous and not to be tied to our possessions.

Prayer: God of the ages, our present age is shaped by our incessant drive to have more stuff. The gods of commerce and power seduce us into believing we are defined by the quantity of our possessions, not by the quality of our relationships. Quiet our endless, restless search for stuff. Bring us into the quiet center wherein your Spirit's call is clear. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

What would you like to achieve by taking a Sabbath rest in July? How has this goal changed throughout the month?

Revisit the take-aways from the last three weeks. How have you done eliminating and reducing the activities that do not provide Sabbath restfulness? How have you resisted consumerism and the media? Did you follow through blessing someone in your sphere of influence? In what ways were you able to distance yourself from consumerism?

Sabbath rest in the context of the tenth commandment (thou shall not covet) means to protect the space and property of the neighbor from the restlessness that disrupts and skews social relationships by resisting the need to acquire stuff. Coveting generates mistrust and sets neighbor against neighbor. Coveting in this sense is both an attitude of craving and forceful action to secure what is craved. Acknowledge now the cravings of your flesh. How do you inappropriately try to fill those cravings? God is the only One who can fill our cravings, ask Him now to speak to your wants. How do you wish to adjust your behavior?

In the coming week, contemplate Exodus 20:17 and Luke 12:13-21 and examine your heart for any greed or envy for things (house), relationships (wife) or job/ability/status (slaves, ox and donkey). How has your desire for what is not yours affected your relationships? Surrender your 'lack' and ask the Lord to align the desires of your heart with His and make your soul content by the power of His Spirit. He is enough and all you need.

Exodus 20:17

¹⁷ "You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

Our Master rabbi told a tale of building bigger barns, to store more grain to have more stuff, because the man did not have enough yet. Before he told the tale, he simply said, "Be on guard against all covetousness" [Luke 12:14]. Or we translate greed:

"Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions." When Jesus said that, he appealed back to Moses at Sinai. Via Moses at Sinai we received 10 lordy words. The second word was about the worship of things: "no graven images" [Exodus 20:4-6]. The 10th is: Do not covet;

Do not be greedy.

*Do not be acquisitive;
Do not accumulate;
Do not hunger and thirst for more.*

The Lord of Sinai has set limits:

*Do not covet your neighbor's house;
Do not covet your neighbor's wife;
Do not covet what belongs to your neighbor.*

*Do not covet ... And then three times,
neighbor, neighbor, neighbor.*

*We live, each of us and all of us,
in a common economy of coveting:
the tax and mortgage laws are designed to let the powerful accumulate more;
the ads are designed to make us desire what we do not need;
the military is designed to protect unsustainable advantage of things in the world;
the ecological threat is the result of cravings that violate the limit of sustainable creation.*

*The tax laws, the TV ads, the strong military, the ruin of creation,
all serve to impinge harmfully upon the neighborhood.
The tax and mortgage laws pray upon vulnerable neighbors.
The ads seduce us to value things as substitutes for relationships;
The military ideology turns neighbors into enemies;
The exploitation of the earth refuses to reckon with rabbits and radishes as neighbors.*

But we have known better since Sinai!

*We know, when we do Sabbath pause, that we can live well
without an updated computer or phone;
without a new car;
without elective cosmetic surgery;
without remedial drugs, etc., etc., etc.*

We cannot and have no deep desire to live without neighbors.

*We confess our anxiety about scarcity,
about not yet having enough and being left behind.*

*We confess, when we do Sabbath pause,
that we do not treasure our neighbor enough,
the one close at hand;
the one far away;
the one who shows mercy;
the one who needs mercy.*

*We pledge in your presence, greater resolve for Sabbath,
that we may submit our restless anxiety to your alternative future,
that we may refocus our lives in your gracious will;
that we may trade coveted things for treasured neighbors,
that we may come to our true selves, liberated from the tyranny for more.*

At sundown on Sabbath, we gladly and loudly declare,

"Free at last!" Amen.

Material from Sabbath as Resistance by Walter Brueggeman