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So God's rest is there for people to enter.

–Hebrews 4:6, NLT

American culture applauds busy people. God doesn't. From the beginning of time, God understood our need for rest and provided an eternal solution—the principle of sabbath.

Sabbath rest is a basic need of all creation. “Ebb and flow” is the fundamental routine for every living thing. There is a time to exert and a time to pull back. Nature understands it and exists by it. Yet man doesn't seem to get it. He continually violates it and pays for it when he does.

God Himself set the example for sabbath rest. “On the seventh day, having finished his task, God rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day” (Gen. 2:2-3).

Millenniums later, He put it into Old Testament law to mandate its importance. It became a way to live.

Every seven days, man and beast were commanded to rest, and every seventh year, the fields were to rest. After seven periods of seven years (49 years) the cycle started over. Sabbath was interwoven into the very fabric of life.

Scientists have found that every seven years the cells of our bodies renew themselves. Sociologists suggest that the stages of life run in sevens.

The first seven years is childhood; the second seven, youth; the third, adolescence; the fourth, young adulthood; the fifth, adulthood; and the sixth, middle adulthood. The seventh seven begins another sabbath—survive middle-age crisis, and refreshing comes again!

In addition to being a day of rest, the Sabbath was ordained to be holy. The Hebrew word for “holy” is kadesh. It means to

set something aside, to make it “different”—or to make it not common.

This principle says we should regularly set aside special time for rest and spiritual refreshing. Rick Warren states it this way: “Divert daily, withdraw weekly and evacuate annually.”

Do you have guarded private time? Is it set aside as different, marked, not common?

Sabbath was also meant to be a time to grow spiritually by contemplating on God. Unfortunately, we’ve lost much of this element in Western Christianity. We’ve allowed Eastern religions to dominate the arena of meditation and contemplation.

How are you doing with your sabbath rest? Are you practicing it? Maybe it’s time to slow down and return to the divine principle. It was given for your benefit.

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