

A Sabbath Planning Guide

by Sean Nemecek

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An unplanned Sabbath will either be boring or will never happen.
This guide can help you make your Sabbath day the best, most life-giving day of the week.

As you answer the following questions, think about what leads you to wonder, worship, gratitude, laughter, and contentment. Try to emphasize these elements in your answers. It's also important to approach your Sabbath playfully. This is not some boring religious duty but a day for your own refreshment. What makes you feel most like a child in the Kingdom of God?

1. It is best if you can plan a full 24-hour period starting just before sundown. For example, 6pm Saturday to 6pm Sunday. It's best if the whole family can enjoy the same Sabbath day together. It's also good to plan your Sabbath for the same time every week. What time this week will you set aside as your Sabbath?
2. List some people who give life to your soul – people who love and appreciate you, people whose company you truly enjoy, people who will not drain your soul.
3. List some places that help you be more aware of God's presence. These may be places of beauty, places with special memories, or new places you feel led to explore. If there is a cost involved with visiting these places, be sure to note the cost too.
4. What are your favorite foods or drinks – things that bring joy to your soul or cause you to give thanks to God?
5. List some music that helps you worship God, that brings peace to your heart, or that makes you happy.
6. List some playful activities – things you enjoy doing for the mere pleasure of doing them (games, sports, hobbies, dance, theater, movies, etc.).
7. List some restful activities that restore your spirit (naps, meditation, reading, journaling, mindfulness practices, etc.).
8. List some things that help you notice God's presence or are beautiful to you (candles, campfires, scents, art, poetry, etc.).
9. List some spiritual disciplines that are meaningful to you (or that you would like to try).

**Remember this is just a guide. How you use your Sabbath is up to you.
These lists are designed to help you get the most out of your Sabbath
but you don't have to do everything.**

Develop a Sabbath Plan

Prayerfully look over your Sabbath Planning List and make a plan for this week.

1. When will you practice your Sabbath?

2. What spiritual activities will you do to connect with God and to be more aware of his presence (worship, Bible reading, prayer, spiritual disciplines, etc.)?

3. What special activities will you do that will bring joy to your soul?

4. Plan a special meal with family or friends – a great way to start your Sabbath.

5. What items of beauty will you use throughout your day?

6. Be sure to leave open spaces in your Sabbath day for silence, solitude, physical rest, or spontaneous fun.

7. Schedule a time for planning next week's Sabbath.

Things to Avoid on the Sabbath:

- Work
- Electronic Media (Email, Social Media, TV)
- Productivity
- Attempts to control
- Perfection
- Aggressive activity
- Power
- Planning
- Judgment

Things you might notice as your soul begins to rest:

- Anger
- Anxiety
- Fear
- Sadness
- Grief
- Sorrow
- Aggression
- Sin

As you notice these things, confess them before God – be honest with God about them and express them as fully as you can, then move on. Don't judge yourself or your feelings.

Attitudes to adopt on the Sabbath:

- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Patience
- Kindness
- Goodness
- Faithfulness
- Gentleness
- Self-Control
- Thankfulness
- Playfulness
- Grace & Mercy
- Forgiveness
- Truthfulness
- Authenticity

Resources for Sabbath Planning

Sabbath: The Ancient Practices by Dan Allender

Sacred Rhythms by Ruth Haley Barton

Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership by Ruth Haley Barton

Sabbath as Resistance by Walter Brueggemann

Keeping the Sabbath Wholly: Ceasing, Resting, Embracing, Feasting by Marva J. Dawn

Unhurried Living by Alan Fadling

The Unhurried Leader by Alan Fadling

The Sabbath by Abraham Joshua Heschel

Rhythms of Rest: Finding the Spirit of Sabbath in a Busy World by Shelly Miller

Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal, and Delight in Our Busy Lives by Wayne Muller

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality by Pete Scazzero

The Emotionally Healthy Leader by Pete Scazzero

Subversive Sabbath by A. Swoboda

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For ministry or leadership coaching visit
<https://pirministries.org/ministries/clergy-coaching/>

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