

10 Keys To Successful Living

4 - Take Time Out

Ex 20.8-11

“Remember the stopping time by keeping it holy.⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work,¹⁰ but the seventh day is a stopping time to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates.¹¹ For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the stopping time and made it holy.”

Why take time out?

To stay in harmony with creation

“The root idea of Sabbath is simple as rain falling, basic as breathing. It’s that all living things – and many nonliving things too – thrive only by an ample measure of stillness. A bird flying, never nesting, is soon plummeting. Grass trampled, day after day, scalps down to the hard bone of earth... God stitched into the nature of things an inviolable need to be left alone now and then.”
(Mark Buchanan)

To be refreshed and renewed

“The Sabbath was made for people, not people for the Sabbath.” (Mark 2.27)

Sabbath is supposed to refresh people, not bind them.

“On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates.”

The Israelites were not to treat anyone else the way they had been treated in Egypt. They weren’t to have their leisure at the expense of someone else’s labour, even someone from outside their own society.

How to take time out

Take time out in solitude to listen

Listen to scripture. Listen for God’s still, small voice. Listen to your own heart.

Take time out in community to celebrate relationships

Have a meal together. Go for a walk together. Sit, drink coffee and talk.

Take time out to waste time and play

Sabbath is for play, for spending some time “uselessly.” Maybe when Jesus told us to be like children, he meant we ought to play and laugh and enjoy life more.

To remember you’re a human being

“Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.” (Deuteronomy 5.15)

Sabbath reminds us that we are not defined by what we do. “You are a human being, not a human doing.”