



Sabbath

An Invitation to Spiritual Rest

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Sabbath

An Invitation to Spiritual Rest

Scott Bessenecker

We are made in the image of God in many beautiful and powerful ways. However, Psalm 121:4 tells us that God “neither slumbers no sleeps,” and while God could have made us without the need for sleep, we have been intentionally created to spend 1/3rd of our lives in a state of dormancy. In fact, God created every healthy living organism to need regular periods of dormancy. On top of designing us to shut down for 8 hours out of every 24, God commands us to “do no work” for an entire 24-hour period every week.

I am convinced human beings are not primarily designed for productivity – at least not in the way the world defines it. By my rough calculation, after accounting for the genetic condition which shuts us down 1/3rd of the day, obeying the weekly Sabbath and every-seven-year sabbatical commands of Scripture, and taking into account the time required for simply keeping a human body alive and functional, we only have about 50% of our lives available to “get stuff done,” and that doesn’t count the years we spend in infancy and old age where productivity is further reduced. We are not God’s work horses designed for efficient productivity.

God rested after creating the world (Gen. 2:1-3). This act of resting is the capstone to the first creation account. God rested, not for exhaustion but for example. If the Creator of the Universe rested from his work, then we ought to rest from ours. Not with begrudging obedience, but because it is good for us, and it serves as a prophetic example to the world around us which is bombarded with the message that one’s value is solely based in what one produces.

Our identity and sense of worth need to be weaned from the unholy attachment to work. **We are more than what we produce** and until we build rhythms of dormancy and rest into our lives we will be forever lured into measuring our value and identity in what we do.

One of my favorite chapters in the Bible is Isaiah 58, where the people of God are challenged to loose the chains of injustice, spend themselves on behalf of the hungry, and to satisfy the needs of the oppressed. Yet that same chapter also urges God’s people to “keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please on my holy day,” And obedience to Sabbath rest comes with a promise; “You will find your joy in the Lord, and I will cause you to ride in triumph on the heights of the land ...” Is 58:13-14. Our rest is connected with our joy and our triumph in confronting injustice.

We ought to rest weekly and we ought to rest deeply in body, mind and spirit. We ought to do it for our own physical, mental and spiritual health; we ought to do it to locate our value and our identity outside of our productivity; we should rest to keep us humbly dependent upon God; we should rest in order to energize us to serve the campus as well as those who are oppressed and hungry; and we should rest to serve as a prophetic example to a watching world which is obsessed with productivity.

This is not a Pharisaical invitation to scrutinize how far one walks or how much one carries on our day of rest. It is an invitation to experience our value and our personhood in God, and apart from our work. It is an invitation into embrace the fact that we are loved and valued by God – even in a state of inactivity, even when we are “producing” nothing for the Kingdom.

We are a diverse fellowship of ministers who have given ourselves to following Jesus together. It is important to develop communal rhythms of spiritual rest. Ones that we commit to together.

Weekly Rest

Building in one day of rest each week may look differently during different seasons of life. Staff are employed in a wide variety of roles which sometimes require weekend activity. And as ministers we are often called upon by our faith communities to serve in some capacity on Sundays. But it is critical that we develop a consistent, boundaried time each week where we allow ourselves a significant period of rest. Like all good disciplines, this involves making hard choices, inviting accountability, and lots of practice. Take time with your spouse or household, and with your supervisor, to draft a plan. Consider these boundaries:

- No sending or checking work-related email.
- No responding to work-related texts or calls.
- A specified number of hours engaged in restorative practices (see questionnaire).
- Mandatory naps!

Although these rhythms will likely change with our stages of life, seasons of the year, and shifting responsibilities, it is important that we devote time and thought to our weekly Sabbath commitment. We have included in this document a number of testimonies which will provide a picture of how some of our staff colleagues use their Sabbath time. Use these testimonies to inspire you to create and maintain your own Sabbath boundaries and activities.

Monthly Retreat

Daily time spent in prayer and listening to God as well as taking a weekly Sabbath are critical to the health and spiritual well-being of all people. But those of us who are ministers of the gospel

bear an increased responsibility for focused time in prayer, reading, and reflection. Taking one day per month beyond the Sabbath to set aside regular activities to re-center ourselves and our ministry is a gift to those whom we serve.

The Hebrew scriptures outline seven holy periods to be celebrated throughout the year. These were days set aside to read scripture, reflect, celebrate, pray and rest. Many of these holy days had the injunction to “do no work.” God was eager for his people to set apart special regular periods on top of a weekly Sabbath in order to draw near to him.

We have provided some ideas regarding how one might take a monthly day of retreat, either as an individual or as a team. With intentionality and accountability, we are asking you to set apart one day (either a 24-hour retreat or an 8-hour period) per month to draw near to the source of your strength and the One who has called you into ministry.

When we are more thoughtful and committed to Sabbath rest, I believe we will be better able to weather the challenges of life and ministry in a beautiful but fallen world.

Sabbath Questionnaire

When making a Sabbath plan, think about a generous number of hours on certain days which will be set apart for physical, spiritual, emotional and relational rejuvenation. Look over the next 16 weeks and consider the various commitments and responsibilities you may have. Then mark out one day each week which you can keep Sabbath. It may be helpful if others in your household are able to set aside the same days (or at least to know which days you have set aside) so that you can talk about how to do what needs to be done while still respecting a commitment to rest on these days.

1. What are some activities that physically rejuvenate you...
 - A. In comfortable outdoor weather?
 - B. In inclement weather?
2. What places and under what conditions do you best nap?
3. What are activities that draw you closer to God or energize you spiritually?
4. What activities feed your emotional well-being?
5. Where are key points of stress in your life today? Are there ways to put temporary boundaries on them, or ways to set these stressors aside for a short period each week?
6. Are there social activities or something you do with a friend that tend to restore you?

Types of Sabbath Commitments

Sabbath seems to best be observed when in community with accountability and shared commitments. Below are some examples of commitments different InterVarsity staff teams have made that might be good places for you and your teammates to start.

No work email one day a week

As a team, commit to one designated day of no emailing work items. We recommend this being Sunday. It's an easy commitment to make and even easier to hold accountable with others!

Observe monthly contemplative retreats and quarterly group retreats

It's critical to get devoted time away from the outside world to commune with God individually and corporately. We've included Retreat Guides in this document to help you observe this practice. You can find additional Retreat Guides by visiting <http://learningandtalent.intervarsity.org/spiritual-formation-prayer/retreat-guides>. Note that quarterly group retreats can also include groups outside of your InterVarsity staff community, like church members, spiritual friendships, etc.

Plan work related events/meetings/gatherings around Sabbath days

As a team, make sure events/meetings/gatherings which your team plans allow staff to observe Sabbath well. If planning a Regional Staff Conference, for instance, place dates in the week to allow staff to observe Sabbath well upon returning. Make allowance for work to halt upon returning so staff return well and don't feel pressured to ignore the spiritual discipline they've committed to. We recognize this may be costly to staff and volunteers who have additional, weekday employment or classes. Do your best to compress meetings or clear another day so that Sabbath can be observed by all.

Allow for appropriate comp days after travel periods and extensive meeting times

Use a rule of thumb suggesting 1 day off for every 3-4 days of travel. Be willing to provide flexibility here depending on the kind of trip. We recommend that supervisors ask about this when their staff travel and record on their performance reviews how your supervisees do in all the above areas.

Identify activities related to ministry and home that will not get done, and plan well

These will undoubtedly differ depending on life stages. For parents of young children, it could include no laundry. For parents of teenagers, it could include insisting any help with homework happens on Saturday. For single adults, it could include letting students know you're not available on a specific day. These specific areas must include preparing well to rest from that work – making sure homework over the weekend is completed by a certain time, intentionally planning for laundry on other days, communicating well with students. Supervisors should plan to ask direct questions on what work will be avoided during Sabbath and help employees plan well to succeed.

Identify areas of refreshment to incorporate into the day, and plan well

Similar to work omitted, areas of refreshment will vary depending on personality, life stages, and preferences. Be willing to share your ideas for what this could look like with your supervisor and teammates. Some could include taking a walk, sharing a meal with others, napping, journaling, reading for pleasure, an excursion out with the family, etc. Planning for these are again helpful to make sure you do include items that are life-giving. For some life stages, flexibility may be required as children or taking care of sick loved ones may affect true availability. In these times, allow for space to see where God is providing enjoyment during your Sabbath and take note to share with others about the experience.

A Key to Sabbath Keeping

A key to observing Sabbath well is extending grace and offering accountability. We were not created to do life on our own, including taking Sabbath days. As staff we should be willing to invite our teammates and supervisors into helping us observe Sabbath well, and we in turn should be willing to help others. The idea is not to become legalistic in our observation of Sabbath, but stand firm to commitments we make to ourselves, God, and each other.



Sabbath Testimony: Al Hsu

Senior Editor for IVP Books, Asian American Male, Husband and Father of 2 Teenage Sons, Attends Anglican Church

Eleven years ago, my family joined a new church plant. One of the reasons we gravitated toward this church was because the core members included legendary IVCF/IFES spiritual formation leaders Marilyn and Doug Stewart, and we wanted to grow to be like them in thirty or forty years. The church met on Saturday evenings because we rented space in another church's building, and the building wasn't available on Sundays. So we meet at 5 pm on Saturdays at sundown, starting each service with the Phos Hilaron, a vespers evening prayer.

Having worship on Saturday evening is kind of like a Jewish rhythm of Sabbath starting at sundown and lasting through the next day. Our church didn't originally plan it this way, but an unintended consequence of this schedule is that our Sundays have been completely freed up to practice Sabbath. We no longer had to rush to get the kids out the door to church on Sunday mornings. Now we could sleep in (as long as the kids would let us), take our time getting ready, maybe make pancakes and have a leisurely breakfast. It became an opportunity to read, rest, go for walks, and spend time together as a family.

Our church's website says, "We begin our Sabbath with Saturday evening worship and are finding a rhythm of work and rest that is restorative to our souls. We are calling one another to radically resist the hurry and busyness of our culture." So our church is intentional about not scheduling meetings on Sundays, except for activities that build community like morning prayer breakfasts in a park or book discussion groups. So we'll have dinner with friends after Saturday church, or we'll get together with folks on Sundays for brunch.

At first it felt weird to have nothing to do on Sunday mornings. If we ran out to Target on a Sunday morning, we'd mentally defend ourselves to others, thinking, "We went to church last night! Really! We're not pagans!" So we avoided shopping and consuming on Sunday as part of our Sabbath rhythm. We've noticed over the years that we don't need to be legalistic about this; we've naturally done less shopping on Sundays anyway because it gets in the way of our rest. We also don't check work email on the Sabbath, and we save chores like cleaning and laundry for Saturdays rather than Sundays. There were some seasons during my PhD program when I'd have to do research and write on Sundays, but the Sabbath rhythm gave me space for that.

Another thing that gradually happened is that my wife and I made Sundays our regular date night. We wanted to avoid the crowdedness of Friday nights, and Saturday nights are for church. On Sundays, there's less traffic and restaurants are less busy. And Sunday matinees and shows are often more available and cheaper than other weekend times. Season tickets for local theatres are a concrete way of getting dates on the calendar, so we have a habit of seeing a musical on Sundays usually once or twice a month. It's a fun way of reconnecting, and we're glad to support the arts in our community.

Now that I'm in midlife, I find Sabbaths all the more important. While I'm not quite as driven as I was earlier in my career, I still need the space to take a breath, clear the decks, and recalibrate. I'm grateful that our church has helped me learn the rhythm of Sabbath, and I'm glad that InterVarsity is pursuing it as a movement.



Sabbath Testimony: Bethany Horvath

NSC Project Manager, Church Traditions include Non-Denominational (current), Presbyterian/USA, Southern & American Baptist

I never heard the word Sabbath really until high school, and then equated it to the Jewish tradition of sundown Friday evening to sundown Saturday evening with no work. Without realizing it, my parents' had instilled within my family a Sabbath rhythm without actually talking about Sabbath. Growing up, Sundays meant attending church, eating a nice lunch together as a family and discussing what we had learned in Sunday School, taking a nap in the afternoon, attending church in the evening and watching The Wonderful World of Disney on ABC. It was a routine our family did diligently. And little did I know how that routine would shape the rest of my life.

Sabbath for me now begins sundown on Saturday to sundown on Sunday because I prefer to attend my church's Saturday afternoon service. It ends around 6pm and I find that this starts off my Sabbath on a spiritual note. As a creative person, my Sabbath involves items that draw me closer to the presence of God in creative ways. I know this type of Sabbath is not meant for everyone, but it works amazingly well for me. I spend Saturday afternoon strolling through my Pinterest boards of recipes to find something new to cook. Saturday after church I take my time grocery shopping for items the recipe calls for. Usually as I shop I find myself thanking God for his creativeness – the beautiful green artichoke with its unique shape, the ingenuity of those who develop different flavor profiles in sauces and spices, the flowers I see while shopping. While shopping, as a single woman, I often notice families and at times find myself admiring and praying for something similar one day, or thanking God that I'm not at that stage in life. It just depends on what God has been saying to me recently and what state of mood I'm in.

After shopping on Saturday evenings I usually spend time on the phone catching up with my family. Talking for some time and hearing how life is, sharing what God is doing, what's on our hearts, etc. The conversations during this time seem different than quick calls that happen in the week. There's something deeper that happens and I find myself talking about deeper things.

My favorite Sabbath activity comes on Sunday. Sunday I sleep in, wake up and make a leisurely breakfast and bask in cups of strong coffee. I lazily make my way to noon and start cooking the recipe I found the day before. Time in the kitchen is where I feel the closest to God during my Sabbath. Chopping up beautiful vegetables and stirring a sauce I created on the stove to finish

a masterpiece I will enjoy all week long provides times of contemplation, listening, and sharing with God. I've started documenting these creations weekly on Instagram using the hashtag #sabbathrecipes as another form of giving thanks and sharing what God is doing in a larger community.

Sunday afternoon usually follows with a nap and early evening oftentimes includes partaking in a movie with friends, having someone over for dinner and conversation, or preparing myself for the week ahead with reflection and prayer.

This gift of Sabbath helps me prepare well for the week ahead. I notice when it's observed well, I don't come into the office Monday morning with dread or feelings of fatigue. It's a gift that continues on after observing and I'm grateful for how it helps me start my week of recognizing God's presence and beauty not only in my life, but all around me.



Sabbath Testimony: Brenda Wong

Hawaii Area Director, Serving 38 Years as InterVarsity Staff, Attends a Non-Denominational Charismatic Church

A realistic Sabbath for me is taking a break from InterVarsity work. The day of my Sabbath varies sometimes, and sometimes I take two parts of two days if my schedule doesn't allow for a full day.

Things I include in my Sabbath are unrushed time with God in His word, worship music, prayer, reflection and journaling. Sometimes I go out to the beach, which is great as being in creation helps me to engage with God. I may go for a walk. Sometimes reading part of a book helps replenish me with new thoughts. Physical rest is part of my day, a slow morning and a nap if needed. I also take time to read the paper.

I may spend time with people who are like family to me or peers that are not expecting to receive from me. This may also include phone calls. If I have a party or social event for someone I can include it as part of my Sabbath if it doesn't feel like work. Sometimes I watch a movie or do errands I have neglected that I need to do for myself. Mostly I don't have a schedule or list of things but am open to the Spirit's leading. Eating some food I enjoy can also be part of the day.

Sometimes Sabbath is on Sunday and worship is part of my Sabbath. If I spend time with church friends, it's usually people I am not responsible for.

I try not to answer emails and only receives calls that are not work related.

There are always obstacles to overcome, the biggest being creating space, planning to not work, and choosing to do things that help me engage more deeply to God and replenish my spirit and soul.

I often feel the conflict of trying to engage in work related things. Because of Isaiah 58, I am open to ministry to the poor during my Sabbath, and hopefully as a choice to experience God and not an obligation.

I love Sabbath and value the disengagement from work to focus on God and loved ones.



Sabbath Testimony: Bret Staudt Willet

Ministry in Digital Spaces Director, Married with 2 Children under 5 Years Old, PhD Student, Anabaptist Church Background

I started taking a Sabbath day as an undergraduate; it was a spiritual practice rooted in my InterVarsity community and a shared value for all of us as we strived to follow Jesus. It was one of those Scripture applications that came along naturally in the course of time. We of course hit Mark 2:27-28 early in the week of Chapter Camp: “The sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath; so the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath.” What was Jesus talking about? What would it mean for us as college students to receive Sabbath as a gift and not a burden?

We took these words back to campus with us and wrestled with their implications. We were all busy with schoolwork at a competitive private liberal arts and engineering school. Many of us were student leaders for InterVarsity, a commitment our staff suggested would take as much time in our week as being a varsity athlete. And we went to a very social school where we all genuinely enjoyed being around people. So... taking a day off seemed daunting, to say the least.

Like generations of creative college students before us and after us, we tried a wide variety of ways to interpret, “Keep the Sabbath day holy.” We thought, maybe Sabbath is just a state of mind, and it’s ok to work as usual, just with a better outlook. We thought, maybe it’ll work to rest a few hours at a time, spread out over multiple days; maybe a half-day is what God would have intended for our modern world.

Eventually, we settled into naming and defining a 24-hour period for Sabbath. We were never hung up on that day overlapping Sunday (since the Sabbath of the early church wasn’t on Sunday). But we committed to 24 hours straight. Maybe Saturday. Maybe Monday. Or Thursday. Undergraduates have odd class schedules, so we made due. I can’t describe the joy of walking into our campus café on a Thursday, seeing a good friend relaxed and peaceful with a hot beverage and a journal. My Thursdays would be busy rushing from one thing to a next, but it was a testimony to me to see my friend taking her space with Jesus.

I didn’t have the words back then, but in recent years Wendell Berry has captured the essence of the Sabbath for me better than anyone (all poetry quoted here comes from *A Timbered Choir: The Sabbath Poems 1979-1997*). As an undergraduate, my understanding of Sabbath was best expressed as:

*I go among trees and sit still.
All my stirring become quiet
around me like circles on water.
My tasks lie in their places
where I left them, asleep like cattle.*

(1979: I)

More than a decade later, I think this captures it more fully for me:

*After days of labor,
mute in my consternations,
I hear my song at last,
and I sing it. As we sing,
the turns, the trees move.*

(1979: I)

*Sabbath economy
In which all thought is song,
All labor is a dance.*

(1983: II)

These days, I have two small, adorable, and remarkably energetic kids under the age of 4. I'm a national director with InterVarsity over a ministry field no one has tackled before. I'm in my first year of a PhD program. My ministry and my research require me to plug into all things digital and connected.

These days, Sabbath isn't part of the routine or life rhythm. It's distinctly out of rhythm. It's not a nice option; it's my lifeline, my reset button. Sabbath isn't convenient, but it's worth fighting for, worth the labor of 6 days to make space for the 7th. I discovered the Sabbath isn't only for me; my classmates have noticed. It's a curious thing to work extra hard to make space for rest; it makes people wonder, "Why?"



Sabbath Testimony: Diana Collymore

Missions Mobilizer & Strategist, Church Backgrounds include Plymouth Brethren, Charismatic Inter-Denominational, United Methodist, & Non-Denominational Urban

Reflecting back on my childhood, I now recognize my parents practiced Sabbath rest on Sundays without formally labeling it as such. My African-Caribbean parents brought the habit of Sunday afternoon rest from their island culture. A practice that was originally introduced to their country through the Church. For my parents, Sunday was a day to pause after a week of working in demanding physical labor combined with the care of family and home. They never stopped working except on the Lord's Day. Corporate worship on Sunday morning followed by a meal, a quiet afternoon, and more time with the people of God in a worship service before ending the day -- this was Sabbath practice for the Collymore family.

Sabbath continues to be a work in progress for me. When I first joined InterVarsity, God was clear about taking up the practice. You know how God repeats himself about something because he wants you to "get it." Or maybe he just does that with me. In this new career with campus ministry Sabbath came up in discussions with my supervisor, articles and conferences. I got the message. It is a practice that I passed on to the students that were entrusted to me during my first years on campus.

Like my ministry assignment has changed over the years, so have my habits changed. After a while I was relearning the of practice Sabbath. An intentional time of resting from work - both vocational and personal- took readjustment. For me, the practice of Sabbath requires adhering to boundaries. There is always something that can take up my time and energy. A quick stop at the store usually turns into completing the shopping for the week. I've found that "one item" turns into a multistore shopping exercise. That quick glance at email becomes an hour of writing messages.

On the days that Sabbath goes well, there is laughter with friends and good coffee. Other times the enticing smells from a new recipe waft in my apartment. There can be exploration of a park or the zoo. On the days that Sabbath does not go well, I am often blurry-eyed and sluggish after what turned into hours of television. As I continue to learn more about my habits, I learn where to create boundaries that will move me towards healthy practices.

I have found that the busier the season the more I need to practice keeping Sabbath. In these seasons Sabbath reminds me that work is not my everything. While my labor is valued it is not the crucial driver. Sabbath is an exercise that forms a trust that God sees more in me than the work that I produce.



Sabbath Testimony: Jim Lundgren

Former Interim President, White Male, Married with 2 Sons and 3 Grandchildren

Quite a few years ago, the Lord spoke to me about the way I spend my Sabbath. Too often it was like a day off and not a day set aside for real rest, restoration and connection with God and my family. I did not feel called by God to be a legalist about Sabbath with tons of rules and regulations, but I did want to engage it as a gift to me and those I love and work with. If I am rested and linked with God, I am less crabby overall and more ready to listen to and engage with each person I meet and with Jesus all through my days.

Frankly, finding the right rhythm for my Sabbath keeping has been a journey. Early on the Lord reassured me that it was not about getting it “right”. Instead it was about the joy of learning disciplines that are liberating not confining. I found that fasting from all InterVarsity work and email helped me feel refreshed and ready to go on Monday morning. While I feel free to watch a game (all things Chicago), I seek to avoid being a TV coach potato.

On the positive side, most of the time, my Sabbaths are on Sunday so worship and engagement at church is a high priority. I set aside time in the afternoons and evenings for reading, devotions and journaling about my experience with God and with people over the last week. Connecting with Mary Beth and with my children and grandchildren is a joy. Mary Beth and I love taking walks together or in the winter sitting by the fire talking and reading. Every other week, we meet with a household small group at church. Again, I am not rigid about doing the same things at the same time every week. The last thing I need is to feel like if I miss one of these practices that my Sabbath has been ruined. Sabbath is for connection, rest and restoration, not guilt!!

I am very excited that our fellowship is exploring Sabbath keeping together in the coming year or two. What a wonderful change it would be if we all were more rested, more centered in Christ and more connected with those we love. Let’s look on this season as a great opportunity rather than a new obligation. God bless you as you engage the adventure of Sabbath!

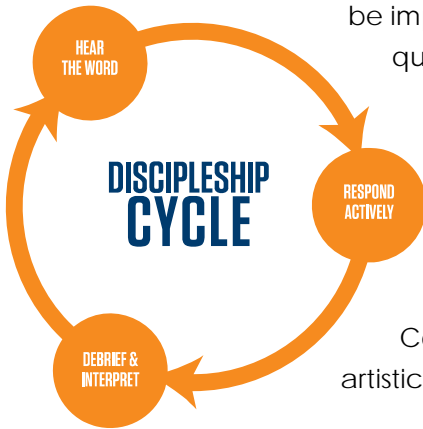
Discipleship Assessment

Silent Retreat Guide

This guide offers an opportunity to assess your growth as a disciple: in Christ in intimacy with God and others, like Christ in character, and with Christ in his mission.

Silent Retreat as Discipleship Cycle:

A silent retreat focuses on Hear the Word, and Respond Actively in the Discipleship Cycle. We hear the Word in Scripture and listening prayer, and we respond by experiencing silence, and solitude in various ways, by resting, by journaling, and by reflecting in various ways. At the end of the retreat, it will be important to debrief and interpret your experience. Reflect on the following questions, journaling your answers as honestly as you can.



Growing as a disciple:

If your life as a disciple were a garden, what does the garden look like? What season is it in that garden? What is the quality of the soil, the produce?

Consider drawing a picture of the state of the garden. (even if you are not artistically gifted, this exercise may help you reflect!)

Growing other disciples:

Describe the quality of your relationships with others, including peers and family.

Describe the quality of your relationships with those you hope will become disciples of Jesus.

Describe any relationships where you are intentionally helping another disciple grow.

Growing in Christ in intimacy:

Spend some time meditating on Ephesians 1:1-14, focusing on your identity in Christ. Also reflect on the following questions.

How would you describe your relationship with God at this point in feeling words? What metaphors or stories would you use? What picture would you paint or song would you sing?

If someone could see all of your activities of spiritual discipline, how would they describe them?

How do you feel about that description?

DISCIPLESHIP VISION
GROWING
DISCIPLES
IN LIKE & WITH
CHRIST

What have you heard from God recently in Scripture, and how have you responded?

Growing like Christ in character:

Spend time meditating on Philippians 1:27-2:18, and asking God how he is shaping your character.

Describe your recent experiences of repentance and obedience to the Word. How would others describe your character and your emotional intelligence?

Draw a picture describing your relationship with power, including the ways you carry your own power or privilege, the ways you relate to those in authority over you, and the ways you relate to those under you.

In what areas of your life are you consciously choosing to surrender to Jesus' leadership? How are you exploring and/or expressing your sense of God's unique calling on your life?

Growing with Christ in his mission:

Spend time meditating on Luke 10:1-11, Acts 1:8 and asking Jesus to speak to you about how you are partnering with him in his mission in the world.

Describe your sense of heart connection with God's wishes for the world. How do you currently pray for God's work in the world?

In what ways are you stewarding your resources, gifts, and station of life toward God's mission in the world?

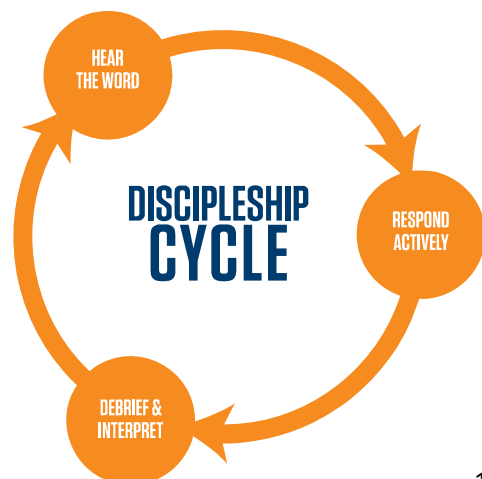
In what ways are you choosing to cross culture or class for the sake of living out the gospel?

Debrief & Interpret:

After your retreat, consider one of two possibilities to debrief/interpret your experience:

Choose several of your reflections from the retreat, and share them with a friend, mentor or supervisor. Discuss your own assessment and plans for future growth.

Ask one or more people who know you well to also answer a few of the retreat questions about you. Then with a friend or supervisor, reflect on the similarities and differences between your own answers and those of the other person.



The Silent Retreat content can also form a Team Retreat

Envision a retreat that allots 90 minutes of content to each of the aspects of the D Vision: IN, LIKE, and WITH. Here (below) is a sample module for arrival exercise (90 minutes) and then followed by a 90 minute module for "IN." Of course, a team retreat will vary greatly depending on the team context, so we are simply suggesting a format with some starter ideas here...

Time	Content	Notes	Materials
15 min	Present D Vision	Present D Vision focused on three dimensions of In, Like, and With. From John 15: Abiding, Pruning, Fruit-bearing.	
45 min	Arrival exercise	<p>Growing as a disciple: Read Genesis 2; (alternative Scripture reflection; John 15 or Psalm 1)</p> <p>The Garden of Eden represents God's ideal environment for his new creation of woman and man to thrive, work, and grow. Read and reflect on the Garden as a metaphor for flourishing life. Think of your life as a disciple as being like a garden. What does the garden look like? What season is it in that garden? What is the quality of the soil, the produce?</p> <p>Consider drawing a picture of the state of the garden. (even if you are not artistically gifted, this exercise may help you reflect!)</p> <p>Pray and commit your observations to Jesus. Ask God's Spirit to work in you during the retreat to help the garden of your life to flourish in him.</p>	<p>Journals, writing supplies, art supplies, crayons, paper, markers.</p> <p>Places to scatter and be alone.</p> <p>Bibles</p>
30 min	Communal Discipleship	<p>Discuss in triads using the garden imagery: Growing other disciples:</p> <p>Describe the quality of your relationships with peers and family.</p> <p>Describe the quality of your relationships</p>	Assign triads for duration of retreat.

		<p>with those you hope will become disciples of Jesus.</p> <p>Describe any relationships where you are intentionally helping another disciple grow.</p> <p>Pray together for each other.</p>	
15 min	Large Group: In Christ in Intimacy	<p>IN CHRIST passage. Ephesians 1:1-14 (esp. v. 5) Our identity is in Christ. As such, we have been adopted as sons and daughters. Who does God say we are?</p> <p>Teaching on the family of God, what He intends it to be, what it means to be daughters and sons, individually and as the household of God.</p>	
45 min	Triads: In Christ in Intimacy	<p>Language of family... means something different to each one of us. Pick the photo that best represents what you think of when you think of "family of origin"</p> <p>Share Triads: Why you picked this.</p> <p>Pray for each other for ways in which the image of God for family needs to be restored for each of you.</p>	Family photographs representing different family dynamics Happy sad blended angry poor wealthy relaxed tense
30 min	Worship Response: We are God's Family	<p>Worship or other corporate activity to underscore family communal identity</p>	Worship music that emphasizes redeemed family identity as the people of God.



Additional Sabbath Resources

[The Radical Pursuit of Rest: Escaping the Productivity Trap](#)

by John Koessler (IVP)

The book includes reflection and discussion questions designed for both individual and group use. You will discover the true meaning behind Jesus' idea of the yoke of rest and restoration for your mind, body and soul.

[Keeping the Sabbath Wholly: Ceasing, Resting, Embracing, Feasting](#)

by Marva J. Dawn (Eerdmans)

This refreshing book invites the reader to experience the wholeness and joy that come from observing God's order for life—a rhythm of working six days and setting apart one day for rest, worship, festivity, and relationships. Dawn develops a four-part pattern for keeping the Sabbath: (1) ceasing—not only from work but also from productivity, anxiety, worry, possessiveness, and so on; (2) resting—of the body as well as the mind, emotions, and spirit—a wholistic rest; (3) embracing—deliberately taking hold of Christian values, of our calling in life, of the wholeness God offers us; (4) feasting—celebrating God and his goodness in individual and corporate worship as well as feasting with beauty, music, food, affection, and social interaction.

[Sabbath Keeping: Finding Freedom in Rhythms of Rest](#)

by Lynne M. Baab (IVP)

Eighteen months in Tel Aviv, Israel, where a weekly sabbath is built into the culture, began Lynne M. Baab's twenty-five-year embrace of a rhythm of rest—as a stay-at-home mom, as a professional writer working out of her home and as a minister of the gospel. With collected insights from sabbath keepers of all ages and backgrounds, Sabbath Keeping offers a practical and hopeful guidebook that encourages all of us to slow down and enjoy our relationship with the God of the universe.

Sacred Rhythms: Arranging Our Lives for Spiritual Transformation

by Ruth Haley Barton (IVP)

Spiritual disciplines are activities that open us to God's transforming love and the changes that only God can bring about in our lives. Picking up on the monastic tradition of creating a "rule of life" that allows for regular space for the practice of the spiritual disciplines, this book takes you more deeply into understanding seven key disciplines along with practical ideas for weaving them into everyday life. Each chapter includes exercises to help you begin the practices-- individually and in a group context. The final chapter puts it all together in a way that will help you arrange your life for spiritual transformation.

Sabbath

by Alec Hill (www.intervarsity.org)

Article by former InterVarsity President, Alec Hill, on the importance of Sabbath in the role of ministry and his personal experience in learning to observe this spiritual discipline.