



Church of God Ministries  
Spanish Fort, Alabama

## Why Do I ... Delight in the Sabbath?

*A world without a Sabbath would be like a man without a smile, like a summer without flowers, and like a homestead without a garden. It is the most joyous day of the whole week.*

—Henry Ward Beecher

I walked into the house and mmmm!!! It smelled so good. Mom was cooking dinner. It wasn't just any dinner, it was Sabbath dinner. Mom was a great cook, but she went above and beyond on Friday night. There was a special meal, maybe baked chicken or Beef Stroganoff. She usually made a dessert for this night; my favorite was Chocolate Chip Cake. We might even have candles on the table. Dad always changed out of his work clothes, and dressed up just a bit, and put on some relaxing music. It was a special time indeed. We were together as a family and each did his part to make this day a delight.

Why should the Sabbath be so special? What makes it better than any other day of the week? The Sabbath is a gift from God. (Mark 2:27) He gave it to us as a day of rejuvenation. One day out of seven when He wants us to cease from doing work. That seems quite generous to me. What employer gives each employee 52 vacation days each year?

### Family

The Sabbath was given to us to be a delight. (Isaiah 58:13) How can we make this gift a delight in our life? Spending time with family is one great way. Starting your Sabbath off with a nice meal is a great way to begin. Sitting around the table talking about what is happening in your life, the plans you have for the future, sharing a funny story that happened at school are great ways to share with your family. Occasionally, my family will remember stories and funny things that happened at the dinner table—even 30 years later. Those times still bring us delight.

Even after dinner, it was still a time to rejoice. No school work or chores, and we didn't need to feel guilty about it. It was time to rest. Sometimes we played a Bible game. Other times, Mom might start reading a Bible story. Often times we didn't get very far in the story, as we started asking questions about the Bible character. Dad and Mom would answer our questions. Our Bible story time turned in to a Bible discussion time. It was a fun way of learning about God, His people, and His way of life.

### Friends

The Sabbath fun didn't end on Friday night. It was just beginning. Sabbath morning we were up and getting ready for Sabbath services. We usually left for church early as we wanted to get there to help set up, but more than that, we wanted to be with our friends. Yes, we had friends at school, but our Sabbath friends were special. They believed just like we did and we looked forward all week to being with them again. Not only could we talk about what happened during the week, but we were helping set up the hall for church services.

Our church friends were important because we shared the same faith. The struggles that we faced in school were the same. Our belief system was the same and having each other to rely upon and to reinforce our standards of belief kept us strong. We knew that we could make it through another week because our friends were struggling with the same things, and we were praying for each other.

Teens were not my only friends at church. The widow ladies were like extra Grandmas. They always had a kind word or compliment. One lady saw me drawing pictures on my notepad, and the next week she brought me a gift—drawing paper and color pastels.

## **Fellowship**

We didn't let the delight of the Sabbath end after church services. We stayed around fellowshiping after services and then cleaned up the church hall. We extended our fellowship time by getting together for a meal. Sometimes we went to our friend's home and sometimes we had people come to our home. It wasn't always the people our age that came over; sometimes we had a houseful of widows and singles.

We talked and shared stories. Often times we talked about where we were going for the Feast of Tabernacles, or told stories about what happened at a past Feast. We discussed the sermon. Each person had his own perspective to share that was interesting. Sometimes we took a walk or went to the park and enjoyed God's creation. This was more time of talking and getting to know one another.

The Sabbath is a command from God that we are to keep, (Exodus 20:8-11) but far from being a burdensome command and heavy load to bare, it is a delight and a refreshing, relaxing and joy-filled day. God instructs us to not work, but to also delight in the Sabbath and in Him. By doing this, we are blessed. (Isaiah 56:2) We are blessed with a day of rest from work or school and worries of everyday life. We are blessed with family time to build strong bonds. We have one-on-one time with trust worthy friends who believe as we do. We have time to share and strengthen our faith with like-minded brethren.

God gave us a free day—free from everyday pressures, work, trials, and stress. Free to worship Him and learn His way of life all day. The Sabbath is a day to delight in Him. How are you going to make the Sabbath a delight?

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