

Welcome to the Sabbath!

DEVOTIONAL SERIES

The Sabbath is one of the greatest keys God has given us for living fruitful lives.

We invite you on a journey to rediscover the relevance of the Sabbath today. The following three devotionals are a part of *52 Sabbaths* by David Hoffbrand. The series consists of insightful reflections for each Sabbath of the year to help you experience a deeper sense of joy and intimacy in your relationship with God.

To learn more about David and *52 Sabbaths*, go to www.sabbath love



DEVOTIONAL 1

Perspective

The Sabbath helps us gain and regain God's perspective on our lives.

When Israel was making their way out of captivity and into the Promised Land, they sent twelve spies to see the land first and all saw the same things. Yet two read the situation differently to the other ten. Why? Perspective!

It was not what they saw that really mattered, it was what they measured it against. Ten measured the people and giants against their own fears and insecurities. But Joshua and Caleb measured them against the truth of who God was to them and who He said they were! Because of this they came up with a different plan.

And here's the key – they each received according not to what they saw, but how they *looked*.

Our perspective determines our outcome more than our circumstances. The instruments we use to measure our lives have been shaped by our past and day to day experi-

ences. This impacts the way we see ourselves and others, and the decisions we make.

If we do not reset and get God's perspective again then these instruments will eventually take us off the course of God's intended destination for our lives. *The Sabbath is our weekly course correction.* The prophet Isaiah said:

But those who trust in the Lord will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. (Is 40:31)

Eagles have amazing vision, but they can only use this fully when they are soaring. When we are on the ground surrounded by our challenges and problems, we can be overwhelmed and barely see a way forward.

The Sabbath gives us a space to unplug from what take us off track, and soar instead with God so we can see things from His perspective.

[This Sabbath, take some time to look up and let God lift you. Ask Him to give you His perspective on everything, to see things through His eyes, including your self-image and any challenges you are facing.](#)

Shabbat shalom!



DEVOTIONAL 2

Antidote

The Sabbath is an antidote to the poison of stress in our lives.

Anxiety is a scourge of the modern world. Statistics suggest that around a third of us will experience an anxiety disorder at some point.

Anxiety attacks, but God gave his people a special weapon in the battle against anxiety – His day of rest.

If the Israelites were ever going to be anxious it was surely in the seasons of ploughing and harvest. They depended on the seeds they sowed and the grain they could harvest to sustain them for the rest of the year. Those fields lay there, bursting with crops, yet God specifically commanded them to keep the Sabbath even in these seasons.

You have six days each week for your ordinary work, but on the seventh day you must stop working, even during the seasons of ploughing and harvest. (Exodus 34:21)

God says in the midst of your busiest season you must continue to observe the Sabbath rest! Stop, and take a stand against the anxious activity of preparing and stockpiling that seems so necessary. In fact, the busier you are the more important it is!

Anxiety and stress can have many causes. But the sense of rest and peace that the Sabbath contributes to our lives can be a massive help in countering them. It is liberating to stop and say - Father, I choose to give this to you. I refuse to be anxious about it.

We survey the fields and we remember the one who made them and created the seasons. We laugh with him and our fellow labourers. We enjoy the fruits of our labour from the previous week and tell stories. We learn and grow.

And then, once refreshed and re-gathered, we get back to it the next day.

[If you are feeling anxious, take a moment and reexamine the “field” of your pressures and worries. Survey it all with Jesus by your side. Hand it back to him – you are his and the field is too.](#)

Shabbat shalom!



Rhythm

DEVOTIONAL 3

God's festivals and the Sabbath are a pattern for life to help us work hard and play hard.

Finding the rhythm of life is about more than simply seasons of work followed by seasons of play. God gave us a template to help us. It is too easy to get trapped in a pendulum swing between a healthy spiritual life and its polar opposite – distance, confusion, and the feeling of being drained.

The Sabbath gives us space to relax each week. Healing is good but health is better. Rescue is good but a steady path is more effective.

You have six days each week for your ordinary work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath day of complete rest, an official day for holy assembly. It is the Lord's Sabbath day, and it must be observed wherever you live. [Leviticus 23:3]

Jewish life is notable for the consistent disciplined sense of routine and the Sabbath is a basic building block of it.

In music the kick-drum (the deepest sounding drum, played with the foot) is the key to creating rhythm. All the other drums play more and work around it, but the kick is the anchor, setting the beat. *The Sabbath is God's kick-drum for our lives.*

The one consistent feature in the rhythm of our lives and the landscape of our activity is this pause. It is the beat that sets the pace for the marathon of life.

The festivals of God, starting with the Sabbath, do the same for our lives. We need holidays and celebrations to keep in step with the Holy Spirit. He has helped millions run the race set before them many times over and He knows what it takes to finish.

[This Sabbath let's ask ourselves if the rhythm of our lives is aligned with God's rhythm for us and if it's suited to the track He has called us to run.](#)

Shabbat shalom!