



# Auburn Presbyterian Church

*Passionately loving the Lord Jesus Christ and radiating that love to everyone*

13025 Bell Air Drive, Auburn, CA 95603 (530) 823-3916 apc@auburnpresbyterian.org

## “Got Sabbath?”

### Exodus 20:8-11

#### The Lord’s Supper

[U of M fight song]

Yesterday was the first day of college football season. The Wolverines of Michigan creamed Western Michigan University by a score of 31 to 7. Go Blue!

[song fade but still there]

Some of you know Michigan was my alma mater. . . . I can still sing the fight song “Hail to the victors valiant, hail to the conquering heroes. . . .”

[song OUT]

Michigan is one of the founding members of The Big Ten sports league, and it has a proud history. Here’s The Big Ten lineup.

Hmmm. Do you notice something wrong with this?

Yeah. There are ELEVEN teams in The Big Ten. Is this “new math”? Can’t the college administrations of these schools COUNT? I have to say, this does not speak well of The Big Ten as a conference, if they can’t even count to... Ten.

There’s another Big Ten I know, and perhaps you do, too. GOD has a Big Ten, and we find them listed in the Bible, in Exodus 20. It’s always been “ten”. It will always be “ten”—you know, “nine plus one equals ten”. Of these ten, I’ve chosen one to read with you this morning, and ask , O God. that you teach us what You want us to know, be and do. Exodus 20, verses 8-11, is up on the screen. Let’s read this together:

*<sup>8</sup> “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. <sup>9</sup> Six days you shall labor and do all your work, <sup>10</sup> but the seventh day is a Sabbath 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. <sup>11</sup> 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 Sabbath day and made it holy. (NIV)*

Sabbath—“Got Sabbath?” Or maybe the better question is, “Has Sabbath got you!??”

God’s order to observe the Sabbath is not a suggestion. It is a command. Here is God speaking to Moses, in Exodus 31:14-17.

*“Observe the Sabbath, because it is holy to you. Anyone who desecrates it must be put to death; whoever does any work on that day must be cut off from his people. <sup>15</sup>*

*For six days, work is to be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day must be put to death.<sup>16</sup> The Israelites are to observe the Sabbath, celebrating it for the generations to come as a lasting covenant.<sup>17</sup> It will be a sign between me and the Israelites forever, for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day he abstained from work and rested.’ ” (Exodus 31:14-17, NIV)*

“There goes your god again,” some will say, “giving orders like some Oriental despot, demanding obedience and obeisance.” Well, maybe not.

God’s Sabbath command gives us the truth: God’s wants to play. He wants us to play with Him. It’s not for nothing that Sabbath comes at the end of six days of creation work; Sabbath is the climax of creation, according to Genesis 1 & 2. All God’s work is about bringing together what we need so we can play with and for God on God’s day. This play time with God is so important, God made it a standing order, every week.

Second, Sabbath reminds us that we are more than our work. The market economy, now global and 24/7, keeps ratcheting up its demands. Work longer, faster, harder, smarter. Your family’s income rides on you continually adapting to the pressure. We work, work, work—for what? So we can buy more toys?

For many, work is an addiction. And it is fed by either greed, or fear, or trying to please someone—a long-dead parent, peers that used to dish out ridicule.

The world would like us to think that we are human doings instead of human beings, whose worth comes only from what we produce. That is slavery, friends. There is a recent term that fits this: “wage slave”. We need to learn that our value is not measured in our productivity (though that is one of “the leading economic indicators” we seek out, to know how the world economy is doing, and how our country’s work force is doing in comparison with the people of other nations). Sabbath doesn’t produce anything. It’s worthless, to the world.

In the entry gate to the Nazi death camp at Auschwitz, the Nazis cast this slogan: “Work Makes Free”. In other words, your freedom comes through work. Your privilege of real life depends on your work.

It was a lie then, and it is a lie now. Work can kill you, devalue you. God works for life. God designed us. God’s commands give life a purpose.

Third, Sabbath gives us rest. Recent science studies have shown human bodies begin to break down if they don’t have periodic rest—not just daily sleep, but rest and re-creation. And, it turns out, the optimum amount of work and rest is six days, and one day. Honest! But be careful—the rest God wants for us is not just get re-charge us for the next six days of work. God knows (because He designed and built us) that we need a one-in-seven rest.

Then, too, Sabbath has its own purpose. The Hebrews were the only culture that got this order to observe Sabbath. Remember, they had just come from Egypt where they had gone generations ago sold their work to Pharaoh in order to feed their families when the crops failed back home. But the most recent pharaoh had no memory of all the Hebrews had done for the nation; he was just eager to have many monuments to himself throughout the land, especially at Ramses. So he started oppressing his labor force, squeezing more work out of them for these

projects to his glory. No rest for the Hebrews. Every day the same. Work, work work. To work for pharaoh the slave-driver is to have no meaning outside your work. To work for the slave-master, never gives rest. Worship of the slave-master means you put the world and work above God. God's Sabbath command frees us from serving the purposes of Pharaoh the slave-master. We get a new purpose in life, and take our rightful place as part of God's creation He designed from the beginning, to give Him glory and pleasure—with us.

The men on Friday morning have also been reading Exodus, and we're up to chapter 32. Chapter 32 is pretty heavy. The Hebrews watched Moses go up the mountain to be with God, but they thought he'd be back in a jiffy to resume his leadership. They wait, and wait. He's still up there.--we think. We haven't seen him. Has anyone seen him? Maybe God burned him up, up there. Now what will we do? We'll need some protection out here in the wilderness. Oh well, let's make our own gods. C'mon, Aaron, make us something we can SEE. Make us something we can CONTROL by what we do in worship, so we get what we want when we want it. As for this Moses and his God, we don't know about him anymore. And anyway, he abandoned us.

How soon they forgot. But then, we forget, too. "Out of sight, out of mind," the saying goes. If we didn't have Sabbath every seven days to remind us, how long do you think humanity would even think about God, or try to connect with Him, and set aside time to play together with Him? And so many of our friends who call themselves Christian have disconnected Sabbath rest from its purpose and our purpose as people. For them, the day is about rest, and spending time with God is an option, an afterthought. We forget. We get lost so easily.

Sabbath is also for worship, which is how we give God glory. "Worship" means, "to attribute worth". In worth-ship, we focus on God, giving God our time, our energy, our money. In an hour like this, we obey God more fully than usual, and we demonstrate that God is worth our time (some), our energy (some) and our money (some). One hour a week out of 112—less than 1% of our waking life.

But when we pray, we also give God our time and energy. Maybe we hear from God more often. We read God's Word. We DO hear from God more often, as we ask God to speak to us through it. We talk with each other about God showing up in our lives, about our questions and doubts, about our fears and needs. God is in that conversation, and simply hearing ourselves confess to another and share with another, we think of ideas and get encouragement. God is in that creative thought and encouragement. We are drawn together as we face God together. God is in that togetherness, too. Jesus said, "Wherever two or three are gathered in my Name [which is Bible talk for, in His presence], I am there for sure." (Matthew 18:20, paraphrased).

Now that we've understood what God was saying to the freed Hebrew slaves back then, we hear God asking us, "Got Sabbath?" What are your plans for the rest of today? Do they include God? How will you play with God today, give God glory this afternoon, this evening?

There's an edge to this. Are you part of God's people, or not? Every week, we decide, don't we? (Every DAY—every MOMENT--we decide if we're going to be God's man or woman.) What's your plan for the rest of today?

Our plan here is to move even closer to God by sharing the Lord's Supper. Just now, you've been listening—and I hope the wheels have been turning and your heart has been moved, so you've not been just passively listening. Now we become more active. Eating and drinking together is the basic form of human interaction in the Middle East, even today. Reading the Bible record, whenever there is a covenant made or renewed, there is a covenant meal. Jesus gave us his "New Covenant", and when we come to the Table, when we eat and drink, we are saying, "I'm IN this, too."

Here is your chance to say it, and do it, and give God glory and worship and play. This is God's deep desire, another gift for you and me.

To put the Supper in a frame of meaning, we usually speak the truth about it with one of the traditional statements of faith Christians have used for many centuries. So today, I invite all who are able to stand with me, and tell the truth about God and ourselves and life, as we say the Apostle's Creed together. . . .

Prayer of Consecration

Words of Institution

Instructions

Distribution

Prayer of Thanks

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