



Practicing Sabbath as a Mom

The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath. Mark 2:27

It is beautiful and brilliant of God to provide the Sabbath for us. In some ways, it's like we have a "snow day" every single week of the year. We get to do what is joyful and life-giving for us - we get to be refreshed with others and with God.

And it *is* possible to Sabbath as a mom... but we may have to give more effort and intentionality in order to make it happen. **Rest requires work - but this makes the rest all the sweeter and better because of how we have prepared for it.**

Here are some practical ideas for making Sabbath a thing in the midst of motherhood:

-Make a plan to fill your time - otherwise you'll probably end up working, cleaning or scrolling even if you intend not to do those things. **Consider breaking up your day into 2 or 3 hour blocks and fill them with various activities:** you and your spouse each get one of the blocks to yourself, one could be a family outing and another could be a movie night or social gathering.

-Ask yourself: What is life giving to you? Then do that thing. What brings you joy? What enables you to experience the presence of God and His love for you? (If you're having a hard time knowing what is life-giving to you, finish these statements: "I never get to _____. If only I had time to _____. Then, go do that thing.)

-Remind yourself: the Sabbath is sourced in God's love for you. It's a gift to receive, not something you are forced to do

-Partner with your spouse or others to get a break from the kids.. A tag-team Sabbath with your husband can give each of you the rest that you need.

-It's okay to say no to birthday parties or other invitations if they are not life-giving for you/your family!

-Be intentional - get the chores you like the least done before your Sabbath. I avoid cooking and laundry on the Sabbath - this means eating frozen pizza or my husband grilling an easy meal. Even if the laundry piles up... I have found I feel so much better after I have had a Sabbath, ready to tackle the housework because I have rested!



-If your work is physical, rest your body and engage your mind on the Sabbath. If your work is mental, rest your mind and engage your body. I love reading/writing on the Sabbath because it's something I don't get to do much of while I'm chasing the kids around all week!

-If chores are building up and home is not a restful place to be, you may need to just leave your house. It may feel irresponsible but you will thank yourself later. **There will always be more to do; you will have to leave some things undone.**

-I have heard the idea of lighting a candle at the beginning of the Sabbath as a symbol of choosing to rest. I have even heard of using the same scented candle on the Sabbath day so that there is a specific smell to the Sabbath - I think that is such a cool concept. Engaging the senses can be powerful!

-Put your phone away, and even try turning it off for a period of time. You will love how it feels and it will be worth anything that you "miss."

-Sometimes, the most holy thing you can do is take a nap!

The beautiful thing about living the rhythm of Sabbath is that there is so much freedom in Jesus! The Sabbath will look different depending on life season, needs, and desires, and will vary person to person because God made us all uniquely. We have to decide for ourselves and our families how we can best rest and spend time with God on our Sabbath. But whatever it looks like...God is inviting us to participate in this weekly celebration - a day of rest, rejuvenation and rejoicing. He is inviting us to lean into His love and enjoy His gifts. We can trust that six days of work is enough and that He is sufficient to supply for our lack.

This will take practice. It's crazy how accustomed we are to noise, doing, producing, and going. We are entrenched in the ways of our culture. It will probably feel hard to slow down and to take a whole day to rest. It will feel counterintuitive, and some Sabbaths may not go how you wanted them to. The kids may not go along with the plan, the naps may not happen, the thing you thought you needed may not go how you imagined. But keep trying - week after week, you will get into a groove and figure out how to evaluate your needs for the Sabbath. And you will not regret it!

Relevant Scripture:

Psalm 92 (a psalm written for the Sabbath day)

Mark 2:23-28

Hebrews 4:9-10