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Sermon Notes

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Call the Sabbath a Delight

Isaiah 58:13-14

Fool's Gold:

In 1577, English privateer and explorer Sir Martin Frobisher, did the first English mining in Canada, on the rocky and freezing Kodlunarn Island in Baffin Bay. On an earlier voyage, Frobisher had discovered on that island a large black rock with a huge quantity of gold colored specks all the way through it. An assayer in England extracted the gold colored specks and tested it, concluding it was gold. The crown then funded a large expedition that eventually mined over a thousand tons of black rocks all sprinkled with gold colored specks. They shipped them back to England, but when they were tested by the queen's assaying office, they were found to be worthless iron pyrite... commonly known as FOOL'S GOLD

Obviously Frobisher's reputation took a beating... However, it is a clear example of the old proverb, "Not all that glitters is gold."

The assaying of ore to determine its worth is a picture of what awaits all of us on Judgment Day. Will our faith and our lives be proved to have been genuine, or will it be exposed as a fraud... as "fool's gold?"

In Isaiah 58, the prophet exposes many religious Jewish people as the spiritual frauds they were... and he points them instead to true fasting, true religion that God accepts as blameless... the pure gold of a genuine piety

Beyond that, however, this illustration works also to show us how DISCERNING we need to be about our lives, what we delight in, what we choose to do with our time. It could be that many of us here this morning are continually deceived by the glittery options of the world, the allure of worldly pleasures and entertainments and agendas and delights... and we are becoming weaker and weaker spiritually

Isaiah 58 called on the people of God to a Sabbath rest, a fast from the world ONCE A WEEK for the purpose of recalibrating our souls to the "still small voice" of Almighty God... to the DELIGHT of intimate and healthy fellowship with God

I. Fool's Gold: The Deception of Religious Machinery (vs. 1-5)

A. A Religious People Going through the Motions

Isaiah 58:1-2 day after day they seek me out; they seem eager to know my ways, as if they were a nation that does what is right and has not forsaken the commands of its God. They ... seem eager for God to come near them.

B. A Religious People Making Demands on God

Isaiah 58:3 'Why have we fasted,' they say, 'and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?'

C. A Religious People Whose Fasting Ends in Wickedness (vs. 3-4)

D. A Religious Machine that Wearies God to the Extreme

Isaiah 29:13 The Lord says: "These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is made up only of rules taught by men.

E. Summary: FOOL'S GOLD... not genuine piety

II. Pure Gold #1: The "True Fast" of Mercy Ministry

Isaiah 58:6-7 "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? ⁷ Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter-- when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?"

A. God Calls this a "Fast"... denying yourself to alleviate the sufferings of others

B. Spending Yourself

Isaiah 58:10 if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.

To be personally invested in the suffering of others

III. Pure Gold #2: The "True Fast" of Delighting in the Sabbath

A. The Second Condition in the Text: Delighting in the Sabbath

Isaiah 58:13 "If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight and the LORD's holy day honorable, and if you honor it by not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words,

1. God calls the Sabbath "my holy day" and "the Lord's holy day"

2. He commands the people to CALL IT A DELIGHT and a WEIGHTY or HEAVY or HONORABLE thing
3. The word HOLY asserts that the day itself is set apart unto the Lord as his own prized possession... GOD SAYS: **although the whole earth is mine, the temple is holy ground; although all nations are mine, you are my holy people; although every moment is mine, the Sabbath is holy unto me—my choice possession**

B. Negatively: Do Not BREAK the Sabbath

1. “keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath”: daily lifestyle choices... how they were walking, living, what they were doing
 - a. It’s almost like the Sabbath is HOLY GROUND on which you should not walk
2. NOT doing as you please on God’s Holy Day
 - a. He pits the people’s PLEASURE against finding pleasure in God
3. NOT going your own way or speaking idle words
 - a. He actually calls on them to watch not only what they DO (where their feet travel) but what they say

C. Rewards:

Isaiah 58:14 then you will find your joy in the LORD, and I will cause you to ride on the heights of the land and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob." The mouth of the LORD has spoken.

1. If you do what verse 13 says...
2. YOU WILL FIND YOUR JOY IN THE LORD!!

Psalm 73:25-26 Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. ²⁶ My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

3. I WILL CAUSE YOU TO RIDE ON THE HEIGHTS OF THE LAND
 - a. In other words, it will be like you are walking along a spectacular mountain ridge, looking out on a majestic display of mountain grandeur... row upon row of mountain peaks and lush valleys and a sparkling ocean beyond...
 - b. You will FEAST ON THE INHERITANCE of your father Jacob: all the covenant blessings will come flooding in

INHERITANCE = God Himself, the fullness of our salvation

4. The Mouth of the Lord has spoken!!! This is an absolute certainty... I have put it in writing and sealed my name to it

The phrase “call the Sabbath a delight” is one of the most provocative and powerful images on the Sabbath in the entire Bible

It is worthy of our full attention now for the rest of our time

As we come to the topic of the Sabbath, we come (I think) to both one of the most complex and one of the richest untapped resources there is in the Christian life

Let me lay it out plainly: I think that learning more and more to CALL THE SABBATH A DELIGHT and to cheerfully and willingly refrain from work and worldly pleasures for the sake of finding our joy in the Lord will make individual Christians and whole churches more and more powerful spiritually, more robust and alive and energetic.

I am not convinced that the Sabbath observance is part of the timeless moral law binding on all people all over the world like the rest of the Ten Commandments... I am sympathetic to those who think it is, but I am not ready to make it a MORAL LAW similar to “Honor your father and mother” and “You shall not commit adultery”

But I think that embracing the spirit of Isaiah 58:13-14 in CHRISTIAN FREEDOM will result in lasting blessing

IV. Understanding and Delighting in the Sabbath

A. What Is the Sabbath?

1. The Hebrew word literally means to “cease, desist, or rest”
2. It means to stop working one day in seven out of reverence for God
3. The original Sabbath rest was by God Himself:

Genesis 1:31 - 2:3 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning-- the sixth day. Genesis 2:1 ¶ Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. ² By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. ³ And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

4. We should not imagine that God rested on the seventh day because he became TIRED after all his work...
5. This resting in his work is an expression certainly of God's TOTAL SATISFACTION in what he had made... ALSO picture GOD SITTING ON HIS THRONE

B. The Sabbath Law in the Ten Commandments

Exodus 20:8-11 "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ 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.

Deuteronomy 5:14-15 On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your ox, your donkey or any of your animals, nor the alien within your gates, so that your manservant and maidservant may rest, as you do. ¹⁵ Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.

This Sabbath regulation was part of the OLD COVENANT regulation for Israel... something that was for them a mark of their covenant with God

They were to labor for six days, but CEASE... DESIST... STOP on the seventh day...

And on that day, now cleared of work, they were to consecrate the day and make it holy to the Lord, because the Lord Himself consecrated it and set it apart as his own

Since the Exodus command began with the word "REMEMBER," it would have been completely reasonable for the people to meditate on God's creation of the universe in six days... and also their redemption from bondage in Israel... the ceasing from WORK is a delightful reminder that they had been liberated from the lash of wickedness in Egypt, when their taskmasters used them ruthlessly!

So the Sabbath has a sense of LOOKING UP at God's kingly throne on which he is seated in power; and of LOOKING BACK at God's accomplishments in CREATION and REDEMPTION

Note also that there would have been a special focus on leaders – heads of households (fathers) as well as masters/kings... to be sure that those who served them could also rest... that they were free from labors that you would command them to do...

This is an OLD COVENANT regulation... and Christians have had long and rancorous debates about whether and how Christians are still to observe the Sabbath

C. “Free from the Law”... what does that mean?

1. In Christ, we have been set free in some very powerful sense from the Law of Moses

Galatians 2:19 For through the law I died to the law so that I might live for God.

Romans 6:14 sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.

2. We know that forgiveness of sins is not earned by being religious or observing the Sabbath however strictly

Galatians 2:16 a person is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ.

3. Yet we know that we can't murder or worship false gods or commit adultery and think that such a lifestyle will lead to heaven
4. Rather, being freed from the Law means freed from fear that the Law's righteous accusations against us will condemn us to hell
5. However, two more things about the Law
 - a. First, there are aspects of the Law that are OBSOLETE in the New Covenant...like **circumcision** and **animal sacrifice**... they are called **ceremonial laws**; and the **national laws**, connected with the life of the nation of Israel
 - b. Second, the moral law is still binding on the Christian's conscience, pressing us to love God and to love our neighbor...
 - c. Nine of the Ten Commandments seem plainly to be permanently binding **MORAL LAWS** that we will always need to obey by the power of the Holy Spirit
 - d. The question is, is the Sabbath requirement also one of those?
 - e. Christians have long struggled over it and have had many different opinions

D. Christian Views of the Sabbath

1. D.A. Carson: represents many who say there is no binding law in reference to the Sabbath for Christians
2. John Calvin felt there were three lasting principles about the Sabbath for Christians to heed: 1) the Lord meant for his people in every generation to have a day of spiritual REST in which they lay aside their earthly work and let God work in their souls; 2) that he wanted his people to assemble together for corporate worship and the hearing of his word; 3) that he wanted to give laborers and those under authority a chance to rest from toil
3. My professor, Meredith Kline, taught this about the Sabbath:

The essence of the command was ceasing work; its focus was not WORSHIP. Simple physical rest, even taking a long nap or going for a refreshing walk in the woods or even a nice bike ride that renewed someone would have met the "Sabbath" ceasing or resting command.

4. The Puritans were very strongly Sabbatarian, however... The Westminster Confession:

"As it is the law of nature, that, in general, a due proportion of time be set apart for the worship of God; so, in His Word, by a positive, moral, and perpetual commandment binding all men in all ages, He has particularly appointed one day in seven, for a Sabbath, to be kept holy unto him: which, from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, was the last day of the week: and, from the resurrection of Christ, was changed into the first day of the week, which, in Scripture, is called the Lord's Day, and is to be continued to the end of the world, as the Christian Sabbath.

This Sabbath is to be kept holy unto the Lord when men, after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering of their common affairs beforehand, do not only observe a holy rest all the day from their own works, words, and thoughts about their worldly employments and recreations, but also are taken up the whole time in the public and private exercises of His worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy." [WCF, 21.7-8]

5. The Baptist Faith and Message 1963 was FBC's confession of faith when I arrived here in 1998. It said this about the Lord's Day:

"The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should be employed in exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private, and **by refraining from worldly**

amusements, and resting from secular employments, work of necessity and mercy only being excepted.

6. BUT in 2000, the SBC voted to make some changes to the Baptist Faith and Message, and the Lord's Day statement was one of the most significant changes:

“The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.”

In other words, you are FREE to do whatever your conscience demands on the Lord's Day

V. Applications

A. Start with the gospel... then the Sabbath question

1. To you who are not Christians... understand that no keeping of the law will ever save your soul
2. TRUST IN CHRIST now for the forgiveness of your sins
3. God sent Jesus into the world to obey the law perfectly on our behalf... and more, to DIE IN OUR PLACE as a sacrifice for our sins; by simple trust in him alone are our sins forgiven
4. If you do, you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit

NOW... eleven issues related to the Sabbath/Lord's Day

A. First: The ultimate goal: finding your joy in the Lord... not in worldly things

1. Salvation happens when we turn away from idols and delight in the true God with all our hearts
2. We grow in salvation by more and more delighting in Christ
3. This passage is really about what delights our hearts—the world, or God
4. Jesus said the sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath... and it was set up that we would imitate God in finding delight in GOD and what he has done in creation and redemption

5. We cannot come to this topic with a sense of GLOOM and MISERY and the legalism of strict sabbatarianism and the drudgery of all the stuff you're NOT SUPPOSED TO DO
 6. This is about a SPIRITUAL JOY that fills your heart... a foretaste of heavenly delight
- B. Second: Is the Sabbath a binding law on Christians like the rest of the Ten Commandments?
1. Consider the topic a weighty thing and work it through scripturally and prayerfully...
 2. The fact that God rested after creation and set apart the seventh day as holy seems to be a timeless lasting pattern for the whole human race... that is weighty
 3. The fact that all the other Ten Commandments are binding on the heart of a Christian is a weighty thing...
 4. The fact that Jesus upheld the Sabbath and taught about it and in no way seemed to imply that the Sabbath was obsolete
 5. YET it is also significant that after the gospels and Acts, the word Sabbath never appears again in the New Testament except in Colossians 2 and Hebrews 4

Colossians 2:16-17 Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. ¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.

Wow... that seems to say that Sabbath observance is a SHADOW ... implying that the Sabbath has been fulfilled by Christ

Hebrews 4:9-11 There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; ¹⁰ for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. ¹¹ ¶ Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.

The author to Hebrews is saying that "entering into the rest" like the Jews entering the Promised Land is similar to the rest of the Sabbath... it is all consummated by salvation in Christ... coming to faith in Christ is like ceasing from works and resting in God

After that, the Sabbath is never mentioned again

6. Romans 14 seems a powerful and helpful guide for this question

- a. Paul was writing to the church at Rome, a mixed church made up of Jews and Gentiles together
- b. Romans 14 addresses controversial topics, “debatable issues,” and it is very possible that the Sabbath was one of those... Jews did observe the Sabbath before they were Christians, and Gentiles had never had that pattern... what to do now in the New Covenant, in the church???
- i) The issue is raised

***Romans 14:5-6 One man considers one day more sacred than another; another man considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind.
⁶ He who regards one day as special, does so to the Lord.***

- ii) BE FULLY CONVINCED in your own mind
- iii) Later, he will say do it by faith:

Romans 14:23 everything that does not come from faith is sin.

- iv) So, when it comes to what you’re going to do on a Sabbath/Lord’s Day, work it through scripturally and prayerfully
- v) Don’t BLOW IT OFF as though it’s not a weighty thing
- vi) Be fully convinced that the Lord DOES or DOES NOT want you to get ahead on schoolwork or watch NFL football or play a video game or go into the office to get ready for a big meeting on Monday
- vii) Whatever you do, make sure you do it aware of the Lordship of Jesus Christ and that you will give an account to him

Romans 14:7-8 For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone. ⁸ If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.

Romans 14:10-12 we will all stand before God's judgment seat. ... So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.

- viii) You’re going to give Christ an account for EVERY DAY, not just Sundays... this is a good chance to ask him what he wants you to do
- ix) Many anti-sabbatarians are so hostile to any legalism creeping in, you’ve forgotten the Lordship of Christ over EVERY DAY of your life, and you really should be asking him at all times, **“Lord, is this what I should be doing with my time? Is this what most advances your kingdom? Is this what most enriches my walk with you? Is this what best serves other Christians?”**

x) the text is calling you to STOP, PRAY about it, CONSIDER, PONDER

7. So... IS THE SABBATH COMMAND as binding on the conscience of the Christian as the rest of the Ten Commandments?

a. I actually don't believe I can answer that for each of you... work and pray and study and be fully convinced in your own mind

C. Third: Basic commitment—never forsake assembling with other Christians

Hebrews 10:24-25 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, ²⁵ not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.

1. It is not legalism to say that healthy, able-bodied Christians must not forsake assembling together with other Christians
2. In the wisdom of God, he has providentially set aside now the FIRST DAY of the week all around the world for the overwhelming majority of Christians to assemble
3. The pattern in the New Testament was on the FIRST DAY of the week, called "The Lord's Day," in honor of his resurrection
4. I think there is a powerful theological statement in this... in the Old Covenant, Jews met on the seventh day of the week to LOOK BACK at the old creation; in the New Covenant, Christians meet on the first day of the week to LOOK AHEAD to the new creation, patterned after Christ's resurrection
5. But in many places in the world, including some churches in America, Christians feel no particular requirement to any day of the week and meet on Saturday night or Wednesday morning. Yet, we can see the wisdom of God in having a normalized day for most Christians to meet
 - a. Trying to schedule a meeting time for a large number of busy people realize how nearly impossible that is
 - b. There is a practicality and a theology to the FIRST DAY of the week as the standard meeting time

D. Fourth: YOU NEED REST!

1. Our bodies and our minds are not machines... we do grow weary and need rest
2. God built in the rhythm of day and night to teach us our limitations and need for rest

Psalm 104:22-23 The sun rises... Then man goes out to his work, to his labor until evening.

John 9:4 As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work.

3. This rhythm shows our weakness

Psalm 3:5 I lie down and sleep; I wake again, because the LORD sustains me.

4. The slaves in Egypt were worked ruthlessly; they felt the lash of the taskmaster's whip every waking hour of their lives... day after day without a single day of remission... the Sabbath reminded them of the relentless toil, and of the way the Lord delivered them

Exodus 1:14 They made their lives bitter with hard labor in brick and mortar and with all kinds of work in the fields; in all their hard labor the Egyptians used them ruthlessly.

Not only YOU but your manservants and maidservants... your workers... you are not to play the role of the relentless taskmaster

5. The Sabbath rest is both physical and spiritual... it enables people not only to refresh their bodies (like you do when you sleep) but your minds, souls, family ties, church connections...
6. Beyond that, our SOULS need to be renewed IN GOD... drawing near to him and finding true rest in him

Psalm 62:1 My soul finds rest in God alone; my salvation comes from him.

Psalm 23:2-3 He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, ³ he restores my soul.

- a. This has a practical side to it... we have to draw away from busyness to be quiet and hear God speak

Mark 6:31-32 Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." ³² So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place.

- E. Fifth: Consider the question not merely "What am I permitted to do?" but "What is best for my soul?"
 1. It's easy to slip into the anti-legalism thing so vigorously and start saying "All things are lawful for me..." It's not against God's law to watch a football game on a Sunday afternoon

2. But it's vital to discern spiritually between GOOD... BETTER... and BEST

Paul in advocating a life of singleness if you can do it is speaking to single men who are engaged to a virgin woman:

1 Corinthians 7:38 So then, he who marries the virgin does right, but he who does not marry her does even better.

Whatever you think about that passage, it brings in the concept on the Sabbath/Lord's Day... if there is no LEGAL requirement to rest, it still may be BEST for you to do it... you may be FREE to spend the rest of the day watching NFL football or preparing for tomorrow's work day, or painting your shed or studying for a test you'll have on Monday... but is it BEST spiritually to do it?

3. Think about the story of Martha and Mary:

Luke 10:41-42 "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, ⁴² but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

4. Over the next ten years, if God allows you to live, you will have over 500 Sundays... if you believed you were free to do whatever you wanted with that time, not counting the time you're at church, what would be the best way to spend the 4000 hours from 1:00 pm to 9:00 pm over those ten years? What would most enrich your soul

F. Sixth: Avoid legalism and judgmentalism

1. The Pharisees made long lists of laws and rules about Sabbath observance
2. Many Reformed communities that were staunchly Sabbatarian have done the same
3. But this kind of legalism misses the whole point of this command
4. Also, if you decide to be more restrictive—not doing sports or working, you may be tempted to judge others who don't join in your convictions

Romans 14:4 Who are you to judge someone else's servant?

G. Seventh: Similarity to fasting... a “means of grace” for enriching your soul

1. Isaiah 58 redefines the FAST...
2. The motive for Christian's fasting is spiritual... you are abstaining from food so you can pray and meditate on scripture and draw near to God

3. Sabbath abstaining from work and secular pleasures is a kind of fast... you are denying yourself a PLEASURE to find a HIGHER, MORE SPIRITUAL PLEASURE

Isaiah 58:13 "If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight

4. Such discipline is a fast that frees up time for prayer and rest and spiritual refreshment and bible intake/meditation

H. Eighth: A chance to evaluate if you're addicted to worldly pleasure—sports, recreation

1. If you find that you have an HUGELY DIFFICULT TIME giving up on NFL Football or Netflix or even secular work, could it be that these things have become IDOLS for you?!!

1 Corinthians 6:12 "Everything is permissible for me"-- but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is permissible for me"-- but I will not be mastered by anything.

How can you tell if something is mastering you? GIVE IT UP for a little while! If it is inordinately hard, you have your answer.

Also, if the issue is not PLAY but WORK, that has been the usual issue throughout history... our level of recreation and free time is off the charts compared to people two or three centuries ago

The command to STOP WORKING was a hardship economically; but it trained people to not live for material wealth

Maybe you can get ahead in this dog eat dog world, competing with other students for grades or other employees for bonuses or promotions, but consider this:

Matthew 13:22 The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful.

I. Ninth: Practical steps for those who want to cease from labor and secular pursuits

1. Some of you may be saying, "Sounds good, pastor... I'm in... what do I do?"
2. Start by clearing out Sunday as much as possible from all work...
 - a. Set out your clothes the night before... like a fireman sets out his equipment for maximum ease of dress

- b. Cook the day before, and merely reheat the Sunday meal... women who cook for Home Fellowships, maybe have a crock pot meal or something more simple so you're not spending Sunday afternoon cooking
 - c. Students... work hard for six days so you do no schoolwork at all on Sunday
 - d. Do your yardwork or home improvements on Saturday and be okay with what you didn't get done
3. Perhaps decide to do an electronic fast... deny yourself the NFL game or movies or anything else electronic, so you can read, pray, rest, sleep, have fellowship
 4. Enrich your soul by means of spiritual disciplines: choose great Christian books—Pilgrim's Progress, other enriching books
 5. Perhaps go to a beautiful place—a lake, some woods, a hill or mountain—to rest and pray and be refreshed
 6. Meditate on powerful Sabbath themes: God's creation of the universe in six days; God's deliverance of the Jews from slavery in Egypt; our deliverance from slavery to sin; our future inheritance in heaven
 7. Pray about each of these things and thank God for them
- J. Tenth: Words to parents... how to make the Sabbath a delight for growing children
1. Be creative with your time; try to make it fascinating and enriching... work at it beforehand to get everything ready
 2. Don't make it dull... read Pilgrim's Progress or a missionary biography to the kids
 3. Research how other families "call the Sabbath a delight"... pray together as a family
 4. It is easier if you get your kids used to this pattern early
 5. If you have teens and you are saying "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord"... and they are addicted to sports, or have little taste for spiritual things and are rolling their eyes and saying "This is SO LAME!" and absolutely can't conceive of a disciplined day of no secular pleasures, it is likely you have uncovered a HUGE IDOL in their hearts
- K. Eleventh: The connection to works of mercy

1. It is possible to tie the whole chapter together... to do works of benevolence, of caring for the poor and needy... in conjunction with Sunday rest...
2. Invite poor people over to your home; feed them, minister to them, get to know them

Isaiah 58:7 Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter-- when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?

Perhaps this sermon will be a doorway into spiritual riches for you... to grow into a deeper understanding of how much God has loved you in Christ:

Ephesians 3:17-19 And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸ may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge-- that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Consider again the rich promise of delight and blessing:

Isaiah 58:14 then you will find your joy in the LORD, and I will cause you to ride on the heights of the land and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob."