

10. THE SEVENTH DAY

The Garden of Eden is a photographer's delight. Did you know that *Eden* is a Hebrew word that means *great delight, happiness, contentment, bliss*? Our gallery has a few artistic examples that imagine the priceless images of The Garden. Creating the man and woman was the last item on God's To-Do List. Everything in the new universe was custom-made for its human inhabitants. Creation was complete. So, the Creator stopped creating (*Psalm 118:24*). Read **Genesis 2:1-3**.

Moses used a familiar word to indicate the end of the creative process. He wrote that God *finished* his work. It reminds us of the last sentence Jesus spoke from the cross. Jesus said, "It is *finished*" (*John 19:30*). He was referring to his **redemptive** work of saving humankind. His work of redeeming mankind from the curse was finished on the cross. But what about the work of the third person of the Trinity? Well, God's Spirit is still finishing his work of re-creating the hearts of believers. His work happens in us. He cleanses all sin from our hearts and makes them pure and holy, like Jesus' heart. That work is ongoing, but one day it will be finished because God always finishes the work he begins. And every time he finishes, it's a win for us. That's worth celebrating!

The Bible says that God rested on the seventh day. But God didn't rest because he was tired. The almighty God never rests (*Psalm 121:3-4*). He rested to teach Adam and Eve a lesson about the work they would be doing for him. He wanted them to understand that he would provide a way for them to regain their strength through physical rest from their work. After sin entered the picture, human beings would also become spiritually weary; their guilt would make them spiritually exhausted. God would refresh their soul with his forgiveness.

Many generations later God's people began to realize that the best way to find rest and refreshment for their souls was to set one day aside each week to worship God. They set the seventh day of the week aside to **commune** with him by hearing portions of his Word, praying to him, and making sacrifices. Later, God included the idea of a sabbath rest in the commandments and the Israelites stopped working on that day. They called it the **Sabbath Day**. (*See Exodus 20:8-11.*)

As part of our worship life, the Sabbath Day is also a day of thanksgiving and giving glory to God's name for all that he has done for us. It is a celebration of God's daily **providence**. Our food, shelter, clothing, friends, health, intellect, strength, and good looks all come from God. We should celebrate his generosity (*Psalms 145:1-7, 18*). We should celebrate the blessings he provides every day. That includes the many ways in which he blesses us in spiritual ways. Do you think there are enough hours in a day to celebrate every blessing? We celebrate his love (*Isaiah 38:19-20*). We celebrate God's promises; his mercy; his compassion; his good plan for our lives, the gifts of family, country, friends, church, military people who protect our country, police, fire fighters, pastors and teachers.

We celebrate God by listening to his Word and obeying his will. We celebrate his victory every time we look at his cross. We celebrate the Spirit's work of turning our hearts to Jesus in baptism. But it's hard to celebrate when there is a war going on inside of us. The spiritual struggle between good and evil is exhausting. Day after day we wake up resolving to be a good person. By day's end we have to admit failure. Thankfully, Jesus gives us peace from our guilty **conscience**. With his forgiveness, he refreshes our tired souls.

END VIDEO. BEGIN CONVERSATIONS.

REMEMBER WHEN ...

Remember a time when you were so exhausted you had to stop and rest? Explain.

WORD POWER: redemptive; Sabbath Day; providence; conscience

FROM THE TOUR

Explain what Jesus was *finishing* when he cried out from the cross, "It is finished."

What evidence do you have to show that God's Spirit continues to work in your heart?

LEARN MORE

Read *Exodus 33:12-14*. What kind of rest do we have in knowing that Jesus is always with us?

Read *Matthew 11:28*. When life gets you down, how can this invitation be a comfort to you?

Read *Psalms 23:2*. What resource in God's warehouse restores souls to their sinless condition?

TAKE-AWAYS

Suggest that someone offers a prayer to thank God for the peace his forgiveness gives us.

Invite a friend to attend church with you to *worship* God and thank him for all his blessings.



Yes, my soul, find rest in God;
my hope comes from him.

Psalms 62:5