



Rest. We all long for it, but it sometimes feels illusive or unattainable. That is true for teenagers as well. They are stressed out, overwhelmed, and exhausted. We pray this four-week study on rest will give you space to explore what God's Word has to say about rest and Sabbath and provide practical ideas for how to incorporate more rest into their lives.

## Weekly Themes

### **Week 1 – Rest for the Weary**

Rest is a gift God gives His people! Enjoy it! This is a high-level overview of a few places in Scripture that talk about rest. It ends with Jesus' invitation in Matthew 11 to come to Him to find rest for our souls.

### **Week 2 – No Longer Slaves**

Here is where we really dive deep into the practice of Sabbath and the third commandment. Sabbath is a gift. God intends it to be a delight. It is also a command. Students will wrestle with how these things all fit together.

### **Week 3 - Take a Nap and Eat a Snack**

Following God's call in our lives is not always easy. Sometimes it is downright exhausting. Yet, He provides all we need in those moments! By unpacking the story of Elijah in 1 Kings 18 and 19 we will explore what it means to care for ourselves or let others care for us as God equips us to carry out His will in our lives!

### **Week 4 – Rest as Good News!**

Living lives of rest can be a powerful witness in a "go-go-go" world! Perhaps it could be our greatest evangelism tool. Not only will we talk about the counter-cultural nature of rest, but also about times when rest does not feel possible. We will do this by exploring two examples from Jesus' life.

## Elements of the Study

Each week follows a similar structure with similar elements. Sometimes they are in a different order to flow better, but each lesson has the following elements:

- **Welcome and Check-in** – This is a space to build relationships with your students and see how their week is going. If your group already has a practice of doing highs and lows or another kind of check in, feel free to add it in here or replace the ideas here with what you normally do.
- **Opening and Closing Prayer** – Often an idea for one is given, but feel free to use your own or ask a student to pray. (The latter generally works best when you ask them beforehand instead of on the spot.)

- **What Does God's Word Say?** – This is the core section where we study what God's Word says about this topic. Most weeks we use these three questions as a way to help the students learn how to read Scripture and unpack it for themselves:
  - What does this section of Scripture tell me about God?
  - What does this section of Scripture tell me about myself/humans?
  - What does this section of Scripture tell me about the topic we are studying?
- **Group Activity** – Most weeks have a group activity. Sometimes it is standalone and other times it is incorporated into the study somewhere else.
- **Let's Get Practical** – Here is where we try to uncover ways to help students live out Scripture and not simply be hearers of the Word, but doers!
- **Choose Your Own Adventure** – This is another application element that challenges students to put what they have learned into practice. Most weeks have multiple options for how they might do this. Encourage your students to try out one of the challenges each week. If you do, it would be great to follow back up before you start each week's lesson to see how it went or connect with them throughout the week.

### Other Notes and Suggestions as You Prepare:

- Adapt this to YOUR group and YOUR leadership style. I try to give suggestions of how to adapt sections or activities to various types of groups/learning styles (e.g., large groups, small groups, more active students, extroverted or introverted, etc.). Do what works for YOU even if it is different than what's suggested!
- If Sabbath and/or intentional rest is not already part of your life I challenge to practice Sabbath at least once before week 2. Ideally you would do it a few weeks in a row so you can share from personal experience what that has been like for you. What did you learn? What was hard? What were the benefits?
- These studies are great, but your students will learn even more from your lives! If you are modeling rest, the students will see that, just like everything else. What do they hear from you? Is it all about how busy or overwhelmed you are? Are they hearing anything about the importance of rest from your everyday life? I do not share this as a guilt trip, but rather an invitation. In busy seasons, I start to notice that my students will say things like, "I know you're really busy, but I had a quick question." That signals to me that I have been communicating that I am too busy for them through my words or actions.
- There is SO much more than can fit into four short weeks about this topic. I have been exploring it for years and still have so much more to learn. If it's helpful while you prepare, I talked a little more about what Sabbath and rest look like in my life on [an episode of the KINDLE Servant Leader Podcast](#). Feel free to check it out! The part I am on is the first half, but the second half is excellent as well! If you have volunteers maybe have them listen to and then use this [discussion guide](#) as you prepare to lead these four weeks.
- With the student handouts, you can decide whether to print them out all together in a little booklet or give one each week. Some things may be helpful if they are all together so you can refer back to past weeks.

# LESSON ONE – REST FOR THE WEARY

## Lesson Overview

**Scripture:** Genesis 1:26-2:3; Jeremiah 6:16; Matthew 11:28-30

**Main Point:** Rest is a gift God gives His people! Enjoy it!

### Supplies Needed:

- Leader Guide
- Student Handouts and pens/pencils
- Bibles
- One of the following to brainstorm a list together as a large group: white board and dry erase markers, Poster paper and markers, or computer screen and projector/TV monitor

### Applicable “End Goals” from LCMS Youth Ministry:

- I rely on God to give me “daily bread” and strive to be good stewards of these gifts. (Matthew 6:11)
- God wonderfully created me. (Psalm 139:14)
- Jesus calls me to faith and is with me daily as I live in baptismal grace. (Matthew 28:19–20; Galatians 3:27)

## Welcome and Group Activity

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** As we begin this week, I invite everyone to take a deep breath.

**Now let it out. For the next four weeks we’re going to be talking about rest, taking care of ourselves, and the concept of Sabbath. To start us off we are going to actually make a list of things that feel like the opposite of rest. With a partner next to you try to come up with at least 5 things that leave teenagers today exhausted, tired, depressed, or anxious. You have 90 seconds. Ready, GO!**

*(If using a computer, consider having a timer going on the screen. After about 90 seconds bring the group back together. Give more time if they need it. For the next section you will need some way to see all their lists together. You can either write them on a white board, type them onto a projected computer screen, have a volunteer write everyone’s ideas on a piece of poster paper or have each group come write theirs on the paper. NOTE: No matter how you collect this information, know that you need to keep it to refer back to in week 4!)*

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Now we want to combine all our lists together. Let’s hear one idea from each group and then we’ll keep circling back around until everything is on the list.

**ASK:** What are your first reactions when you see this list? *(Get their reactions and share your own as well.)*

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Before we continue, let’s pray and ask God to be with us as we figure out how to find rest in the middle of all of that *(referring to the list).*

## Opening Prayer

*Say your own opening prayer, use the one below, or ask someone else to pray in response to the list above and our desire to learn to rest from God.*

Jesus, when we look at this list, it is exhausting, overwhelming, and depressing. We have so many heavy things in our lives that leave us weary. Help us learn together today how you provide rest when we are in this weary place. Amen.

## Weekly Personal Check-In

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Each week we are going to have some kind of “check-in” to see where we are at regarding energy levels and rest. Many of us pay close attention to the battery level on our phones, computers, or other devices, but often neglect to pay attention to ourselves. On the sheet find the little battery symbol. If you had a battery level indicator like most devices have what would yours look like or what would your percentage be for today/this week? Fill that in on your sheet. Once you’re done with that answer the other two questions next to it rating how much rest is part of your life and how much you WISH rest was in your life. Put a line or circle where you put yourself on each rating scale.

*(After they have time to do this, find a way to hear back from one or more of the questions they rated. This could be in pairs, an open question to whoever wants to share in the large group, or even have them stand up and indicate one end of the room to be “1” or “empty” and the other side “10” or “fully charged” and have them stand where they indicated for each of the 3 questions. If you already have regular small groups determined this would be a great check-in for those groups kind of like you might do highs and lows in small groups.)*

## What Does God's Word Say?

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Whether you’re on empty or fully charged there’s a lot we can learn from God’s Word about how He designed us for both work and rest. Let’s start back at the very beginning.

**READ OR HAVE A STUDENT READ:** [Genesis 1:26-2:3](#)

**ASK THESE THREE QUESTIONS:** *(Do this in the large group, small groups, or as individuals. Let them pull out and discover the important parts of the reading. They may surprise you! Bonus: encourage them that these are questions they can also think about when they read Scripture on their own.)*

- **What do these verses tell us about God?**
- **What do these verses tell us about ourselves?**
- **What do these verses tell us about our current topic we are talking about (rest)?**

*If you do this in smaller groups get some people share a few learnings. If you do this in one large group, you can incorporate the following ideas into their responses as you go or after they’ve finished.*

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** We will talk in future weeks about how to balance the call to work and serve with the call to rest (both of which we see here), but one thing that is clear even from these first words of the Bible is that God wants us to experience rest and invites us into that. One fascinating note is that the seventh day of creation, the day God rested, was the seventh day for Him, but the FIRST full day of life for the humans. Sometimes we think about rest as this reward we get at the end of a week or the end of our work. Rather, it seems perhaps God desires us to work FROM a place of rest not work in order to GET rest.

**These themes continue throughout all the Bible. Let's look at a few more places where God talks about rest.**

*SAY SOMETHING LIKE:* **Jeremiah 6 is one of those places. Verse 16 starts by saying:**

Thus says the Lord: "Stand by the roads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, here the good way is; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls..." (ESV)

**This section talks about how God laid out a plan for how people could live with freedom, balancing work and rest and that by seeking and walking in that way they would indeed find rest for their souls. Isn't that what we want... not just physical rest like when we get sleep at night but deep rest in the very core of who we are?!? What's fascinating is that the verse doesn't end there. It continues:**

"But they said, 'We will not walk in it.'" (Jeremiah 6:16b ESV)

**The New Living Translation says, "But you reply, "No, that's not the road we want!"**

**Isn't that how we are sometimes too, though? We have moments for rest or God gives us something and we, through our action, intentionally or unintentionally say, "No. I'm not going to go that way even though I know it may give me rest."**

*ASK THE GROUP:* **Whether intentional or not, what are the practical things in our lives that keep us from experiencing rest? That could be physical rest, emotional rest, relational rest. For example, one thing that sometimes keeps me from rest is \_\_\_\_\_.** *(Share your own. Here are some ideas: FOMO, high expectations on self or from others, busy schedules, distractions, choosing things that seem restful but are really just checking out or ignoring real life like scrolling social media or bingeing TV shows).* **What gets in the way of us experiencing rest?**

*(Have a group discussion.)*

*SAY SOMETHING LIKE:* **Some of those things are good things. And even at times we may need to just have a good distraction to get our minds off of something hard. However, God longs for us to experience true DEEP, life-giving, restorative rest (and to give us grace and forgiveness when we repent and chose another way!).**

**Let's look at one more place the Bible talks about rest. This time we get to hear words straight from Jesus.**

*READ OR HAVE A STUDENT READ:* **Matthew 11:28-30**

"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (ESV)

**Jesus invites us to experience rest... to learn from Him... to enjoy this gift of rest He gives.**

*ASK:* **When you hear this invitation to "come" and "rest"... what things come to mind that you need rest from this week? Spend a few moments to tell God those things in your head or make a note on your paper. Maybe start with this sentence, "Jesus, these things feel heavy right now...."**

*(Give a few moments for personal prayer and maybe end with something simple like: "Jesus, give us rest for our souls despite these heavy things. Amen.")*

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Think back to the list we made at the beginning of today... the list of things that leave us tired, depressed, exhausted, and anxious. THESE are the yokes of this world. These are burdens we put on ourselves and that other place on us. Here Jesus invites us to take HIS yoke which is so different from these other yokes. HIS yoke is easy and light in comparison. His yoke brings forgiveness for our sins and everlasting life. His yoke is one in which we find peace and rest.

This is because ultimately, He took on all the burdens and all the weight on the cross. We can find peace and rest in the fact that our identity is secure in Christ apart from the work we do. We don't have to prove ourselves or do enough to earn God's love. Jesus already did that on the cross. It is true that God has good work for us to do in this world; we'll talk about that in future weeks, but that work is not what saves us. It's important to keep this in mind when we try to figure out how to add rest into our lives. Even that act can become like a heavy "yoke" as we strive to do rest the "right way".

The historic Christian practice of baptizing infants is a beautiful picture of this truth. The little baby has no way to say the right things or do the right things or avoid the wrong things. Yet, in their baptism God says, "He/She is MINE... loved dearly... forever!" Our position with God, our standing with Him has nothing to do with what we do; it's all what He has done for us! That is something we can truly rest in today!

### Let's Get Practical

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** As we wrap up today, let's get practical about what this looks like in our lives. We started today by having you indicate where your battery level is at. That's helpful to know but we also need to pay attention to what kinds of things fill up that battery and which things drain it away. On your own or with someone next to you try to make some lists of things that are battery filling or life giving and which things are life or battery draining. (See "Life Lists" section of handout) If it's hard to think in general maybe just think back on the last week or two and think about the things that were exhausting or brought joy or delight.

### Choose Your Own Adventure

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Lastly, each week of this session we are going to end with a challenge or idea of how to live out what we learned this week. Most week's it's a **Choose Your Own Adventure** so you get to pick which activity you want to try out. *(Direct their attention to the student handout and talk through those 3 options. Have them pick one and share with the group or a friend which they want to try this week.)*

### Closing Prayer

*Use your own prayer or the one below:*

**Jesus, show us how to rest in you this week. When the work and expectations seem to pile up remind us that you give rest. When hard things happen in our families or with our friends, give us space to step away and recharge so we can respond well. When we are physically tired, help our bodies get the rest they need in sleep. And even if we get caught up in our mind trying to figure out to rest the "right way", calm us to simply see you. Whatever we need God, we trust you to provide it this week. In Your Name, Amen!**

## LESSON TWO: NO LONGER SLAVES

### Lesson Overview

**Scripture:** Exodus 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 5:12-16; Luke 13:10-17; Mark 2:27-3:6

**Main Point:** Sabbath is a gift God gives us to remember His freedom and healing!

#### Supplies Needed:

- Leader Guide
- Student Handouts and pens/pencils
- Bibles
- A set of random printed pictures, emojis, or memes to use in the check-in activity

Options/Ideas for what to use:

- Print out 50+ random pictures you find; make them a variety of people, scenes, colors, black and white, etc.
- Print out a bunch of different emoji faces of all different emotions and expressions
- If you have a card game like "What Do You Meme?" you can use the picture cards from this.

#### Applicable "End Goals" from LCMS Youth Ministry:

- God desires to bless me with family, friends and community. (Proverbs 6:20, Colossians 3:20, Ephesians 6:1-3)
- In Christ, I am both a citizen of heaven and of earth. I trust Jesus that He alone gives me life to the full in the here and now. (John 3:16; Philippians 3:20; John 10:10)
- Jesus calls me to faith and is with me daily as I live in baptismal grace. (Matthew 28:19-20; Galatians 3:27)"
- Christ gathers and strengthens my local church community, and the Christian Church throughout the world through Word and Sacrament. With this community, I gladly hear God's Word preached and taught. (Act 2:42-47; I Corinthians 11:17- 34; Hebrews 10:25; Luke 10:16)

### Welcome and Check-in

*Before students come in spread out whatever pictures you gathered (see supply list) around the floor or tables.*

*Open in prayer or have a student or volunteer pray.*

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE: To start off today, look through all the pictures/memes/emoji's spread out all over and then you will pick two pictures.**

- **First, pick one that describes something about your past week.**
- **The second one should be one to describe your relationship with God today.**

*(You can either have them physically pick up the pictures if you have enough or have them look and then just remember which pictures. Once they had enough time to choose, have them share what pictures they chose and why in however much or little detail they desire. You can do this in pairs, small groups, or go around the whole group depending on the size of your group.)*

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE: Last week we talked about the gift of rest that God gives us, the things that keep us from rest or cause us to need it, as well as what charges us up or**

**drains our batteries. Any thoughts or reactions to last week as you have had more time to think about it? Did anyone try out the challenge from the end of last week? How did that go?** (Make sure to encourage/give grace for those that didn't try it or it didn't go well; learning to rest is just that... a learning process!)

**Today we are specifically going to talk about the concept of Sabbath rest that we read about in the Bible.**

### What Does God's Word Say?

*ASK: When you hear the word "Sabbath" what do you think of? (Perhaps make a list or just gather thoughts verbally. You can always have them talk in pairs or small groups if that helps get the conversation going. E.g. going to church; not doing things; worship; etc.)*

**One place we learn about it is in the catechism. Here is what Martin Luther says about what the third commandment means:**

*"We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it."*

***What are your thoughts or reactions to His statement?***

**With all of that in mind, let's jump right in and find out how God's Word, the Bible talks about Sabbath!**

*(For this next section if you have too small of a group to divide up just look through each of them together as a large group. If you have lots of group, just double up having more than one group/pair look at the same verses. Also, you don't have to use all 5 verses if you don't think you'll have time to recap them all.)*

**We are going to break into small groups and each look at one section of Scripture that talks about Sabbath. We will use the same three questions we used last week to think about the verses. In your groups, read the section of Scripture and then talk about what it tells you about Sabbath, about God, and about us as humans. Make sure to have someone in your group take notes and someone else who is willing to report back to the large group a quick summary of what you read and learned! You may not get to all three questions.**

*Scriptures to give out to groups:*

- **Exodus 20:8-11**
- **Deuteronomy 5:12-16**
- **Luke 13:10-17**
- **Mark 2:27-3:6**
- **Isaiah 58:13-14**

*Questions (also on handout):*

- **What does this section of the Bible tell us about Sabbath or rest?**
- **What does this section tell us about God?**
- **What does this section tell us about ourselves/humans?**

*Give groups 5-10 minutes to read their scripture(s) and talk about the questions. Then bring them back together and hear their reflections on each one at least for the first question. Either share the thoughts below after all the groups have gone or intersperse them through the conversation as you talk about each Scripture.*



There are many more scriptures about Sabbath than just these and if you read all of them there are some general themes you find. These are some aspects of Sabbath we see in Scripture:

- Worship/Hearing God's Word
- Delight, joy, FUN!
- Rest or restorative activities
- Community or connection
- A day for healing and freedom

In some of these stories we saw that the religious people just kept adding more and more rules to Sabbath telling them all the things they couldn't do. We see this especially in the Luke and Mark sections we read. It is interesting to look back at those verses and see how the religious leaders talked about and viewed Sabbath in comparison to how Jesus talked about it. In short, the religious leaders focused on all the things you CAN'T do on that day while Jesus seemed to focus on the gift of the Sabbath and what you CAN do.

It is important for us to know why these religious leaders acted this way because it is easy for us to maybe get to that point as well or to feel guilty or ashamed if we can't figure out how to rest well. Their motives were pretty good. In our day and time, we have the Bible that tells us all about Jesus and the amazing things He has done for us. But back then they did not have any of that. God promised them hundreds and hundreds of years before that He would send a Savior, a Messiah but they were just waiting and waiting and waiting. At some point along the way a belief had come to be that if every single Jew "kept the Sabbath holy" (one the 10 commandments) THEN the Messiah would finally come. Can you imagine being in that place? If you are in a really hard place of waiting someone says "If you just do \_\_\_\_\_, then this will all be fixed." Wouldn't you want to try to do that thing, especially if it wasn't a bad thing?

Again, their motives weren't all bad, but they were missing the point. In these stories, they were missing Jesus. It was kind of ironic. They were getting mad at Jesus, a Jew, for breaking the Sabbath because now they'd have to wait another whole week to try to get it perfect so that the Messiah would come... the Messiah that was standing right in front of them talking to them!

Sometimes we do this too though; we get so caught up in the "right" way to do something we miss the gifts God has for us. So, as you try out the concept of Sabbath, of keeping a day holy or set apart, may Jesus be clearly at the center of it all!

Let me share one more fascinating thing to point out from these Scriptures and then we'll get on to practically what this means for us.

*Have someone from the group that looked at **Exodus 20:8-11** read those verses out loud to the group.*

**ASK THE GROUP:** In the Exodus version of the 3<sup>rd</sup> commandment what does God give as the reason for Keeping the Sabbath Day holy? ("because God rested on the seventh day")

**Now pay attention to this. The 10 commandments given in Deuteronomy 5 are almost identical EXCEPT one small thing. When Moses recounts the 10 Commandments in Deuteronomy there is one slight difference. See if you catch it.**

*Have someone from the group that looked at **Deuteronomy 5:12-15** read those out loud to the group.*

**ASK: In this section what reason does God give for Keeping the Sabbath holy?** (to remember that we are no longer slaves!)

**Both reasons are important; important enough for God to mention them in the 10 Commandments. The first is what we talked about last week. We remember the Sabbath day to mimic God resting on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of creation. AND we honor the Sabbath day to remember that we are no longer slaves!**

**Here is a quote by a guy name Mark Buchanan that talks about this:**

*"Exodus grounds Sabbath in creation. Deuteronomy grounds it in liberation. Exodus remembers Eden, Deuteronomy Egypt. ... Exodus gives theological rationale for rest, and Deuteronomy historical justification for it. One evokes God's character, the other his redemption. One calls us to holy mimicry—be like God; the other to holy defiance—never be slaves again. ... Slaves don't rest. Slaves can't rest. Slaves, by definition, have no freedom to rest. Rest, it turns out, is a condition of liberty. God calls us to live in the freedom that He won for us with his own outstretched arm. Sabbath is a refusal to go back to Egypt." – Mark Buchanan in "The Rest of God: Restoring Your Soul by Restoring Sabbath"*

**We see this in Isaiah 58 and in Jesus' words about Sabbath, don't we? Key elements of Sabbath include freedom, joy, and delight! This is possible because of what Jesus did for us. We are free! So honoring Sabbath is a way to declare to the world that sin and Satan do not win and do not have control in our lives! **John 10:10** talks about how Satan comes to steal, kill, and destroy us BUT Jesus comes to give abundant full lives. Sabbath is one of the ways He does this!**

### Group Activity/Let's Get Practical

**Let's get a little practical about what this looks like in real life. Here's a case study:**

Sam just made the soccer team. However, he found out that there may be an occasional game on Sunday afternoon which is normally when his family practices Sabbath. He and his family are having discussion about whether or not he can participate in those games. One on side they really do try to keep Sundays as a day for worship, connecting with each other, and rest. It is set apart, holy. At the same time Sam really truly enjoys soccer and it is restful and restorative to him. He feels so much joy in playing and so for him, it feels like the ideal activity to participate in on Sabbath.

**In your groups talk about that. What are your thoughts on the hard spot Sam's family is in? Is there anything from today that helps in the conversation?** (Either end the conversations in the small groups or come back to the large group and hear responses if there is time.)

Here's the thing: God doesn't tell us whether Sam should play soccer on Sunday or not. There are a lot of factors, however, here are some other helpful points to remember as we close out today (*Feel free to adapt these to your own words*):

- Sabbath isn't equal to just Sunday. The sabbath day is about not letting anything get between us and God's Word. Sabbath (rest) is found in the Word and not in the calendar.
- Sabbath is not an escape from reality. It is actually stepping into the truest reality. It's a taste of the perfection of Eden AND a taste of what is to come in eternity. It's "practice" for heaven!
- While Sabbath isn't a day to be completely self-centered it generally should have elements of delight and joy (see [Isaiah 58](#)). Think for a minute about what a PERFECT night would be like. Maybe even close your eyes. It's probably different for all of us, but imagine that you're out back at a friend's house with your favorite people hanging out in the pool or around a bonfire. You're roasting s'mores. Telling stories. You're so caught up in the night that none of you realize you haven't checked your phones in a long time. There's laughter. The problems of the past week aren't anywhere near the surface of your mind and you wish this night would just never end! If you've had a night like this and I asked you why it was so special, you'd probably say something like, "I just don't even have the words to describe it." And that's probably true because I believe what we're experiencing in those moments here is a glimpse of eternity. We get a chance to taste that a little each time we honor the Sabbath day and keep it holy.
- "Holy" really means "set apart". It's less about all the rules and regulations that the religious leaders of the Bible God caught up in and more about distinguishing this day as different. That doesn't mean it may not be hard at times. We are going to sin and fail to be set apart on our own. There may be activities that you don't participate in or work that simply doesn't get done. It may even disappoint people, BUT it's worth it as through the Holy Spirit, we connect with Jesus in this way!
- What's restful for one person may be "work" for someone else. Like the soccer example above, for some people like Sam it may be pure joy and delight; for others it's exhausting work. And sometimes it's somewhere in the middle. Or with your parents, some of them may see gardening as a chore while others really enjoy being out in God's creation during that time and it's really relaxing and peaceful.
- It is a command. Sabbath is a beautiful joyful thing, but also... God commands us to do it. Here's another quote from Mark Buchanan: "Get this straight: the rest of God, the rest God gladly gives so that we may discover the part of God we're missing—it is not a reward for finishing. It's not a bonus for work well done. It's sheer gift. It's a stop-work order in the midst of work that's never complete, never polished. Sabbath is not the break we're allotted at the tail end of all our tasks and chores, the fulfillment of all our obligations. It's the rest we take smack dab in the middle of them without apology, without guilt, and for no better reason than God told us we could."
- Lastly, remember to keep Jesus at the center. Ask him to give wisdom and grace as you figure it all out!

If there is extra time, as a group, brainstorm activities that connect with the various Biblical aspects of Sabbath adding to the lists on the student handout:

- *Worship (going to church; worship music; connecting with God in creation)*
- *Rest (take a nap, other activities that may be restful for different people)*
- *Delight (PLAY!, laugh, eat food you enjoy, remember you aren't slaves, you are free!)*
- *Community and Connection (go to church, have meals with friends or family, write a letter to someone)*
- *Healing and Freedom (serve someone else or provide rest for them, pray, journal, deal with the hard stuff)*

**Sabbath is a time to remember who we are. All throughout the week all kinds of things are thrown at you, expectations you place on yourself, expectations from parents, teachers, coaches, school tasks to do, deadlines to meet, comparisons to other people, feelings of not living up, and each week is filled with good things too. Sabbath is a day to sort through it all and remember what's true by looking in God's Words to us. Through Scripture we see, I am a loved child of God. I have a beautiful eternity waiting for me in heaven because of Jesus. God has a purpose for me in this life on earth and will give me all I need to carry it out for my good, His glory, and so that the world around me can know His love too!**

### Choose Your Own Adventure

Pick one of these challenges for the week ahead:

- Set aside some time as Sabbath this week. You may not be able to find a full 24-hour period to start, but maybe it's just 2-3 hours where you can plan a specific activity (or lack of activity) that you find restorative.
- Have a conversation with your family about Sabbath. Here's an idea for a way to start the conversation: "We were talking about Sabbath today in youth group. I'm curious: what comes to mind when you think of Sabbath or why do you think it's important?" After they answer you can ask if they want to hear your thoughts or just sit and listen. Another follow up question might be: "What would it look like for us to practice Sabbath in our family?"

### Closing Prayer

Use your own prayer or the one below from Ron Mehl in "The Tenderly Commandments" to wrap up:

"Lord, this kind of command ought to be the easiest to obey. Yet so often I find it the most difficult. You told us to rest because we desperately need to. Lord, forgive me for my worrying, striving, manipulating, and scheming—as though everything somehow depended on me. ... Taking things into my own hands has wearied me more than I can say. I look to You now as the One who restores my soul. I look to You as the One who said, 'Come unto Me, all that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.' That is what I want to do today, Lord. I want to be like Mary of Bethany, who sat quietly at Your feet... gazing into Your face, hanging on Your every word. The needs around her were pressing too, but You told her she had made the best choice. And so today, I will listen for Your call and submit to Your tender command. In Your Name, Amen."

## LESSON THREE: TAKE A NAP & EAT A SNACK

### Lesson Overview

**Scripture:** 1 Kings 19-19:12; Romans 8:26

**Main Point:** We will get exhausted while doing what God calls us to. Yet, He provides all we need in those moments! Caring for ourselves or letting others care for us equips us to carry out God's will in our lives!

#### Supplies Needed:

- Leader Guide
- Student Handouts and pens/pencils
- Bibles
- Playdoh
- Potentially fun snacks since the title of this lesson does talk about snacks 😊

#### Applicable "End Goals" from LCMS Youth Ministry:

- When faced with troubles, I boldly trust in God's mercy and cling to His promises. (Psalm 5)
- I am simultaneously sinner (old creation) and saint (a new creation), asking for repentance and resting in Christ's grace, forgiveness of sins, and promises. I am strengthened in my walk with Jesus through the work of the Holy Spirit. (Psalm 51)
- I pray about sinful temptations and ask for the Holy Spirit to protect me from them.

### Welcome and Check-in

*Pass out the playdoh as people are coming in to play with.*

*Open in prayer using your own or the one below based off Psalm 119:18:*

**Jesus, open our eyes to wonderful things in Your word today. Amen**

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** For our first activity today, I want you to make something out of the playdoh that answers this question:

- **If you had a free Saturday and could do anything you wanted, how would you spend the day?**

**While you shape that, talk with the people around you about last week's topic. Did you find any Sabbath this past week or talk with your family? How'd it go? Or maybe you have Sabbath plans for today to share. Chat about those things while you shape something to describe your perfect free Saturday with nothing on the calendar.**

*Go around the whole group or in small groups for them to share their "perfect Saturday" creations. After this either collect the playdoh or, if you group can handle it, let them keep playing with it throughout the class as a way to relax and do something with their hands while they listen.*

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** The reason I/we had you answer that question of how you'd spend your free Saturday is to help you continue to think about things that are restful and restorative to your body and soul. Think back to your answer for a minute and consider

at the end of that perfect day how would you feel? Excited? Exhausted? Exhausted in a good way or a bad way? Lethargic? Energized? Connected? Disconnected?

When we think about Sabbath and Rest sometimes the things that we lean toward *seem* restful in the moment, and maybe physically they are, but sometimes they leave us feeling worse off at the end. I'd challenge you to consider when thinking about Sabbath and Rest to find the things that leave you feeling rested in your soul, at peace, cared for, and connected. That doesn't mean you can just have a lazy day every once in a while to play video games or watch "too much" TV. But we ALSO need time where we are actively resting in truly helpful ways.

### What Does God's Word Say?

*SAY SOMETHING LIKE:* Today we are going to talk about a guy named Elijah and the title of this week's lesson is "Take a Nap and Eat a Snack" and essentially that's what God told Elijah to do. We're going to dig into that part of the story here in a minute but first we need to find out what happened in Elijah's life right before this.

**Let's all turn to 1 Kings chapter 18.** *(You can fill time while people are looking by helping them find it if your group could use that (e.g. 1 Kings is kind of in the middle of the Old Testament there are a lot of books with numbers all around it... if you get to 1 or 2 Samuel keep going; if you it 1 and 2 Chronicles or like Job or Psalms you've gone to far) ... or just start giving the context below while they find it)*

**CONTEXT –** *The book of 1 Kings covers about 120 years of time starting with the death of King David around 970 BC and ends around 850 BC. In the middle of this time God's people, called "Israel" split into two Kingdoms. Back in 2 Samuel God set started setting apart kings to lead his people. This is a historical narrative book that tells us about some of the kings that led God's people during that time as well as some of the prophets God sent to lead them as well. Often, these prophets had the hard job of telling the kings and/or the people that they were (once again) not following God's commands. It was not an easy job. Elijah was one of these prophets for the northern Kingdom while King Ahab was reigning.*

In **1 Kings 18** we see a battle of sorts between Elijah, who claimed to be the only one left of God's prophets, and hundreds of prophets of Baal (one of the false gods many people worshiped).

*(At this point either read **1 Kings 18:20-39**, summarize it in your own words, or use this summary below):*

- Elijah had Ahab gather all the people of Israel as well as the prophets of Baal and prophets of Asherah (yet another false god) on Mount Carmel.
- He challenged them to a dual.
- They set up two altars with a bull on each one. But then they didn't light the fire as they might normally do for a sacrifice.
- Elijah challenged the 450 prophets of Baal to call upon Baal to send fire to burn up the bull on their altar and that he would do the same. They agreed and he let them go first.
- The other prophets called out to their false god for hours, they danced around the altar and even cut themselves all in trying to get their god to answer.

- Elijah wasn't very nice as he mocked them saying things like "You'll have to shout louder! Maybe he's daydreaming!" or even "maybe he's busy using the bathroom." But nothing. Verse 29 says, "but there was still no sound, no reply, no response." (NLT)
- They continued on all day until evening.
- Finally, Elijah set up his altar. Then, he dug a trench around the altar and had the people fill large jars with water to pour all over the altar. He had them dump water all over the altar and the sacrifice three times.
- Then, he prayed to God and verse 38 says that immediately "the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench."
- The people then bowed down on the ground and worshiped God.

**ASK:** Before we move on, any thoughts, reactions, or questions about that part of the story?

- After this story, another miracle of sorts happens for Elijah. In short, he prays for rain, and it suddenly happens. (1 Kings 18:41-45) And a third miracle is mentioned in vs 46 when he has the strength to outrun a chariot.
- What's interesting though is that Elijah didn't feel very victorious or powerful or anything we might expect him to feel after this defeat, at least not from what we see in Scripture.
- When the King Ahab got home from the mountain, he told Jezebel what Elijah had done and word God around that Jezebel planned to kill him within the next 24 hours.
- This sent Elijah running for his life into the wilderness.

Read or have someone read 1 Kings 19:4.

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** At first glance this doesn't make any sense! He just witnessed God do three different miracles through him. He trusted God boldly and God came through. He won! And now he's suicidal and asking God to take his life. While it may not initially make sense, the more we think about this the more it kind of does make sense. While you probably haven't called down fire from heaven and had it burn up a bunch of stuff, I bet you have had times in your life when maybe it *seemed* like everything should be great. Yet, it didn't *feel* so great.

You got the A on the test. You made the team. You got the invite to that party with the popular people. And yet, you still felt lonely, discouraged, or unsatisfied or unfulfilled. You won the big game, but it didn't feel as exciting as you thought. You got the lead in the musical, but then immediately you started worrying about all the work involved in learning lines and not making a fool of yourself. You did something you thought would please your parents, but they didn't even seem to notice.

**ASK:** Either grab your handout and write down something about a time like that OR talk to a person next to you. You get to choose which way to respond but take a few minutes to think about or talk about a time when on the surface it seemed like you should have been happy and doing well, but you actually weren't.

*SAY SOMETHING LIKE:* If you haven't had an experience like that already in your life, you probably will at some point... where the emotions don't seem to line up with the situation.

If you remember back to week 1, we used a battery to kind of indicate how we were doing. On your page indicate where you are this week. Are you fully charged? Completely empty? Somewhere in between? (Give a few seconds for them to fill it in on their sheet.)

Elijah's battery level indicator would be flashing 0%. He had nothing left.

*ASK:* With someone next to you pick one of these two answers to share about:

- When was a time you felt completely drained like that... you had nothing left? It could be physically exhausted, or it could be like Elijah where it is more of an emotionally drained situation.
- When was a time you felt completely charged, or as close to 100% as you have ever been? What was going on when you felt like that?

So here we are with Elijah, alone in the wilderness, just wanting to die. Let's see how God responds.

*Read or have a student read 1 Kings 19:5-9.*

*SAY SOMETHING LIKE:* And here is where our theme for today comes in... take a nap and eat a snack. It also shows God's provision.

*ASK (take a good chunk of time to get them talking about the story):*

- What stands out to you in this story or what questions come up for you?
- What does it tell us about God?
- Does it tell us anything about ourselves or what we might need to do in those situations you wrote or talked to a neighbor about a few minutes ago?

*If the following things don't come up in conversation, consider sharing the ones that seem applicable...*

Here are a few more things we can see in these:

- God provides. – He provides all we need. He provides in big ways like fire from heaven but also in simple things like food. He is provider, even providing His own Son for us.
- Sometimes we need to deal with practical needs like sleep and food. Can you imagine how tired Elijah was?!? He climbed up a mountain, had been up all day the day before waiting for Baal to send fire which never happened; he had physical labor of building an altar, arranged wood on the altar, cut up the animal, and dug a trench around the altar. This after climbing down the mountain and then back up again and then ran 31 miles in the rain (that's longer than a full marathon). And he goes on another 100+ miles before we see him by the broom tree. Yea... I'd be pretty exhausted too. More on that in a minute!
- Even if you take the physical element out, we will get exhausted at times doing what God calls us to. Elijah was called to do hard work. Jezebel (and others) were



out to get him and ultimately Satan was out to destroy him as well through discouragement. Satan attacks us in the same ways, especially in the times when God is using us the most to share His love in the world. We will get exhausted and maybe even a little beat up. But God remains with us. He'll show up in those moments for us like He did for Elijah. That helps comes through the Holy Spirit. Here is one example of that.

- Read or have a student read [Romans 8:26](#).
- We have the gift of God's spirit to help us when we don't have what we need or when we don't know what to pray.

## Let's Get Practical

*SAY SOMETHING LIKE:* We have been learning so much the last few weeks about the importance of rest. Sometimes even physical rest or nourishment helps us spiritually. When taking Elijah's story and making some practical applications to our lives here are two ideas of what can help us care for ourselves or someone else in hard places.

## HALT

*SAY SOMETHING LIKE:* Some of those seasons you described above where the emotions didn't line up with the situation may have gone on for a while. But I bet for some of them, once you got some sleep or some food it didn't feel quite so overwhelming. (We all know that person who gets "hangry" when they have late lunch, right? When we're in one of those overwhelming situations here's a helpful acronym that may help us figure out what we need:

**H**ungry  
**A**ngry  
**L**onely  
**T**ired

Dealing with one or more of these things may not change a hard situation. However, it may make it a little easier to keep moving forward. When we don't fuel our bodies properly with adequate food and sleep it impacts the way we think and the way we think impacts how we feel. If we are angry, we also often can't think rationally. And as for lonely, we all need people to walk through us in the hard moments of life. There still may be a long journey ahead to deal with the hard situation; Elijah had a forty day walk ahead before he actually met with God and heard what he was supposed to do next, but God does give us these warning signs in our body to show us when something may need attention kind of like warning lights on the dashboard of a car. HALTING helps us respond to things instead of just reacting to them and gives us space to connect with God to see what we might need. God knows that we are physical creatures with needs, but we don't want those needs to get in the way of seeing Jesus in our situation.

## BREATH PRAYERS

*SAY SOMETHING LIKE:* Prayer is another practical tool that helps in these moments. Sometimes we need long moments to sort out our lives with God, but other times quick short prayers are just as helpful, if not more so. Your handout has a few short prayers that maybe you'll find useful in hard moments:

*(see handout)*

Physiologically, studies have shown the calming benefits of deep intentional breaths. One idea is to combine these short prayers with deep breaths. Some people call these “breath prayers” where you say one half of the prayer as you inhale and the second half as you exhale. The repetition tells our mind and heart we will be okay because our God is with us. It helps us (as Phil 4:8 encourages) to dwell on what is true about our faithful God. The physical action of breathing tells our body we will be okay too. It clears our mind to be able to hear what God has for us in our next step.

Whether you combine these with breathing or not, try to memorize one of these prayers that you can use on hard days or in difficult situations.

## Wrapping Up

*SAY SOMETHING LIKE:* As we close out today, I want to remind us of another man, who climbed another mountain one day. People had a death threat out on him as well and unlike Elijah’s situation, God didn’t step in. He didn’t give him a nap or send an angel to provide food. No, He stood back as His very son was beaten, stripped naked, and left to die. He didn’t prepare a sacrifice on an altar; He *became* the sacrifice. When you see it in comparison to the way God cares for and provides for Elijah, maybe it makes Jesus’ death stand out a bit more. It makes us realize the sacrifice it took for God to let His Son carry the weight of that cross so that we don’t have to. Jesus didn’t just defeat 450 prophets of Baal, He defeated sin and death itself when He rose from the grave three days later. God did stand back, but only so He could provide an even greater gift to us, His children. He loves us that much! Enough to die so we could live. Now that’s a reason to have peace and rest even when life feels so overwhelming we can’t go on. He gives us practical tools and resources and tips to care for ourselves. Those things matter. AND even better, He gives us himself! Always with us! Forever!

*Jesus, thank you for your sacrifice. Thank you for being the One true God! Thank you for the gift of rest. Help us know you more as we work and rest this week! Amen.*

## Choose Your Own Adventure

Let’s put these things we learned into practice in one of these ways this week:

\* Pick one of the short prayers on your sheet to say at least once every day this week. If it’s helpful to you maybe say the first line as you inhale and the second as you exhale. Think ahead now to a time when you can do this intentionally (e.g. while brushing teeth; set an alarm; as you leave school; etc.).

\* Text someone else in this group sometime this coming week and ask them how they’ve been finding rest or encouragement.

## LESSON FOUR: REST AS GOOD NEWS

### Lesson Overview

**Scripture:** Mark 6:30-44; Mark 3:9

**Main Point:** Living lives of rest can be a powerful witness in a "go-go-go" world! Perhaps it's even our greatest evangelism tool.

**Supplies Needed:**

- Leader Guide
- Student Handouts and pens/pencils
- Bibles
- The list of the main stressors for teenagers from Week 1
- 3 "dot" stickers for each student (or a marker will work if you don't have stickers)

**Applicable "End Goals" from LCMS Youth Ministry:**

- "I was not created for myself, but for others. I am called to act justly and serve my neighbor, to love and show mercy, and to walk humbly with my God. (Micah 6:8)
- At times, it will seem the world or "culture" may have victory, but I will trust in the truth of God's Word and His desire for me. (Romans 12:2; Ephesians 6:12; John 1:9-13; I John 1:5-10)
- I trust the Holy Spirit to give me words to share my faith with others when opportunities become available. (Matthew 4:19; Matthew 5:16; Romans 1:16; 1 Peter 3:15; Mark 12:31; Luke 10:25-37)"

### Welcome and Check-in

*Open in prayer or have a student or volunteer pray.*

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE: We're going to one last battery level check-in. Where are you at this week and why? Indicate that on your handout. What does your battery look like? If you can remember (or have the handouts with you) how has your "charge" level changed or stayed the same over the last four weeks? Think about what made it higher or lower on certain weeks.**

**Then, share with a neighbor one thing you learned about yourself about what drains and recharges you? If new ideas come to mind you can add them to your "life-giving" and "life-draining" lists from a few weeks ago.**

### Group Activity

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE: As we start today, I want us to actually go back and look at the list we made in Week 1 of this study on Rest and Sabbath. I asked you to tell me all the things that leave teenagers today feeling exhausted, anxious, or discouraged.**

*Give each student 3 dot stickers (can also just use markers if you don't have any kind of stickers) and ask them to go up to the list and put their stickers on the three they think are the "Top 3 stressors for teenagers today". If you have a large group, you could also use a digital platform to have them vote on the top three from their seats OR earlier in the week post them on social media for students to vote on. Somehow get to the top three from the group.*

*THEN SAY SOMETHING LIKE:* Okay so now \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ are what we collectively think are the top three stressors for teenagers today. Now say someone was experiencing these three things.

What would be “good news” to this person? What could happen in their life or what could someone say to them that would be considered good news or bring relief? (*Get their responses and perhaps add your own*).

The word “gospel” really just means “good news”. We talk about sharing the gospel but sometimes that is scary; perhaps it’s a little less scary when we think about offering people good news.

*ASK: One more question: We mentioned \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ would be considered good news to this person. What do you know about Jesus that connects with those aspects of good news? (This is where you’ll have to do some quick thinking on the spot since you won’t know exactly what topics are going to raise to the surface, but maybe think of some ideas ahead of time for the list they made in week 1 where you can give examples of how Jesus speaks good news into the stressors they experience.)*

*SAY SOMETHING LIKE:* There are a lot of ways that being a Christian is counter-cultural. There are a lot of places in our lives maybe in your schools or homes even where you may be put down for being a Christian or that it is hard to follow Jesus. Maybe a teacher pushes back against your beliefs or friends try to get you to participate in things that aren’t healthy or right. Maybe even showing up here seems weird to others. Being a Christian often goes against the grain of the world around us.

However, rest may be the one counter-cultural area that even those who are against everything about Jesus want what Jesus has to offer! It is the one area where perhaps we have the best chance to share with our friends about how amazing our God is. Perhaps Sabbath and rest is even our greatest evangelism tool!

In a “go-go-go” work with a million expectations and a thousand ways we’re all trying to compare and live up, I think people, including your friends, are longing for a message that says “rest” ... “take a break” ... “you don’t have to have it all together”!

- *Do you agree or disagree (that rest is something teenagers are longing for)? Why?*

### What Does God's Word Say?

While rest IS good news, sometimes it’s not just that easy. Maybe you’ve had this question lingering out there as we’ve talked the last few weeks... “But my life is too busy! How do you find the time to rest?” Have any of you wondered that while we’ve been talking the last few weeks?

*(See if anyone says yes or no to know how to continue. If no, then maybe say something like, “Well I wonder that sometimes” or “You may feel like you have that time not but there probably will come a time when you feel like you don’t have time to rest.”*

*ASK: So, what are your thoughts on that? What if you don’t have time to Sabbath or you don’t have time for things that restore your body and soul? What if you were encouraging a friend to rest and they responded, “But I can’t!”. What might you tell them?*

*Gather their thoughts and then continue.*

**Well, in our story today Jesus ended up in a situation where Jesus wanted to invite his disciples into rest... BUT ... the crowds didn't let them.**

**Let's see how He handled it.**

*Read or have someone else read **Mark 6:30-32***

**First, let's stop there and note: This is another piece of Scripture where we see Jesus valuing rest and inviting people into it. Practically, He was inviting his disciples into it. John the Baptist (Jesus' cousin) had just been murdered, the disciples had been out doing ministry all over, and they were TIRED. So, Jesus invites them to come away and rest with Him. He shows us the value of time away with other people and with God that we've mentioned a lot the last 3 weeks.**

**BUT ... it didn't go as planned. Read **Mark 6:33.****

**Sometimes this happens to us as well. We have all the good intentions to rest, to take some time away, and then someone needs us or something happens to disrupt it. Let's see how Jesus responded:**

*Read or have someone else read **Mark 6:34-46***

**ASK: So how did Jesus respond?**

*Hear their responses and if they don't mention them consider adding these thoughts to the conversation:*

- **He served. He had compassion. He found some strength somewhere to keep going when He had nothing. BUT don't miss the last part... He still also found time to get away and rest.**
- **One fascinating thing is that in verse 31 it said that one of the reasons that Jesus was trying to get away is that they were so busy that they didn't have any time to eat. And what happens after Jesus teaches... He provides a meal. Verse 42 says "they all ate as much as they wanted" ... I can't imagine that the disciples and Jesus fed 5000 men and their families and didn't eat as well. In their serving, Jesus fed them and was fed.**
- **SOMETIMES God sustains us in the seasons or moments when rest isn't possible. But that is not his desire for every season and every moment. He longs for us to have times to step away and rest so that we can spend time in His Word and focused on our relationships with God and others.**
- **Practically this just takes practice. We have to try things out and figure out our schedules and maybe even say "no" to some things in order to find space and time for rest. And when we do, I think God does miracles similar to the fish and the loaves with our time. Somehow, suddenly we find ourselves accomplishing more in 6 days of work with a day for Sabbath than when we packed 7 full. Somehow, suddenly, we are more focused in our schoolwork when we take time for sleep at night and can get things done quicker and more accurately. Somehow, suddenly we compete better athletically when we find a rhythm between work and rest.**

Let's look at one more example where Jesus talks about the importance of self-care. It's back a couple chapters in Mark 3.

This is another situation where the crowds had followed Him to a lake. They were crowding around wanting Jesus to heal them. As they got there we see something fascinating that would be easy to skip over when you're reading the story; it's hidden in Mark 3:9.

*Read or have someone else read **Mark 3:9**.*

In the middle of overwhelming need Jesus prepared for Himself and found a way to protect Himself from being crushed. He planned ahead. That is another important part of any kind of self-care or spiritual practice. Satan does not want us to be able to do these things because he knows what powerful good news it is like we talked about before. If we are not intentional, there will ALWAYS be one more thing we can do, one more task that needs done, one more person who needs are help. And sometimes, like we saw Jesus do, God really is asking us to sacrifice a little and meet those needs. But sometimes, with a little intentionality and planning we really can have time to rest, to Sabbath, to care for the bodies and minds God's given us.

**ASK: Any thoughts reactions or other things you see in these two stories about Jesus?**

*If time, go back to the same three questions we've asked a lot in this study:*

- *What do these two stories tell us about God? About ourselves? About Rest?*

Here's some amazing truth: God's Word and His rest are always available to use even when we fail to take Him up on those gifts! He is a patient and loving teacher who just keeps graciously inviting!

Lastly, when we're in one of those "But I can't!" moments, it also may be helpful to remember that the things that matter most, the eternal salvation things, Jesus has already taken care of. When He was there, dying on the cross, He said, "It is finished!" It's complete. Think for a minute about the relief you experience when you check a big task off your to-do list. You turn in that big paper or you have that hard conversation. There is a peace and a relief. Now multiply that feeling by a million... that is relief we get to experience knowing that Jesus said everything needed for our salvation is done, complete, finished! THERE is some good, gospel news!

### Let's Get Practical

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE: Get with a friend and share what gets in the way of rest for you as well as what you may be able to do in the week or two ahead to plan and prepare for rest, to set aside space and time for it.**

Then have this conversation as a large group:

- **So, circling back to where we started, what about these stories would be good news to a friend who isn't really connected to Jesus?**
- **Can someone think of a way you might use something from these stories or anything we've talked about the last four weeks as a simple way to engage conversation with someone?**

Here's are some ideas/examples:

- *If you hear a friend mentioning how tired they've been lately or how their lives are so busy. Maybe say something simple like, "Yea, I know what you' mean! We've actually been talking about that at church a lot lately and I've heard some really interesting things that have been helpful for me." Gauge their reaction and if they don't seem interested you can just leave it at that, but if they seem intrigued asked, "Would you be interested in hearing some of what we talked about?"*
- *Say something like, "Hey, I'm going to do (insert fun/restful activity here) on Saturday as just a fun way to unwind. We've been talking a lot about rest at youth group and I thought that sounded like a fun way to just take a break from all the crazy of life. Want to join me?!?"*

### Choose Your Own Adventure

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE: This week's challenge has to do with what we were talking about earlier with the gospel being good news. Who is one person who you know who could use some rest? What is one practical way you might encourage them or invite them into rest this week?**

### Closing Prayer

**Jesus, there are always more things to do. We know you felt that when you were on earth as well. Remind us that, first of all, the most important things have already been completed by you on the cross! Thank you for that. Help us rest in that reality. Help us also practically plan for rest so that we are ready and energized to do the work you have before us each day. Show us who needs to hear about the rest you offer this week and give us opportunities to share that good news with them! Amen**