



Small Group Discussion Notes

The Rest of the Story Week 8

Cultivating Sabbath

November 13th, 2022

Warm Up

Would you rather grow a vegetable garden or raise chickens?

Digging Deeper

Read *Luke 8:4-15*

In this parable Jesus uses the sowing of seeds in various conditions and types of soil to paint a picture of the condition of people's hearts to receive the word of God. This is a powerful image and one that can be used to examine our level of receptivity to Sabbath. Consider the various soils/conditions and share which one best reflects your openness to Sabbath.

What practices would you expect to find in the lives of people who are like the good soil in their openness to experience Sabbath? What similarities might there be between people who are open to the word of God and open to Sabbath rest?

Read *1 Cor. 3:6-8*

Paul reminds us that while we labor with God, it is ultimately God who brings about growth. How might this understanding help us with our expectations of what takes place in times of Sabbath? Who ultimately brings about true peace and rest?

Is it freeing to know that God is ultimately the one who brings about spiritual growth, and we simply need to cultivate the conditions that allow us to be receptive to the work He is doing? How might this be different from the ways in which you or others have viewed spiritual growth?

How do activities like reading scripture, prayer, silence, fasting, etc. help us to be receptive and attuned to God's work in our lives?

Next Steps

What are the weeds and rocks in your life that you need to remove in order to cultivate Sabbath? Similarly, what are nutrients so to speak, that you need to add to the soil of your life in order to have good soil for Sabbath?

How might your friends and family participate in the cultivation of such times of Sabbath rest?

So as to not let Sabbath become just another spiritual concept, beginning this week what is one tangible next step that you will incorporate into your life to make it a higher priority?

Final Thoughts

Vigen Guroian, author of *The Fragrance of God* says, "If a healthy soil is full of death, it is also full of life: worms, fungi, micro-organisms of all kinds....Given only the health of soil, nothing that dies is dead for very long." As you continue on your Sabbath journey, regularly consider what might need to die in your life in order to continue cultivating healthy, flourishing times of Sabbath and a robust Sabbath Imagination.