Moses Project Spiritual Practices Spring 2022

**Sabbath-Keeping**

In her book, *Leaving Church*, Barbara Brown Taylor provides some insight into what sabbath is all about: “Stop for one whole day every week, and you will remember what it means to be created in the image of God, who rested on the seventh day not from weariness but from complete freedom. The clear promise is that those who rest like God find themselves free like God, no longer slaves to the thousand compulsions that send others rushing toward their graves.” It’s not hard to find ourselves enslaved by our busyness. Life might feel like little more than going through the motions of tending to an endless to-do list. In the hustle and bustle, we lose perspective on what matters most. Sometimes we even lose sight of who we really are as we begin to define ourselves by what we do.

This may be the reason that remembering the Sabbath is a commandment rather than a suggestion! We need the Sabbath to remind us that life is more than what we do or do not accomplish. It is about who are, about what we are becoming through God’s grace at work within us. Whether or not we practice on THE Sabbath, we are called to find ways to step away from the busyness to simply be in God’s presence, to enjoy the blessings God provides, and to find rest, renewal and the perspective we need to live in the freedom and love God gives us. This might look like prayer and Bible study, service to others, meaningful time with friends or family, rest or play… whatever calls back into connection with who we are as God’s beloved children.

In a Group: Give group members a piece of paper and have them to divide it into two columns. In one, instruct them to list what they do (at least in part). In the other, ask them list characteristics or qualities of who they are. Invite some reflection and discussion about how each of these lists shape who they are. Then invite some consideration of what helps them to connect with who they are, particularly as children of God. Encourage them to identify one way they might set aside time for that kind of connection in the coming week.

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Andrea Severson is a licensed mental health counselor and spiritual director. Her degrees include a Master of Science in counseling from Drake University and a Master of Divinity from Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University. She holds a certificate in spiritual direction and is an ordained elder in the United Methodist Church. Andrea enjoys hearing the unique stories of the individuals and couples with whom she works.  Her areas of interest include anxiety, depression, trauma, identity, faith and spirituality, life transitions, and relationships.  Andrea is a member of the American Mental Health Counselors Association and Spiritual Directors International. In her spare time, she likes reading historical fiction, listening to the Beatles and camping.