

# THE SABBATH REST IN THE LORD

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Pastor Wencong in his sermon on “Sabbath Rest in the Lord” (8 Nov 2020) reminded us of what the Sabbath Rest is about and why it is still important for us today. Christians celebrate the Lord’s Day (Sunday) as equivalent to the Jewish Sabbath day.

The Lord’s Day is to be a day of rest – ceasing from work, from study and perhaps even from the normal routine of the six days. Underpinning this ceasing is the call to “be still and know that I am GOD” (Ps 66:10). As such the Lord’s Day is to be marked by a spirit of worship – a recognition of who GOD is, both at a community and an individual level. In the army, when an officer (senior rank) enters the room, the soldiers in the room are to stand still, call to attention and cease whatever they are doing to acknowledge the officer’s presence and to give attention to what he/she would be saying. In the same way, we acknowledge GOD’s presence in our lives and community by ceasing whatever we are doing – our work, study and routine to pay attention to what GOD is saying on the Lord’s Day.

Another aspect of the Sabbath Rest is the idea of recreation. The word “recreation” means to re-create, to renew and to revitalise. In Genesis 2:2-3 when GOD rested from ALL his works, there is perhaps a picture of wholeness (shalom) here – a time to enjoy the fruits of His labour and see All his creation in harmony to his purpose. Surely GOD does not need rest to recuperate. As such the intent of recreation is not to get ourselves ‘ready’ for the next days of work. The purpose of Sabbath Rest is to renew our body, mind and spirit to be at peace and harmony (shalom) with GOD’s purpose.

Sabbath Rest also foreshadow the eternal rest we have in GOD. Jesus made this rest available to us by inviting us to come to him (Matthew 11:28-30). We don’t have to wait till we get to heaven to taste this rest of GOD. The context is about salvation. As such Sabbath Rest is only available to those who have a relationship with Jesus. We cannot have the Rest without having the Rest giver. That is not possible. The Rest is only available in the giver – “come to me” Jesus said. Jesus is our Sabbath Rest and in that sense, every day can be the Lord’s Day and every moment the “Sabbath Moment”- living our lives in worship to GOD and in shalom

to his purpose in Jesus Christ.

May the Sabbath Rest of GOD guide and lead us into Christmas and the New Year ahead, Amen.