

On Earth as in Heaven: Rethinking Time

11/24/2018 Andy Figueroa

"Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter or your male servant or your female servant, or your ox or your donkey or any of your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you."

Deuteronomy 5:12–14

When churches teach about stewardship it's usually about money, the fuel that seems to power everything. Without generous offerings of money the parish would wither. Please remember to offer your 2019 estimated giving card if it's not already in. Let's also remember that before man made his first offering to God, He gave us the sabbath, a gift of time. *So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.*

Genesis 2:3

In the third of the Ten Commandments, God now formally gives man one seventh of each week as a time for rest and commands that it be observed. It's more than a Biblical tithe of time that God generously gives to us for our well-being. God knows that rest is important and that His industrious people are not going to take time off from tending their crops, livestock, or trades when the specter of hard times can always be seen lurking around the corner. The concepts of leisure time, days off, vacation, and retirement had not yet been dreamed up.

Our world has dramatically changed from those Biblical times.



Modern people expect to have five (or fewer) working days each week containing 40 (or fewer) working hours, significant vacations, and decently early retirement.

Ignoring vacation and retirement for now, how much leisure does a typical working person have? Six 24-hour days per week (not counting the day of rest) gives us 144 hours. We need to sleep each day so subtract 48 hours leaving 96. Also subtract 40 hours of work leaving 56. Your own hours may vary, especially for workaholics and retired persons.

To whatever extent that we have free time that our forefathers did not, it is a great gift. What portion, if any, of this new resource



should we consider offering back in deliberate ways beyond Sunday to the glory of God? The opportunities to use these precious windows of time are not on neutral ground – they are in hostile territory. Concupiscence and the world conspire against us. As St. Paul cautioned,

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.

Ephesians 5:15–16

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