Perspectives on Technology: A Technology Sabbatical

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# Abstract

The author discusses taking time away from technology. He is careful not to start the Abstract with a tab because that’s considered a no-no. Every paragraph for the rest of the paper will begin with a tab however.

*Keywords*: Sabbath, Sabbatical, Technology

A Technology Sabbatical

# Method

The most significant class I took at Lenoir-Rhyne University wasn’t one in my major. It wasn’t even a 3 credit hour class. It was a little mini-term class in the Computer Science department. Although we only met for 8 weeks, (a full semester is 16 weeks), I learned more life lessons from this single class than all the others.

# Results

The hardest assignment, and the one that I took the most from, was entitled a “digital sabbatical”. For one sunny afternoon, I shut everything down – my computer, my laptop, my tablet, all television watching, listening to the radio, driving a car, and yes, even my beloved cell phone. OK, well, I had to drive to the store, but other than that, I pretty much went off the grid for those few hours. And you know what? I survived! In fact, I thrived! No longer being interrupted every few minutes with a tweet or a text message from my friends, I was able to put two thoughts together coherently. It reminded me of Henry David Thoreau saying “I was determined to know beans”. I love the juxtaposition of that saying. It’s usually used to show how little someone knows, and yet there is great wisdom in knowing beans. In chapter 1, Economy, Thoreau said:

For more than five years I maintained myself thus solely by the labor of my hands, and I found that, by working about six weeks in a year, I could meet all the expenses of living (Thoreau, 1985).

A college student could learn a lot from reading chapter 1 of Walden.

But why use the word Sabbath? Why does it have to be a religious observance? I think it’s because in order to meet the conditions, it almost requires a religious commitment. Isaiah said:

If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight and the Lord’s holy day honorable, and if you honor it by not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words, then you will find your joy in the Lord, and I will cause you to ride in triumph on the heights of the land and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob (Isaiah 58:13-14, New International version).

# Discussion

Although we live in the age of grace, we can learn a lot from the Old Testament. To me this says to take time away from all the distractions and entertainments. Sacrifice some time to the Lord. In the Old Testament, they sacrificed animals. Maybe offering our time as a sacrifice will be well pleasing to the Lord.

# Bibliography

Thoreau, H. D. (1985). *A week on the Concord and Merrimack rivers ; Walden, or, Life in the woods ; The Maine woods ; Cape Cod* (6th ed.). New York: Literary Classics of the United States.