



CROWN LIFE-BEATS: RE-CREATE 1

RE-CREATE: We value regular life-giving rest.

Week 1 CROWN - RE-CREATE

AIM: To have a clear understanding of God's call to 'sabbath' and to begin to be able to apply the principles of rest practically in our own lives.

Re-Create: We reject the incessant demands of modern life, and seek to model something better. We recognise the importance of having regular rest each week, to "re-create" by involving God in times when we cease "productive" work.

Study Notes:

Ice-breaker question: Can you think of a phrase people often use to show they are busy or don't have enough time for all they have to do? How many can you get as a group?

Prepare:

Spend some time worshipping as appropriate to your group. Ask God to speak through his word.

Father God, as we follow you, you lead us beside still waters and our souls are restored.

In our busy and distracted world, teach us to stop and find the rhythms of rest that will enable us to live fruitfully. As we celebrate every good thing we have in you, renew us to shine for you in the world around.

In Jesus' name, Amen.



The CROWN Rhythm

Bible Passages:

Get different members of the group to read each of the short passages.

Genesis 2

3 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. 2 By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. 3 Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

Exodus 20:8-11 (The Ten Commandments)

8 'Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. 9 Six days you shall labour and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. 11 For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Deuteronomy 5:15 (Additional explanation of the fourth Commandment)

15 Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the Lord your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm.

Therefore the Lord your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.

Study Questions:

Choose from the questions (and add your own) that seem most relevant to your group / context:

Genesis 2:1-3

1. If God rested after the creation of the universe, what was the first thing that people did? What is the significance of that?
2. If the everlasting God doesn't grow tired or weary, (Isaiah 40), what might it mean that God rested on the seventh day? How might this connect with his declaration each day that his creation was "good" or "very good."?



3. If the first experience of humanity was to share rest with our creator, our first experience of work flows from that relationship. This turns on its head our usual idea of resting from our work. Instead we work from our rest? What does that difference say to you? What might that begin to mean in your life?

4. The 'sabbath' or rest day, is a day blessed by God and made Holy. What might that mean? What does that say of its significance and potential benefit to us?

The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:8-11 & Deuteronomy 5:15)

1. How do you feel that breaking the sabbath, not taking rest, is ranked on a par with murder, adultery and theft in the Ten Commandments?
2. Why do you think the command to rest is extended to family, households, foreigners, even animals?
3. "In six days you shall do all your work..." What would you say in our culture are the main barriers / temptations / difficulties we face to 'stopping' and resting?

4. Why do you think we are tempted to overwork? Are there fears that drive us? What might they be?
5. How does stopping despite our fears represent trust in God that he is in 'charge'? In what way is it good for us to be reminded that we aren't in charge, and the solution isn't working harder?
6. In a lifestyle where people survived on the food they grew and harvested, what does it say, that they were prepared to stop and focus a day around rest and drawing close to God?
7. The Exodus reading reminds us that God rested and blessed the seventh day. In remembering the sabbath we are to remember God within it. How might we do that?
8. The Deuteronomy verse connects re-creation with being set free from slavery. What might we be enslaved to? How might God help set us free through good patterns of rest and re-creation see?
9. The Sabbath gave the Jewish people a distinct identity. How might being a 'rested' people show the world our faith makes us different? Would people recognise that in you right now?
10. Jesus constantly modelled good practice in terms of taking rest, drawing aside to be with God - can you think of any stories / examples?
11. Does a sabbath always have to be Sunday? What principles make for a good time of rest and re-creation?
12. How might this connect with other CROWN rhythms? How may they help us build a Re-Create pattern?



Interesting Bible Background:

As well as a weekly day of rest, the bible includes many other instructions about 'rest'. This include rest for the land, (leaving fields fallow to have their fertility renewed), great festivals and celebrations in which God's goodness is celebrated. These point to the need for us to have different layers of rhythms.

Rick Warren suggests a simple pattern for building re-creation into our lives:

Draw-back Daily - time to pray, reflect, give thanks

Withdraw Weekly - take sabbath, re-creation

Abandon Annually - get a break, a holiday.

We encourage people to form a CROWN rhythm around, Stopping, Resting, Renewal (being renewed by God) and Celebration.

12. Where do you see these 'sabbath' principles referenced in our passages or other parts of the Bible:

Stopping? Resting? Renewal? Celebration?

If you have time, close the evening with by looking at these verses from the bible.

First of all - PRAY, pray that the Holy Spirit will highlight to you the one thing that he wants you to take away - and expect him to do that!

Secondly, if you are in a group, read the verses (either together, verses in turn, or one person).

Thirdly, read the verses on your own, slowly. STOP when you feel you have found the verse, phrase or verse that God is highlighting to you. Underline It.

Fourthly, ask God what it is about that phrase, verse or word that he is wanting to talk to you about. This is usually for your encouragement. Ask, is this just for me? Is it for someone else (specific) too? Is it for the whole group?

Finally, write down the highlighted words and thoughts (below) and perhaps come back and review that in a few weeks time.

Some promises from the Bible around rest and relying on God follow - feel free to add your own:

John 15:5 'I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

Mark 6:31 And He said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a secluded place and rest a while." (For there were many people coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.)

Matthew 11:28-30 "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Psalm 4:8 In peace I will both lie down and sleep, For You alone, O LORD, make me to dwell in safety

Psalm 127:2 It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for he gives to his beloved sleep.

Isaiah 40:29-31 He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

Exodus 33:14 And He said, "My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest."

Psalms 62:1-2 My soul finds rest in God alone; my salvation comes from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will never be shaken.

Proverbs 19:23 The fear of the LORD leads to life, So that one may sleep satisfied, untouched by evil.

Philippians 4:6-7 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Note down how you feel God has spoken to you through any of these verses:

End the session by joining together to say the closing prayer.

*Lord of All, you call us to work from our rest.
Forgive us where we have been driven by the pace of the world and our own fears and insecurities.
Help us to lay all these down, and to learn to rest in you. Teach us these unforced rhythms of grace, that we live and model something better. Amen.*



The **CROWN** Rhythm

HOMEWORK: Developing a “Re-Create” aspect of your Rhythm of Life.

As part of forming a CROWN pattern, we start with a focus on ‘sabbath’ rest, a day set apart to be renewed. Establishing these principles on one day will see them overflow to the whole of our lives.

For homework, we begin by taking stock our present reality. Complete the table below as honestly as you can over the next week.

STOPPING: When have I been able to cease activity? What have I struggled to put down and let go of?	
Day to day:	Sabbath “Rest Day”:
RESTING: When have I found rest and refreshment. What has helped with that? What has stopped me from properly resting? What is pre-occupying my thoughts, cares and concerns?	
Day to day:	Sabbath “Rest Day”

Week 2 - Repent & Believe:

AIM: For each member of the group to be able to honestly reflect on where they are 'at' with this rhythm, to begin to express a sense of call or aspiration where they feel God wants them to be. To take a simple first step towards the STOPPING element of RE-CREATE, and try something towards that as a first / baby step of beginning to form a rule.

INSPIRATION -

Exodus 16:1-5, 22-30

The whole Israelite community set out from Elim and came to the Desert of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had come out of Egypt. ² In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. ³ The Israelites said to them, 'If only we had died by the Lord's hand in Egypt! There we sat round pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death.'

⁴ Then the Lord said to Moses, 'I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions. ⁵ On the sixth day they are to prepare what they bring in, and that is to be twice as much as they gather on the other days.'

[The people gathered the bread called manna, but were instructed not to keep any, as fresh provision would come the next day. Those who kept the bread found by morning it went rotten and was filled with maggots.]

²² On the sixth day, they gathered twice as much – two omers^[b] for each person – and the leaders of the community came and reported this to Moses.

²³ He said to them, 'This is what the Lord commanded: "Tomorrow is to be a day of sabbath rest, a holy sabbath to the Lord. So bake what you want to bake and boil what you want to boil. Save whatever is left and keep it until morning."'

²⁴ So they saved it until morning, as Moses commanded, and it did not stink or get maggots in it. ²⁵ 'Eat it today,' Moses said, 'because today is a sabbath to the Lord. You will not find any of it on the ground today. ²⁶ Six days you are to gather it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will not be any.'

²⁷ Nevertheless, some of the people went out on the seventh day to gather it, but they found none. ²⁸ Then the Lord said to Moses, 'How long will you^[c] refuse to keep my commands and my instructions? ²⁹ Bear in mind that the Lord has given you the Sabbath; that is why on the sixth day he gives you bread for two days. Everyone is to stay where they are on the seventh day; no one is to go out.' ³⁰ So the people rested on the seventh day.

What does this passage teach us about people? sabbath? about trust? about God?

GROUP DISCUSSION:

The majority of the second session is spent by beginning to work out together how we can put the principles Jesus gives us into practice.

- It is useful to identify a baseline - *i.e. Where am I really at with this?*
- To share what God is saying - *i.e. Where do I think God wants me to be?*
- To consider first or next steps - *i.e. How can I make a start?*

For some of us this may be:

- Affirming and consolidating what already is taking place, and reflecting on how we might be more fruitful within it.

For others:

- Recovering patterns which have been fruitful in the past but have lapsed. (It is good to explore and understand why).

For others still:

- Forming new RE-CREATE patterns that will bring life.

INITIAL FEEDBACK:

We begin by sharing in turn what we have learnt from the teaching and the journal we kept as homework. We use this to understand our present reality and to begin to discern how God might ask us to respond. This week we will explore how God may be leading us to Stop and Rest.

TESTIMONY: John Mark Comer explains what his Sabbath looks like

A Sabbath is an entire day set aside for rest and worship - a whole day dedicated to Yahweh. But that doesn't mean the sober kind of over-serious, fasting all day and memorising Leviticus. For us that means asking what draws us into deeper connection with God, each other and our own soul. We start on Friday night; we power off all of our phones – there's no technology in the house for 24 hours. We gather round the table, light a candle, read a psalm, pour a bottle of wine, invite the Holy Spirit and open our time in prayer. And then we feast – we have this massive dinner for about two hours. We go around the table and each share our highlight of the week and have this great time. There's no TV so we read and then collapse into bed. Saturday there's Bible reading, prayer and lots of good coffee. I make a huge brunch for all the kids. We'll go on a nice, long walk and in the afternoon I normally read and journal. My wife is extroverted; she'll ride her bike and go get coffee with her best friend. And then we come back together Saturday night and end it.

Nine times out of ten it's the best day of the week, for all of us, and we love it and we savour it and we're always sad when it's over. But we have another one to look forward to six days later. (*Christianity Magazine December 2017*)

What excites and challenges you about this example?

Recognising you may be at a different stage of life, our recommended book *Keeping the Sabbath Wholly*, by Marva Dawn also offers some great perspectives from a single person.

TAKING THINGS FURTHER:

Look over the questions below. Does one stand out to you in particular? Begin to explore why the Holy Spirit might have highlighted that.

The following questions may help you think a little further:

Is 'sabbath' just like any other day for me, or is it set apart?

What stops me from stopping and finding rest?

What might I need to stop, to make space for rest?

What fears keep me busy?

Do I have boundaries to protect space for rest?

How is the evil one stealing rest and stopping you getting it?

What would you do with a completely free half hour? half day? week?

How does the Holy Spirit (want to) breathe life into my patterns of rest?

STOPPING - First thoughts, what might a simple next step I can put into practice be?

Prayer

Pray further into your response to this study using the prompts below as is helpful.

- Pray the Bible: *Be Still, and know that I am God! Psalm 46:10 (Literally ENOUGH! and know I am God!) Ask God to help you to learn to stop, and to discover him and draw close to him as you do.*
- *Commit any first steps you have each decided upon to God, asking him to be at work in them.*
- *Pray for each other that God might help you learn how to take rest physically (body), emotionally (soul), spiritually (Spirit.)*
- *Ask for God to be revealing any blockages that will get in the way of finding rest: for wisdom to overcome practical issues, for courage to overcome*

HOMEWORK:

Take a first step to stopping and make

Seeking God - *Find rest, O My Soul, In God Alone. Psalm 62:5*

As you try to stop, closely observe what challenges and blessings come your way.

- What was hard? (Are there practical blockages)
- Where did I struggle? (Compulsion to check phone / do emails)
- Where did I discover good things? How did I draw closer to God or others?

Commit to spend a short time praying and reflecting into the question below as you make space noting anything that seems relevant.

Seeking God - Question 2: How is God leading me into REST?

As you make space begin to ask how to fill it well. What restores you? What draws you close to God? What is helpful Re-Creation?

WEEK 3

AIM: For each member of the group to begin to express how God might be calling them to STOP and REST and to see how this might fit in with building a Re-Create rhythm. Is there a particular aspect they need to focus on? Are there first / baby steps they can begin to take?

INSPIRATION:

Psalm 127 verses 1-2 (ESV)

1 Unless the Lord builds the house,
 those who build it labour in vain.
Unless the Lord watches over the city,
 the watchman stays awake in vain.
2 It is in vain that you rise up early
 and go late to rest,
eating the bread of anxious toil;
 for he gives to his beloved sleep.

Discuss briefly what we can learn from this Psalm.

1. What does it say about our activity and busyness?
2. How might we 'let the LORD build the house' instead?
3. Do you relate to a pattern of vainly rising early, and resting late?
4. What is the bread of anxious toil do you think? Do you ever eat it?
5. How are you sleeping? In the context of this Psalm, how might sleep be felt a gift from God?

GETTING STARTED:

Read the quote below, from Tim Keller:

"The purpose of Sabbath is not simply to rejuvenate yourself in order to do more production, nor is it the pursuit of pleasure. The purpose of Sabbath is to enjoy your God, life in general, what you have accomplished in the world through his help, and the freedom you have in the gospel—the freedom from slavery to any material object or human expectation."

In light of this (and all we've heard so far) give your present 'Sabbath' patterns a score out of 10 and give a brief explanation why.

GROUP DISCUSSION:

FEEDBACK:

Spend some time reflecting in turn how you got on with the homework exercise? Take some time in discussion to explore this further.

STOPPING:

What challenges have come up? What has got in the way of you stopping? What has gone well? Where did you experience God? What was on your mind when you stopped? Did anything stop you 'switching off'?

Do you see any steps that you might begin to take to form into a RECREATE rhythm? Are there further questions you have / things you'd like to try?

TAKING THINGS FURTHER:

RESTING:

Take around ten minutes on this next exercise. Think of a time that you have felt completely at rest in each of Spirit, Soul and Body and note each down. If you are able, highlight what you can learn from that. How might this help you begin to build a rule of life that brings you rest.

Spiritual Rest (Spirit): Think of a time you've felt at Spiritual peace, e.g. when you've known that Christ is enough and you are safe in him.

Spiritual Rest (Spirit): What do you learn from this?
How can you position yourself to find this rest?

Emotional Rest (Soul): Think about when you have felt at rest, content in your heart and emotions. Where were you? What was happening?

Emotional Rest: What do you learn from this?
It may help to think about whether you are extroverted or introverted?
Is there some kind of recreation that rejuvenates or restores you?

Physical Rest (Body): Think about a time you've felt completely rested.

Physical Rest (Body):
Do you have a physically demanding job, or are you stuck at a desk? (You may find some exercise helps if the latter).
What helps your body wind down? (A walk / a bath / a nap etc)

THE TOUGH STUFF:

Isaiah 30:15 (NLT)

“Only in returning to me
and resting in me will you be saved.
In quietness and confidence is your strength.
But you would have none of it.

The prophet Isaiah speaks of a decisive rejection of God’s invitation.

Question: Why might we “have none of” God’s offer to find rest?

The answer to this might begin to reveal our fears or where we truly put our trust. Idols of self-reliance / money / career can all drive us to non-stop work.

GOING DEEPER:

We’ll explore all of this a little further in the following questions. Look over them and pick one that you feel the Holy Spirit is highlighting you. Why is that do you think?

- What steals my peace and rest?
- How might I ruthlessly eradicate hurry from my life?
- What drives me to keep going when I really need to stop?
- Where do I experience *re*-creation, what brings me alive?
- What is life-giving rest to me?
- Am I sleeping well? What keeps me awake?

NEXT STEPS

Reflect on the what you have learnt together about this principle.

Summarise your progress in the table below:

Aspiration: What would an ideal RE-CREATE rhythm look like for me? (If you can’t yet describe what you’d do, think of some key words about the outcomes you’d like)
Right Now: What does my present reality look like in this area?

Prayer

Pray further into your response to this study using the prompts below as is helpful.

- Pray the Bible: *My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest. Exodus 33:14* Ask God to help you to lead you into rest.
- *Commit any steps you have each decided upon to God, asking him to be at work in them.*
- *Pray for each other that God might help you learn how to take rest physically (body), emotionally (soul), spiritually (Spirit.)*
- *Ask for God to be revealing any blockages that will get in the way of finding rest: for wisdom to overcome practical issues, for courage to overcome*

HOMEWORK:

STOPPING:

How do you plan to STOP this week? (Try and do something that you may be able to maintain.) Take note of how it went, battles / joys and where you experienced God.

Taking REST:

In light of your reflections, note one thing you will try to find rest this week? Take note of how it went, battles / joys and where you experienced God.

WEEK 4

AIM: For each member of the group to be increasingly clear how God is calling them to STOP and REST. To have an awareness of any obstacles they face and be forming strategies to overcome them. To begin to explore what it means to meet with God and be renewed as they set sabbath time aside.

INSPIRATION:

Jesus and the sabbath. Mark 2:27 - 3:6

27 And he said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. **28** So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath.”

Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there with a withered hand.

2 And they watched Jesus, to see whether he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him. **3** And he said to the man with the withered hand, “Come here.” **4** And he said to them, “Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?” But they were silent. **5** And he looked round at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” He stretched it out, and his hand was restored. **6** The Pharisees went out and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him.

1. The pharisees had created 39 categories of different forbidden activities on the Sabbath. Why does Jesus cut across that?
2. Jesus is LORD of the sabbath. He’s in charge. What did that mean for the pharisees? What does it mean for us?
3. The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath. It is a blessing, not a burden. Which does your rest most feel like? How can you make it more of a blessing?
4. As God’s people gather Jesus turns up and heals the man with the withered hand.
 1. How does Jesus turn up in your time of rest?
 2. What space do you make for him to work?
 3. What of your own ‘structures’ gets in his way?

GROUP FEEDBACK:

Following on from your homework, feedback where you have got to:

- How have you seen God at work in helping you form the STOP and REST elements of ReCreate?
- Where do you feel you have made progress?
- Where might the input of others help?

Take 5 minutes to reflect on the following questions, completing your response in the table below:

Barriers / Blockages: What would stop me from reaching my ideal rhythm?
What can I do to change that?

Help / Equipping: What support / input / coaching would help you grow in
this area? (We can point you to useful resources and coaching.)

TAKING THINGS FURTHER - *RENEWAL*:

In *Keeping the Sabbath Wholly*, Marva Dawn encourages us to embrace the gift that the day is.

She emphasises the need for intentionality to *positively - and deliberately choose the values of the Kingdom of God. Fellowship and sharing Christian community plays a part, in this sense there is a very clear overlap with the Community rhythm of CROWN.* In setting aside time we get the opportunity to feast on the things of eternity. We are refreshed and renewed with an enjoyment of God's goodness, and get fresh perspective on our lives.

“We set aside time, and get to feast on the things of eternity.”

As we think about this, share which of the questions most stands out to you and why?

Am I too busy doing church things to connect with God?

Am I intentional or passive as I come to worship?

Is my sabbath rest legalistic?

Where can I bring God into my rest, and experience his re-creation of me?

Am I so fixed on the day-to-day that I don't connect with things of eternity?

Am I living full of the Holy Spirit?

Do I get God's peace or perspective on what stresses me out?

Am I burning with passion for Jesus, or burnt out?

When have I experienced God's presence in time set aside to seek him?

Step 4: CHOOSING TO BE RENEWED

RENEW

Has busyness, other demands and distractions squeezed God out?

As we stop and rest, we are making space. It is a space that God wants to fill. Stopping means we can intentionally position and place ourselves to seek and draw close to God.

Inviting God into our rest may look different for each one of us.

It will be more than coming to church, and may include:

- reading / time for reflection
- music or quiet.

If you have good patterns already, it may help to think about what keeps them fresh?

If you need to build your patterns, how can you do this without striving?

How might you express the RENEW element of a RE-CREATE rhythm?

PREPARING FOR A CHALLENGE:

For homework, agree one thing you will try this week in response to your learning this week. Be prepared to come back and update your progress!

Prayer

Pray further into your response to this study using the prompts below as is helpful.

- Pray the Bible: *The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. Pray that God will lead you into the rest he has prepared.*
- Pray that you experience more of eternity as you make space and time.
- *Commit any steps you have each decided upon to God, asking him to be at work in them.*
- *Pray for each other that God might help you learn how to take rest physically (body), emotionally (soul), spiritually (Spirit.)*
- *Ask for God to be revealing any blockages that will get in the way of finding rest: for wisdom to overcome practical issues, for courage to overcome*

HOMEWORK:

Sabbath rest and time with God should be a joyful thing.

This week give something God might be leading you to form into your personal rhythm a go - and feedback how it went.

At the same-time think about the space you have started to make. Does it feel like duty or joy? What makes it special?

Complete the table below as honestly as you can over the next week taking stock of your present experience and reality.

THIS WEEK I AM GOING TO TRY:	
NOTE HOW YOUR EMERGING RHYTHM WENT:	
CELEBRATION: When has space and rest been a joyful thing to me? Does space / sabbath feel like a joy or a chore or interruption to all that needs 'doing'? How might I make it feel special?	
Day to day:	Sabbath "Rest Day"

WEEK 5 - FORMING RHYTHMS

AIM: For everyone to consolidate all that has been learnt so far in order to draw together a personal Re-Create rule that is rooted in the principles and wisdom of Stop / Rest / Renewal & CELEBRATION

CELEBRATION:

Begin in celebration - how have you got on with the homework?
How did it feel? Where was God at work? What did you learn?

We will take this into the rest of our session as we think about the crucial place of celebration in a rhythm of Re-Creation.

INSPIRATION:

David notes, when I was growing up, *Sunday Best*, or *Sunday Drivers* were not terms of endearment. In fact, the portrayed sense of Sunday was that is a diminished or a boring day, perhaps like Morrissey sang, of an imagined post-apocalyptic world: *Everyday is like Sunday, Everyday is silent and grey!*

The Bible gives a resounding NOT SO!

READ Psalm 92 *A song for the sabbath together.*
Why not stand and declare it!

INTERESTING BACKGROUND:

Sabbath in Jewish tradition was the high point of the week, the peak, the jewel or bride as it was known.

Great festivals marked the high points of the Jewish year.
What celebrations and festivals can you think of in the Bible?

Perhaps the most important, was Passover. In the Last Supper, a Passover meal, Jesus identifies the bread and wine with his body and blood. He is our deliverer, we remember that in him we are saved.

Whenever we break bread and share wine, we are declaring the fulfilment of God's purposes, also looking ahead to the banquet of heaven to come.
Jesus, *our passover lamb*, fulfils Passover.

For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. 1 Co 11:26

Put another way, we can share in festival every week!

DOES CELEBRATION HAVE ANY PART IN YOUR REST?

Adele Ahlberg Calhoun perhaps nails how we should approach it:

The practice of Celebration includes the identifying and pursuing those things *that bring the heart deep gladness* and revelling in them before the Lord.

Marva Dawn highlights the value and place of, special food, celebrating friendship and close relationships, enjoying creation and beauty as potential sources of celebration?

Reflecting on your journal, (Homework), what step of celebration could you add consistently into your Re-Create routine?

CELEBRATING:

What will make you rest and sabbath distinct and special?

FORMING A PERSONAL RE-CREATE RULE

Over the last few weeks we have noted some important principles in forming a RE-CREATE rule -

1. Acknowledging the priority of sabbath and space, resisting the relentless drive of the world.
2. Building upon what we already have in place in terms of Stopping / Resting / Renewal and Celebration.
3. Sharing that journey with others for encouragement and accountability.

An effective rhythm that is rooted in the encouragement of community and, taken step by step, needn't be threatening nor intimidating but instead lead us to deeper places with Jesus. We will find, as we do rest, we will become more productive or effective in how we use or time. Give thanks to God as you notice that!

Where can you listen and hear with others and be accountable for your Re-Create rhythm? How might it be easy to keep that regular but simple?

If it is hard to flesh out a rule, then you may find these examples below based on rules of life that others have adopted in this area based on experience and good practice helpful:

Sample elements of “RE-CREATE” Rhythms:

STOPPING:

- We fast electronic gadgets for 24 hours.
- I will switch off the work emails at six o'clock every evening and at the weekend.
- We organise our shopping on Friday to keep the weekend clear.

RESTING

- I will make time to read a good book at the weekend.
- I will listen to worship music and take some quiet space each week.
- I will go for a long walk at least once a week.
- I will pursue a favourite hobby, tuning in to God as I do.

RENEWAL:

- I will prepare myself for worship, asking God to meet with me as we gather as church.
- We take time to read the Bible together as a family over a leisurely breakfast.
- I will take a retreat or quiet day twice each year.

CELEBRATION:

- We share a special bottle of wine and meal on Saturday to start sabbath.
- I will prioritise spending time with loved ones, setting time aside each week.
- We will seek to share food with friends from church each week on a Sunday afternoon.

MAKING YOUR RULE:

Use the table below to help draw your learning together.

PRAYER:

As a group list key things that you can pray for together as this life-beats series draws to a close. Commit the Homework to God, seeking his blessing on all that everyone will be doing.

MAKING YOUR RULE! Use the table below to help confirm your RULE

SETTING PATTERNS
WHAT IS? How are you already experiencing God through this rhythm? Are you better at Stopping? Have you found Rest?
REFLECT: Next Steps: In light of the journey so far, do you need to make any changes to the shape of your emerging rhythm? What question could the group ask me that I could be accountable to?
WHAT WILL BE? Write down your emerging rule of life for Re-Create

HOMework: As you've noted your personal rule down - as HOMEWORK, clarify what that will mean for you this week.

WEEK 6 - CELEBRATION, CONFIRMATION, COMMISSION AND ACCOUNTABILITY:

AIM: Let's celebrate all that God is done, and look ahead with hope to all that God will do as we live this out. To have a sense of God's confirmation of our rule and his empowering us to live it out.

CELEBRATION:

Share in turn,

- 1) What you have learnt during this life-beats journey.
- 2) Where you have seen God at work.
- 3) What hopes you have for God using this aspect of your CROWN rule.

CONFIRMATION:

As we are celebrating progress, giving thanks for all God has done, spend time teasing out any remaining issues, using whichever of the resources from previous weeks is most helpful and relevant.

Note down your confirmed rule of life for RE-CREATE below:

MY CROWN RE-CREATE RULE:

Why not write this on your CROWN booklet

INSPIRATION:

PROMISE VERSE

Matthew 11:28-30 (MSG)

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”

These words of Jesus are a personal invitation. Which stands out to you?

**Come to me.... Get away with me.... Walk with me.... work with me...
Watch how I do it... Lean the unforced rhythms of grace... Keep
company with me...**

COMMISSION:

Each member of the group will share their personal rule in turn.

As they do, to commission them, gather around them and lay on hands in prayer asking for the Holy Spirit's power to fill them.

Note down and encouragements, promises / prophetic words that are shared for people so that they can take these into their onward journey.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Who will you be accountable for your rule ongoing. This is a crucial ingredient to your pattern being sustained. (It could be this group continues, but it might also be a prayer partner / triplet or others in your Missional Community.)

Then explore together what is next - which Rhythm do you want to build into.

If you want to go deeper into RE-CREATE, then there are more specific Life-Beats journeys focusing specifically on each of STOPPING / RESTING / RENEWAL and CELEBRATION.

As CROWN needn't be taken in a specific order, but can be sequenced around the needs of a group or individual discuss which of Community, Re-Create, Offering, Word or Networks seems right to do next.

COMMUNITY:

We value belonging to and worshipping with the church family.

RE-CREATE:

We value regular life-giving rest.

OFFERING:

We value using our gifts as we join God's plan to renew all creation, bringing glimpses of heaven to earth.

WORD:

We value pursuing a living relationship with Jesus and his word.

NETWORKS:

We value sharing life and faith with those outside the church.

PRAYER:

As a group list key things that you can pray for together as this life-beats series draws to a close. *Close the meeting in prayer, blessing each other in Jesus name and asking that he will make each person fruitful to Gods glory!*

Aspiration: What would an ideal expression of this rhythm look like for me?
(If you can't describe what you'd do, think of some key words about the
outcomes you'd like)

Right Now: What does my present reality look like in this area?

Barriers / Blockages: What would stop me from reaching my ideal rhythm?
What can I do to change that?

Help / Equipping: What support / input / coaching would help you grow I'm
this area? (See available resources below)

Next Steps: What would a rhythm that moves me towards my ideal look
like? What question could a group ask me that I could be accountable to?