

# MORE THAN WHAT YOU

What does an average week look like for you. How do you feel at the end of the week? Do you find yourself wishing you had more time?

Time. It's a funny thing, isn't it? It's something we all understand the basic concept of - seconds, minutes, hours. Yet thinking about time has the power to stir up some pretty powerful emotions. Stress, anxiety, that feeling that there just isn't enough of it, or the sense that your time with someone is running out. When you thought about your week, did you think about how much easier it would be with more time? Are there things you would really like to do that you just don't have the time for? On the other hand, maybe you're someone who's super chill and time is just another wave to coast on through life. If that's you, the rest of us are jealous. No matter how you feel about time right now, it is something that deeply affects all of us. In many ways, we become a slave to it. It controls us.

Did you know that research reveals that the ideal amount of free time for us to have every day is 6 hours and 59 minutes? When you take away the time you spend sleeping, getting ready for and then travelling to school or work, and the time it takes to do homework or check e-mails for work the next day, how consistently do you think you actually achieve 7 hours of free time in a day?

Sometimes, in the busyness of life, it can be easy to get caught up going through the motions, just trying to get through each week as it comes. The truth is, God wants so much more for us than that. In fact, He has quite a bit to say on the topic of time. He starts by saying this, "Stop!"

Read [Deuteronomy 5:12-15](#).

What stands out to you in this passage? How does it impact the way you think about time?

Here's a little context. The Israelites were a nation of people that had been enslaved for approximately 400 years in Egypt. As such, their entire wellbeing and worth came from what they could do for the Egyptian people. If they were sick, or old, or weak, they were considered useless and were often beaten until they pushed themselves to get a little more done. God came in a powerful way and rescued them from their slavery to take them to a land of their own. But He needed to teach them something significant about themselves and about who He was that they didn't yet believe. He needed to teach them that they were more than what they did. Woah! Just think about this for a second. God is doing something really profound here. For centuries, the Israelites' worth and value as humans had been defined by what they did. In fact, I reckon they even thought of themselves in that way. You don't just eliminate 400 years of culture overnight. God is setting something in place that establishes them as a freed people and stops them from slipping back into a slave mentality. So God says "Stop! Six days a week, work, do the things you need to do, but on the seventh day of the week I am going to give a whole day back to you."

Why? It's because God understands something about you and I that we often fail to see or believe in ourselves. We are not what we do. We are so much more than the things we do.

How does this perspective have the power to change the way we see ourselves?

This is God setting us free from our own limitations. Whether you're someone who struggles because you just can't keep up with everything you think you need to do, or whether you're someone who is frustrated because you're unable to do things you used to do, God has something greater He is saying to you today.

Your worth does not come from your work, your busyness or how much you can cram into a week, it comes from something else entirely. God wants you to know that your worth actually comes from Him. He wants to be your master, but not your slave master. Where Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, only saw the Israelites for what they did for him, God was teaching them a new reality. It's not what you do, but the you behind the action that God is actually in love with.

Most teachers will only value you for getting good grades. Most bosses will only value you for the money you make them. Many friends will only value you for the favours you do them. But every now and then you'll meet someone who sees past all of that, sees you for who you actually are, and loves you for it. This is how God sees you, without fail, 100% of the time.

### How does this impact our understanding of who God is?

The reason we actually need the Sabbath as a time that is set aside every week on the seventh day is because, when left to ourselves, it doesn't take us long to start slipping into that slave mentality again that says our worth comes from what we do. So we keep the Sabbath to live in the freedom of knowing that we are more than what we do. We keep it on the seventh day to honour the God that set us free.

But it's difficult to remember that! Even the Israelites forgot what was at the heart of the Sabbath and they received it from God Himself. One look at the New Testament shows they fully believed that their worth came from the things they did. They had even turned the Sabbath into a time to define each other by these things. The religious leaders had a list of 39 things you couldn't do on the Sabbath, and a list just as long of things you must do. When Jesus comes on the scene, He is absolutely devastated! The Sabbath was supposed to free humans from this way of living, instead they were once again slaves.

The Sabbath actually tells us that who we are is about relationships, connections with each other and the world, and finding ourselves in God. It is an opportunity to discover freedom, love, and our purpose for living.

Read [Mark 2:23-28](#).

### What does this tell us about the Sabbath?

If we start to define ourselves, and the Sabbath itself, by the things that we do (or don't do), it is no longer a symbol of God's freedom. It instead becomes a symbol of oppression and slavery.

The Sabbath is saying to you right now that no matter how you view yourself, you are not what you do. Who you are is so much deeper and more amazing and more relational than that. God knew we needed a constant reminder to understand and actually live this out, so He gave us the gift of the Sabbath to remind us of our freedom. But what does a free person do?

A free person first honours and loves the one who freed them. This is a huge part of what the Sabbath is about. A free person knows that he or she is worthy of love, respect and is equal to everyone else around them. A free person therefore treats the world with this love and respect and expects to be treated in such a way. A free person remembers what it felt like not to be free and desires to free others from the darkness and oppression in this world. A free person holds their head high knowing that life will throw all sorts of things at them, but God is the one that makes them whole and nothing can take that away from them.

So where do you start discovering this freedom and this new way of understanding yourself? A great place to start is by enjoying the freedom of the Sabbath.