



ZIMZUM DISCIPLESHIP: THE SABBATH

SMALL GROUP SESSION 1 - GENERAL OVERVIEW

GATHERING

Opening Prayer:

Almighty God, who after the creation of the world rested from all your works and sanctified a day of rest for all your creatures: Grant that we, putting away all earthly anxieties, may be duly prepared for the service of your sanctuary, and that our rest here upon earth may be a preparation for the eternal rest promised to your people in heaven; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Begin with brief check-ins and the opening questions below:

Opening Question:

How has it been practicing zimzum discipleship? Have you been able to find space in your life?

Content Study

- Watch the Sabbath video from +Phil LaBelle on the ecwww.org/zimzum-discipleship website.
- Reflect on the video together. What did you notice?

Reading: Genesis 2:1-3

"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished and all their multitude. On the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation."

Reflection Questions

- Many of us imagine humankind as the pinnacle of creation. However, as Jürgen Moltmann puts it, “Human beings are not the ‘crown of creation.’ It is the sabbath with which God crowns the creation which God beholds as ‘very good.’” What might this mean for you in how you view the world and how you live your life?
- Describe a time you did something creative, and reflect on how you enjoyed or delighted in it. (Maybe a garden or outdoor space or painting or poem or a meal or ...)
- Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel words “The Sabbath is not for the sake of the weekdays; the weekdays are for the sake of the Sabbath. It is not an interlude but the climax of living. The goal is creating the Sabbath as a foretaste of paradise.” What do those words mean to you?
- What would it look like for you to orient your life toward a weekly Sabbath focused on delight, rest, renewal, and connection?
- The spiritual practice we are focusing on is honoring the Sabbath. What would it take for you to regularly engage this practice, even if it is only for 6 or 8 hours on a Saturday? What excites you? What concerns you or is holding you back? Commit to trying it during these weeks and moving toward a full 24 hour period.

Final Reflections

- What has captured your heart or your imagination in today’s discussion?
- How is your soul?
- Where have you seen God—or Love—recently?

Closing Prayer

Almighty and Eternal God, you sacrificially withdrew from a place within yourself in order to create the entirety of the cosmos so that you might be in relationship with us and all of creation. Help us to embrace zimzum discipleship and make space in our own lives, that we might more faithfully follow in the way of Jesus who gave of himself for the salvation and healing of the whole world. All this we ask in the name of the Risen Christ, who dwells endlessly with you and the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*