

## Lent Devotional February 28, 2026

### Scripture

#### Mark 2:23-3:6

*23 One Sabbath he was going through the grain fields, and as they made their way his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. 24 The Pharisees said to him, “Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?” 25 And he said to them, “Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need of food, 26 how he entered the house of God when Abiathar was high priest and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and he gave some to his companions?” 27 Then he said to them, “The Sabbath was made for humankind and not humankind for the Sabbath, 28 so the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath.”*

*1 Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there who had a withered hand. 2 They were watching him to see whether he would cure him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him. 3 And he said to the man who had the withered hand, “Come forward.” 4 Then he said to them, “Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save life or to kill?” But they were silent. 5 He looked around at them with anger; he was 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 conspired with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him.*

### Devotion

#### Nathan Salamacha '23

As a person in full-time ministry and as someone who was a lay leader before this vocation, I feel that the idea of sabbath can be difficult for many Christians to engage with. For some, taking a time to rest from the work of the other six days of the week seems like a waste. Our culture has taught us that if we are not constantly on the grind, if we are not always trying to get ahead, we are falling behind our friends, families, and rivals. Taking a single day off can feel like a death sentence when we are enraptured by this mindset. Then there is the flipside of this attitude. Some Christians guard their sabbath time to such an extent that they do not leave space for God to breathe into their lives on that day. Much like the Pharisees, we focus on the restrictions found in the commandment of Deuteronomy chapter five, in which we are to “not do any work,” but we forget that the commandment starts with God calling us to “Observe the sabbath day and keep it holy.”

Sabbath is about reserving space for the holiness of God to dwell amongst us, for putting our everyday busyness on pause so we can intentionally fellowship with God’s people as we communally encounter our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. Jesus calls out the Pharisees for ignoring this important part of God’s holy commandment: to hold this day as holy. Our God is a God who cares for the poor, the hungry, the forgotten. That is exactly what Christ, and his disciples, did in this passage. They ate and their hunger was satisfied; then they went and healed a man who had been ignored by his community for his physical difference. This is the restorative gospel work of sabbath.

### Prayer

God, as we go throughout this season of Lent, a time where we focus more on Your holiness, let us reserve space for Your Sabbath work. Let us pause our everyday work so we can care for the poor, feed the hungry, and include the forgotten into Your holy community.