

God knew when to stop...do we?

Hope so, but we shall see! The Genesis creation story reveals that God produced good work for six days, and on the seventh day he rested. After originating light, time, space, life, and humanity, God was not tired from his labor. Rather, he ceased the creation process. In his ceasing, God again set the standard, he knew when to stop.

Key Term

שַׁבָּת

Shabbat = Sabbath = 7th = Cease Work

*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.” Genesis 2:2-3*

Multiple good reasons to enjoy rest... God’s people are so blessed!

1. Physical rest - God modelled the Sabbath rest, and people made in God’s image are blessed when we follow a pattern of regular weekly rest. The need for physical rest shows our daily dependence on God who sustains us.
2. Spiritual rest - Jesus understood that people are weary and burdened. So he called people to *“Come to me... and I will give you rest,”* so they can *“find rest for their souls.”* (Matthew 11:28-30) Also, Jesus identified himself... *“The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath!”* (Luke 6:5) He is the Master of rest, of knowing when to stop.
3. Eternal rest - The Forever Family will enjoy the eternal heavenly rest in Hebrews 4. This is the promised *“Sabbath -rest for the people of God”* (Hebrews 4:9). Entering this rest is entering God’s presence. He is our rest!

Why did God “cease work”?

In Genesis 1:31 God called his creation “very good” and ceased work on the seventh day. Consider why God stopped at that point... Had God run out of ideas? Had God’s creativity been exhausted? Not at all. Rather, it was the right point to stop because ceasing at that point lined up with God’s exact purpose and intent.

Specifically on the male/female issue, the right “stopping point” should also line up with God’s original purpose and ultimate intent. God created male and female. STOP. God created them as a *spiritually-gifted, image-bearing, world-changing team* to demonstrate God’s heart for all people. STOP. Missing God’s standard on men and women carries weighty consequences. Some choices, policies, and theologies limit God’s laborers. Some actions limit God’s harvest. Some actions and attitudes build ungodly pride or elevate human culture over God’s kingdom standards.

Do you stop too short? Do you go too far? Do you rightly reflect God’s character and commands?

- Are you a door-opener for males only, but limit what God can do through godly women? (**TOO SHORT!**)
- Are you a door-opener for ungodly sinful relationships? (**TOO FAR!**)
- Are you a door-opener for multiplying *godly* men and women, encouraging them and building them up to look more like Jesus? (**GOOD!**)

Stopping “too short” is sin. Stopping “too long” is sin.

Conclusion

God knew when to create and when to STOP. He created, blessed, and commissioned two genders, then he stopped. He did not make male and female identical or interchangeable. It takes wisdom to stand strong against culture. God expects us to stop where he stops.

4 Crucial Questions

1. What does this teach us about **GOD**?
2. What does this teach us about **PEOPLE**?
3. What command should I **OBEY**?
4. With whom can I **SHARE** this?