News
EarthBeat



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Third week of Advent—Consumption

Day 21: Saturday, Dec. 19

REFLECT

> "Remember the sabbath day — keep it holy."
>
> -Exodus 20:8
>
> "Selah is found in the Hebrew Bible seventy-four times. Scholars believe that when it appears in the text, it is a direction to the reader to stop reading and be still for a moment, because the previous idea is important enough to consider deeply. The poetry in scripture is meant to transform, and the scribes knew that change begins through reading but can be completed only in quiet contemplation."
>
> -Glennon Doyle, *Untamed*

An exploration of consumption and simplicity would be incomplete without reflecting on the role of technology in our lives. In addition to the environmental and human rights issues associated with the mining of resources to create new phones and tablets, unconscious scrolling on our gadgets can make us less present to the people around us, rewire our brains to become addicted to distraction, increase anxiety, promote poor work-life balance and also disrupt our sleep patterns.

The biblical concept of Sabbath can help us to manage and limit our use of technology. We are called to rest one day a week, to take a break from work and distractions in order to simply delight in creation and to love God and our neighbor. If you struggle with managing technology usage, consider trying a technology sabbath to unplug from your phone, computer, tablet, email or any digital media from which you could use a break.

While taking a day off from technology has many iterations, one of the earliest sources of the idea of the tech sabbath was a group of Jewish artists and professionals who put together the Sabbath Manifesto. Resources abound with

suggestions for how to put a technology sabbath into practice, but at its most basic level, all you need to do is shut off your devices and use the time you would have spent on them to rest in God and community.

Maybe there is a hobby you enjoy that has fallen to the wayside in favor of Netflix. Maybe the constant influx of messages and emails distracts you from prayer or quality connections. Maybe you haven't experienced boredom in a while, and this practice will give you space to be still and to hear the Spirit or to listen to the "still small voice" within you.

However you choose to use the time away, powering off is one simple but impactful way to make space for God and abundant life this Advent.

ACT

Disconnect from technology one day this week. If you can't do a day, try a few hours.

View the Advent Simplicity Calendar for additional suggestions to simplify technology usage.

Simple Advent, Abundant Life

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