



## Scenes from a Sabbath

"In the beginning was the Word," we read, and we take it as a charter for multiplying the words of our religion—from memory verses to proof texts, from doctrinal statements to critical reflections and systematic theologies. In the meantime, we live our lives and seek to live the sacred words into our lives. But the divine Word, the *Logos*, was and is more than an assemblage of characters laying quiescent on a page. It is more even than a spoken recitation of sacred texts. The Word is act, the ongoing creative and redemptive activity of Christ as He sustains and reconciles all of creation to Himself.

We keep Sabbath, as our Exodus 20 memory verse has always told us, in remembrance of God's act of creation. If we memorized the Deuteronomy 5 version, we would know that our Sabbath-keeping also recalls God's redemption of an enslaved people from oppression, His creation of the Chosen People. The Sabbath commandment has been spoken into our midst and into our souls, and we have become God's people. Every time we cease from our labors on Friday night, we seek to quiet our souls so we can hear—still, again, anew—the creative redemptive Word.

If we want to do theology, if we must multiply our human words about God, we do well, then, to attend to these and many other "scenes from a Sabbath." God is with us in those scenes, even as He calls us to be with each other. The Word can be heard over and through the throb of an airplane engine, and it can ring like music from the mountains and meadows we fly over. The Word can be heard in the warm and trusting prayers of church folk who bear one another's burdens and welcome the stranger in their gates. It can be heard in the cross-currents of casual talk among family members who each have their peculiar agendas, but whose spirits are joined in the weekly rhythm of Sabbaths shared over decades and generations. God lives, let the earth be glad.

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