

Shorter Catechism: Questions 60-62

The Fourth Commandment. Part 3: A Day of Delight

"...call the Sabbath a delight, the holy *day* of the Lord honorable" -Isaiah 58

Word of God (Exodus 20 - KJV)

20 And God spake all these words, saying, ²I *am* the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

³Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

⁴Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of *any thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth: ⁵Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me; ⁶And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

⁷Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

⁸Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: ¹⁰But the seventh day *is* the sabbath of the Lord thy God: *in it* thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that *is* within thy gates: ¹¹For *in* six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them *is*, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

¹²Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

¹³Thou shalt not kill.

¹⁴Thou shalt not commit adultery.

¹⁵Thou shalt not steal.

¹⁶Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

¹⁷Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that *is* thy neighbour's.

I. Fourth Commandment: A Holy Resting

- **Question 60: How is the Sabbath to be sanctified?** The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day, (Exod. 20:8,10, Exod. 16:25–28) even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days; (Neh. 13:15–19) and spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship, (Luke 4:16, Acts 20:7, Ps. 92, Isa. 66:23) except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy. (Matt. 12:1–31)
- **Deut. 5** - ¹⁴but the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the Lord your God. *In it* you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger who *is* within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you."

a. Preparation for the Lord's Day

Outline adapted from a "Body of Divinity" by Thomas Watson.

- **Spiritual Preparation**
 - **Prayer**
 - Pray for your minister, and the preaching of the Word.
 - Pray for the worship services.
 - Pray for your local body of Christ, and your fellow worshipers.
 - **Be in the Word**
 - Suggestion: Meditate upon the passages that will be preached.
 - Suggestion: Meditate upon the passages that were preached last week.
 - **Meditate on God. His Works and Attributes.**
 - God's Works of Creation.
 - God's Works of Providence, particularly in the prior week.
 - God's Holiness.
 - God's Work of Salvation.
 - God's Kingdom.
- **Physical Preparation**
 - Food preparation.
 - Vehicle preparation. Gas it up, check tires, etc.
 - Family preparation. Lay out clothes, shoes, backpacks, bibles, psalters, etc.
 - Make a schedule. Know what time to get up, to have breakfast, etc.
 - Plan on getting to Church early. Do not rush. Be relaxed.

II. Fourth Commandment: What is forbidden?

- **Question 61: What is forbidden in the fourth commandment?** The fourth commandment forbiddeth the omission or careless performance of the duties required, (Amos 8:5, Mal. 1:13) and the profaning the day by idleness, (Acts 20:7,9) or doing that which is in itself sinful, (Ezek. 23:38) or by unnecessary thoughts, words, or works, about our worldly employments or recreations. (Jer. 17:24–26, Isa. 58:13)

III. Fourth Commandment: Our Attitude

- **Isaiah 58** – ¹³ "If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, *from* doing **your** pleasure on **My** holy day, and **call the Sabbath a delight**, the **holy day of the Lord** honorable, and shall **honor Him**, not doing **your own ways**, nor finding **your own pleasure**, nor speaking **your own words**, ¹⁴ Then you shall **delight yourself in the Lord**; and I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth, and feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father. The mouth of the Lord has spoken."
- The subject of this passage rests upon ownership: "The Holy Day of the Lord" against "your own ways, your own pleasure, your own words".

- There are blessings that result from delighting in the Sabbath. Conditional blessings.
 - Only if you delight in the Lord's Day. Not if you keep the day as a 'requirement', but only if you delight in the Lord's Day.
- Blessing: He will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth. God will exalt you, and honor you. **Matthew Henry**: "which denotes not only a great security (as that, ch. 32:16, *He shall dwell on high*), but great dignity and advancement. "Thou shalt ride in state, shalt appear conspicuous, and the eyes of all thy neighbours shall be upon thee." It was said of Israel, when God led them triumphantly out of Egypt, that *he made them to ride on the high places of the earth*, Deu. 32:12, 13. Those that honour God and his sabbath he will thus honour. If God by his grace enable us to live above the world, and so to manage it as not only not to be hindered by it, but to be furthered and carried on by it in our journey towards heaven, then he makes us *to ride on the high places of the earth.*"
- Blessing: Feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father. **Thomas Watson**, "that is, I will feed thee with all the delicious things of Canaan, and afterwards I will translate thee to heaven, whereof Canaan was but a type."
- These promises are attached to the Covenant of Grace ("heritage of Jacob your father").
- Solemnly confirmed by God: "The mouth of the Lord has spoken."
- The Sabbath: a preparation for Heaven. **Heidelberg Q. 103**: "...Secondly, that all the days of my life I cease from my evil works, and yield myself to the Lord, to work by his Holy Spirit in me: and thus begin in this life the eternal sabbath."
- *"We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased."* – C.S Lewis

IV Fourth Commandment: Reasons annexed

- **Question 62: What are the reasons annexed to the fourth commandment?** The reasons annexed to the fourth commandment are, God's allowing us six days of the week for our own employments, (Exod. 20:9) his challenging a special propriety in the seventh, his own example, and his blessing the Sabbath day. (Exod. 20:11)
1. Abundance of time given for our own employments and recreations (6/7)
 2. His ownership of the Sabbath Day.
 3. His own example.
 4. His blessing of the Sabbath Day.