

Shorter Catechism: Questions 57-59

The Fourth Commandment. Part 2: The Lord's Day

""Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath" - Mark 2:27

Word of God (Deuteronomy 5 - KJV)

⁶ I *am* the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

⁷ Thou shalt have none other gods before me.

⁸ Thou shalt not make 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 waters beneath the earth: ⁹ Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto 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, ¹⁰ And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

¹¹ Thou 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.

¹² **Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee.** ¹³ **Six days thou shalt labour, and do all thy work:** ¹⁴ **But 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, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou.** ¹⁵ **And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.**

¹⁶ Honour thy father and thy mother, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

¹⁷ Thou shalt not kill.

¹⁸ Neither shalt thou commit adultery.

¹⁹ Neither shalt thou steal.

²⁰ Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbour.

²¹ Neither shalt thou desire thy neighbour's wife, neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour's house, his field, or his manservant, or his maidservant, his ox, or his ass, or any *thing* that *is* thy neighbour's.

I. Fourth Commandment: Governs our Time

- **Q. 58 What is required in the fourth commandment?** The fourth commandment requireth the keeping holy to God such set times as he hath appointed in his Word; expressly one whole day in seven, to be a holy Sabbath to himself. (Deut. 5:12–14)

II. Fourth Commandment: Governs our Behavior

- **Q. 58 What is required in the fourth commandment?** The fourth commandment requireth the keeping holy to God such set times as he hath appointed in his Word; expressly one whole day

in seven, to be a holy Sabbath to himself. (Deut. 5:12–14)

- **WCF 21.8** - This Sabbath is then kept holy¹ unto the Lord, when men, after a due preparing of their hearts², and ordering of their common affairs before-hand³, do not only observe an holy rest all the day from their own works, words, and thoughts about their worldly employments and recreations⁴, (Exod. 20:8, Exod. 16:23, 25–26, 29–30, Exod. 31:15–17, Isa. 58:13, Neh. 13:15–19, 21–22) but also are taken up, the whole time, in the public and private exercises of His worship⁵, and in the duties of necessity and mercy⁶. (Isa. 63:13, Matt. 12:1–13)
 1. Keep it Holy. It is not a common day. Set it apart.
 2. Prepare your heart.
 3. Order your common affairs ahead of time.
 4. Rest from your works, words and thoughts about the world.
 5. Spend the time in public and private exercise of His worship.
 6. Perform acts of necessity and mercy.

III. Fourth Commandment: What is our attitude towards Holy things?

- **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.”
- **C.S Lewis** - “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.”

IV. Fourth Commandment: The Lord’s Day

- **Q. 59 - Which day of the seven hath God appointed to be the weekly Sabbath?**
From the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, God appointed the seventh day of the week to be the weekly Sabbath; and the first day of the week ever since, to continue to the end of the world, which is the Christian Sabbath. (Gen. 2:2–3, 1 Cor. 16:1–2, Acts 20:7)
- **Hebrews 4 (ESV)** – ⁴ For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: “And God rested on the seventh day from all his works.” ⁵ And again in this passage he said, “They shall not enter my rest.”

⁶Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, ⁷ again he appoints a certain day, “Today,” saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted,

“Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts.”

⁸ For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. ⁹ So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, ¹⁰ for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his. ¹¹ Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

- **A.W Pink, commentary on Hebrews** – “Here then is a plain, positive, unequivocal declaration by the Spirit of God: "There remaineth therefore a Sabbath-keeping." Nothing could be simpler, nothing less ambiguous. The striking thing is that this statement occurs in the very epistle whose theme is the superiority of Christianity over Judaism; written to those addressed as "holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling." Therefore, it cannot be gainsaid (opposed) that Hebrews 4:9 refers directly to the Christian Sabbath. Hence we solemnly and emphatically declare that any man who says there is no Christian Sabbath takes direct issue with the New Testament scriptures."... Thus, the Holy Spirit here teaches us to view Christ's rest from his work of Redemption as parallel with God's work in creation. They are spoken of as parallel in this respect: the relation which each "work" has to the keeping of a Sabbath! The opening "for" of verse 10 shows that what follows furnishes a reason why God's people, now, must keep the Sabbath. That reason invests the Sabbath with a fuller meaning than it had in Old Testament times. It is now not only a memorial of God's work of creation, and a recognition of the Creator as our Proprietor, but it is also an emblem of the rest which Christ entered as an eternal memorial of His finished work; and inasmuch as Christ ended His work and entered upon His "rest" by rising again on the first day of the week, we are thereby notified that the Christian's six work-days must run from Monday to Saturday, and that his Sabbath must be observed on Sunday. This is confirmed by the additional fact that the New Testament shows that after the crucifixion of Christ the first day of the week was the one set apart for Divine worship. May the Lord bless what has been before us.

Examples of the New Testament shifting of the Sabbath Day:

- **Acts 20** - ⁷ Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.
- **1 Corinthians 16** - ² On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.
- **John 20** - ¹⁹ Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace *be* with you."
- **John 20** - ²⁶ And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!"
 - Jewish days are numbered inclusively. **Sunday = Day 1**, Monday = Day 2, Tuesday = Day 3, Wednesday = Day 4, Thursday = Day 5, Friday = Day 6, Saturday = Day 7, **Sunday = Day 8**, etc.

- **Mark 2** -²⁷ And He said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.
²⁸Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.”
- **Revelation 1:10** -¹⁰ I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet

Various Historical Evidences for the Lord’s Day being kept by the Church as the Christian Sabbath

- **Wikipedia article on the Greek word for Sunday:** The [Modern Greek](#) word for Sunday, Κυριακή, is derived from Κύριος (Lord) also, due to its liturgical significance as the day commemorating [the resurrection of Jesus Christ](#), i.e. [The Lord's Day](#).
- **Jewish Talmud** states of Christians: “every week they celebrate the Day of the Nazarene [Sunday] which has always been forbidden to us.”