

## The Gift of the Sabbath — 05/17/20

**TEXT- Mark 2:24-28** *And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful? 25 And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him? 26 How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shewbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him? 27 And he said unto them, **The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:** 28 **Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.***

**INTRO** – The innocent act of plucking corn and eating was regarded by the Pharisees as a breach of the commandment which forbade reaping on the Sabbath. This was trivial formalism.

**Jesus defends the action of His disciples by a three-fold argument.**

**First, He quotes the example of David** at Nob, as a scriptural precedent for the breaking of a ceremonial law when necessity demands it.

**Second, He shows the meaning of the institution of the Sabbath**

It was a provision for man's benefit.

Jesus teaches a principle about religious observances.

They are means to an end, and are never to be regarded in such a way that the end is sacrificed to the means.

**Thirdly, He declares He has the right to control that which was made for the good of man.**

### God's Gift To Man of the Sabbath.

Two parts— The History of the Gift and The Use of the Gift

#### I. The History of the Gift

##### A. The Sabbath of Creation

**On the sixth day of creation man appears. He is a higher creation. He is to be on earth the representative of God in dominion—one with God;**

**Knowledge, like God's knowledge**

**Life like God's life**

**Authority like God's authority**

**Righteousness like God's righteousness**

**How can man remember his spiritual mission and dependence?**

**How man be brought communion with God?**

**And if man sin how shall he be brought back to righteousness?**

The creator added another day—a seventh day, a Lord's Day, a day of Divine rest and of human opportunity.

It was not a day of God's withdrawal; it was a symbol of human need and of the true rest of the soul of man—it was **instituted as a reminder of man's need for spiritual refreshment.**

#### B. The Sabbath of the Decalogue

**The account of the observance of the Sabbath in the sixteenth chapter of Exodus precedes the giving of the law on Mount Sinai.**

When the manna fell, it marked the Sabbath day.

None fell on that day. Twice as much fell on Friday as on any other day.

For forty years that standing miracle marked the division of time into weeks, and made one day sacred as a day of rest and of worship.

Then when the moral law was given, as you find it in the twentieth chapter of Exodus, observance of the Sabbath was incorporated in it by the finger of God. **Exo 20:8** *Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.*

**The law of the State of Indiana and its penalty are found among the General Laws, chap. xxxv., sec. 1: "If any person, of the age of fourteen years and upward, shall be found on the first day of the week, commonly called Sunday, at common labour, or engaged in his usual vocation, works of charity and necessity only excepted, such person shall be fined in any sum not less than one nor more than ten dollars; but nothing herein contained shall be construed to affect such as conscientiously observe the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath."**

#### C. The Sabbath of Subsequent Times

**Isa 66:23** *And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD.*

**Mark 2:27** *The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:*

**Mat 22:35-40** *Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, 36 Master, which is the great commandment in the law? 37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*

**The first commandment covers the need to love God which includes the Sabbath.**

1. *The Pharisaic Misunderstanding.*—To the Jew religion appeared to be communion with a God who had revealed Himself by the law of Moses. What the Lord Jesus Christ is to the Christian, that the law of Moses was to the orthodox Jew of the time of Christ. As it is our aspiration to grow up into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so it was the aspiration of the pious Jew to conform in all respects to the law, or, as St. Luke puts it, "to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless



**They carefully counted the exact number to be kept, and arrived at the conclusion that there were 365 negative commandments, "Thou shalt not," or one for every day of the year; 248 positive commandments, "Thou shalt," or one for every bone of the body. 613 total**

2. *Christ's Interpretation.*—The Sabbath in Christ's time was a veil upon the eyes of the people. It blinded the Jews so that they could not see further than the narrow walls of the synagogue. But Jesus Christ came to show them the Father.

- **To cure a sick man and tell him to take up his bed and walk**
- **Lift an ox out of a pit**

#### **D. The Lord's Day**

**1. Its Origin.**—It is mentioned in the Acts as the time when "the disciples came together to break bread," i.e. for the Lord's Supper. Acts 20:7 *And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.*

**It is urged by the Apostle Paul 1 Co 16:2** *Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.*

**It is named again in the book of Revelation** and from the phrase, "the Lord's Day," Rev 1:10 *I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,*

**2. Its Relation to the Sabbath.**—What was the relation of the Lord's Day to the Sabbath? We turn for an answer to the New Testament.

**Col 2:16-17** *Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: 17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.*

**Rom 14:5-6** *One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. 6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.*

The Lord's Day was never substituted for the seventh. Each rested on its own ground. It leaves it exactly as in the case of baptism, where the Christian rite took the place of circumcision

**Justin Martyr wrote between the years 138 and 150: "We all of us assemble together on Sunday, because on the same day also Jesus Christ, our Saviour, rose from the dead, He appeared to His apostles and disciples, and taught them what we now submit to your consideration."**

**It is evident from this, and from other historic documents, that Christ's resurrection made the first day the Lord's Day**  
**Paul saw and understood this, Col 2:16** *Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:*

**The Lord's Day marks the completed Redemption, as the Sabbath had marked the completed Creation.**

The Resurrection is also the fundamental truth on which Christianity rests; and thus it is as much insisted on by the Christian Apostles as is God's creation of all things by the Jewish prophets.

**The Resurrection is commemorated, as Irenæus points out, on the first day of the week, when God brought light out of darkness and chaos. It is the risen and enthroned Lamb who says, "Behold, I make all things new": and therefore if "any man be in Christ, he is the new creation."**

#### **II. The Use of the Gift**

The importance of Christ's statement, "The Sabbath was made for man," is permanent and universal; it establishes not the exception, but the rule; Why do we observe the Lord's Day?

##### **A. It is a Gift for every Man**

**1. If the Sabbath was made for man, it must have been because man needed it; as a permanent blessing.**

In the Lord's Day we may realize our nearness and affinity to God—**Robertson of Brighton**, "*I am more and more sure by practical experience that the reason for the observance of the Sabbath lies deep in the everlasting necessities of human nature, and that as long as man is man the blessedness of keeping it, not as a day of rest only, but as a day of spiritual rest, will never be annulled.*"

**2. All God's children have a right to share in its blessings, poor as well as rich,**

**The first day of the week is, to many Christians, not only the one day of rest but the one day of worship.**

*Sunday cannot be a day well and wisely spent by a man if in what he does, or neglects to do, he thinks only of himself,*

- **It is a day the family can come together and worship the lord.**
- **It is a day when he may transfer some of his treasures to heaven and fix his heart on things above, where moth and rust cannot corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal.**
- **It is a day when lost souls can profess their faith in Christ**

##### **B. It is a Gift for the Whole Man**

The Sabbath is made for man, for man as God designed and created him.



A Sunday well spent  
Brings a week of content,  
And health for the toils of to-morrow.  
But a Sunday profaned,  
Whate'er may be gained,  
Is a certain precursor of sorrow. *C. J. Ridgeway*

**1. It is necessary for our Physical Health.**

**Mark 6:31** *And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.*

The soil must sometimes lie fallow, or its energies and treasures will ultimately become exhausted.

Beaconsfield once said, "Of all Divine institutions, the most Divine is that which secures a day of rest for man. It is the corner-stone of civilization."

**2. It is necessary for our Mental Health.** Incessant anxiety can result in depression or even insanity.

John Burns stated: "Sunday rest is physically good, mentally invigorating, and morally healthful" It has done more than anything else to maintain the institution we call 'home.'

**3. It is necessary for our Moral Health.** Contentment of spirit, cheerfulness of disposition, clearness of judgment, sensitiveness of conscience, strength and directness of will, are all needed in the lives of believers.

**4. It is necessary for our Spiritual Health.** Above all things it was ordained because it was indispensable to our spiritual growth.

Special care and special seasons must be appropriated to nurture our spirits One-seventh portion of the week is indispensable for healthy growth.

**C. It is a Gift that is without Repentance**

**Heb 4:9** *There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.*

The Christian can say: Jesus is greater than angels, greater than Moses, a greater priest than Aaron, greater than Joshua, redemption is greater than creation, and as God rested from the works of creation, so as Jesus rested from the works of redemption on the first day of the week

**CONCL** - This blessed day is an infallible prophecy of the eternal rest which awaits us in heaven.

Here, we have conflicts and trials.

This life is full of toil and strife and disappointment and bereavement.

The rest which remains to come, will be perfect.

The toil is here, but the rest is yonder.

The conflict is here, but the victory is yonder.

The cross is here, but the crown is yonder.

The sorrow is here, but the happiness is yonder.