

You and The Sabbath

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[0 : 00] We'll be reading Isaiah chapter 58 in its entirety. Shout it aloud.

Why have we fasted, they say, and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves and you have not noticed? Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers. Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife and in striking each other with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high.

Is this the kind of fast I have chosen? Only a day for a man to humble himself? Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed and for lying on sackcloth and ashes?

Is that what you call a fast? A day acceptable to the Lord? Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen? To loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke?

[1 : 35] To set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter? When you see the naked, to clothe him and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?

Then your light will break forth like the dawn and your healing will quickly appear. And your righteousness will go before you. And the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard. Then you will call and the Lord will answer.

You will cry for help and he will say, here am I. If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with a pointing finger and malicious talk, and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness and your night will become like the noonday.

The Lord will guide you always. He will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail. Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and you will raise up the age-old foundations. You will be called repairer of broken walls, restorer of streets with dwellings.

[2 : 56] If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight and the Lord's holy day honorable, and if you honor it by not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words, then you will find your joy in the Lord.

And I will cause you to ride on the heights of the land and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob. The mouth of the Lord has spoken.

Long ago Isaiah said, The Lord is our judge. The Lord is our lawgiver.

The Lord is our king. It is he who will save us. We have a lawgiver, a king, a judge who will save us. That's Isaiah's word. And in the New Testament, James identifies that one as the Lord Jesus, who he says, There is one lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy.

[4 : 07] Well, this is the one who has given us the Ten Commandments, all of them good, glorifying to God, but also good for us. All of them, the ways that his people are to live and to bring him glory in this life.

We're on the fourth of the Ten Commandments that says, Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Now, last week we looked at the Lord Jesus and the Sabbath day.

We wanted to know what did Jesus do with this commandment. And we saw that he upheld the Sabbath day by keeping it holy and by defending it against the abuses of the Pharisees.

First, he upheld it by keeping it holy himself. Remember, he's the lawgiver. And in becoming man, he put himself under the law.

So the lawgiver became the lawkeeper that he might save us lawbreakers. That's what Isaiah was talking about. The Lord himself, our lawgiver, will save us.

[5 : 15] That's what James is talking about. There's one lawgiver who is able to save us. How does he save us? He himself, the lawgiver, becomes a man under law and perfectly obeys that law that he might have a righteousness, a report card of perfect righteousness to give to every repentant, believing sinner.

And so by his perfect obedience, he qualifies to be the Lamb of God, the sacrifice to take the punishment that my lawbreaking deserves. And so the lawgiver has become the lawkeeper to save us lawbreakers.

His keeping of the law has provided salvation for us, but has also left us an example that we should follow in his steps.

But Jesus not only kept it, he also defended it against the false teaching of the Pharisees and the New Testament is full of this, of our Lord's high view of this day and how he stood up to any sort of teaching that took away from God's intent for the day.

So he upheld the original design that God had for this day. It was made to be a day of blessing, a day of benefit for man. And so the Lord Jesus set it free from all the oppression of the multiplied man-made rules that the Pharisees had placed upon it.

[6 : 50] Well, Jesus' keeping of the Sabbath day then is both our salvation in that he has a righteousness now to give to sinners. And it's also the pattern that he's left behind for us to follow.

So last week, Jesus and the Sabbath day. This morning, you and the Sabbath day. You and the new covenant Sabbath, the New Testament Sabbath, the first day of the week that is now the Lord's day, even as the seventh day of the week was what Isaiah 58 in our scripture reading called the Lord's day.

Well, the fourth commandment tells us that it matters to the Lord what you do on his day, just as it mattered to him, matters to him what you do with his name.

That's the third commandment. Now, what you do with his day. So what are you to do with his day?

Well, remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. It's a day to be remembered, to be observed.

And it's a day to be kept holy.

[8 : 03] Now, remember the most basic idea of keeping something holy is to sanctify it, to set it apart, to separate it from all the rest. And that's what we are to do with this day.

This day, the Lord's day, is to be kept holy, set apart from the other days of the week. It's to be used differently than the other days.

That was true in the old covenant. It remains true in the new covenant. God is Lord over all days.

But he says, I want one day to be set apart from the other six days for special use unto me.

So precisely, how are we to do that? Just what does it mean practically? Well, there is something that we are to do and something we're not to do.

There's something that we don't do and there's something we must do. And so to set this day apart, to sanctify it, to keep it holy, means in the first place, resting from your ordinary work.

[9 : 09] Now, the command itself, the command proper, is just verse 8. Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.

The word in the Hebrew for Sabbath is a word at its root that means rest. Rest. God is telling us to remember the rest day by keeping it holy.

And then he goes on further to explain in verses 9-11 of Exodus 20, Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a rest, a Sabbath, to the Lord your God.

And on it you shall not do any work. Why? Because in six days the Lord made heaven and earth and the sea and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day.

Therefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, the rest day, and made it holy. He did that in Genesis chapter 2 in that creation ordinance on the seventh day of creation.

[10 : 17] He made the rest day holy by resting on it from his creative work. And we now are to keep what he has made holy. We are to keep holy by resting from our ordinary work of the six days just as he did.

And that's what we find then in the scriptures. In Nehemiah chapter 13 verses 15 and following, we read about those who desecrated or profaned the Lord's day.

What does it mean to desecrate the Lord's day, to misuse the Lord's day? Well, listen what Nehemiah saw. In those days I saw men in Judah treading wine presses on the Sabbath and bringing in grain and loading it on donkeys together with wine, grapes, figs and all other kinds of loads.

And they were bringing all this into Jerusalem on the Sabbath. Therefore, I warned them against selling food on that day. Men from Tyre who lived in Jerusalem were bringing in fish and all kinds of merchandise and selling them in Jerusalem on the Sabbath to the people of Judah.

I rebuked the nobles of Judah and said to them, What is this wicked thing you are doing desecrating the Sabbath day? And then I commanded the Levites to purify themselves, to go and guard the gates in order to keep the Sabbath day holy.

[11 : 42] Now here we have in statements right against the other. Those who were desecrating, doing a wicked thing, desecrating the Sabbath day and those who were to keep the Sabbath day holy.

God is sending a clear message. We either keep the day holy, set apart unto him for its purpose, or we desecrate it by treating it as something common.

That's what it means to profane or to desecrate something. It's to take something that is holy and set apart for special use and to treat it as a common thing. We can do that with the name of God. We can do it with the day, God's holy day. So these men in Nehemiah 13 broke the fourth commandment by pursuing their ordinary work as if the Sabbath day was no different than the other six, as if it had no other purpose than for them to go about their business.

Now, let's be sure about this. God has nothing against work. God works. God invented work. God put man to work and told us even in this very passage, he tells us to do this for six days of the week.

[13 : 02] Six days you shall work. Work is part of his original design for man. He made man to work. work. It's part of that original creation order that God pronounced very good as he saw work as a part of Adam's daily adventure in the garden.

He says, this is very good. It's the way we fulfill our creation mandate, which is to subdue the earth and to rule over it. We do that by working.

It's the way by which we're to provide for our own needs, by working, such that if we don't work, we're not supposed to be given food to eat. We saw in the Sunday school hour, by working, we love our neighbor, don't we?

We provide good services and things for them. Work. It's not that God has something against work. Furthermore, the Bible teaches us that we glorify God in our work as we do it as unto him.

So it's not that work is worldly, work is ungodly and therefore it has no part on the Sabbath day. It's just that God has more than one way for us to glorify him.

[14 : 24] He was saying to his people, six days of the week, I want you to glorify me this way with your ordinary work. But one day of the week, I want you to glorify me in another way by resting from your ordinary work, your usual routine, in order to worship me without distraction.

So aren't we to glorify God every day? You bet. Every day is to be lived for God equally the same. But God has determined that the way we glorify him on this day is different from other days. He's the Lord over time and he's laying a special claim to it.

So though in the New Testament the Sabbath day has changed from the seventh day to the first day of the week, the day of resurrection, the heart of the fourth commandment has not changed. there still remains a weekly day that he calls the Lord's day. He puts his own name upon it, a day to be set apart to the Lord by resting from our ordinary work.

[15 : 34] Now, this being a creation ordinance, something that began at the very beginning of man being created and then given six days to work and one to rest, since that's a creation ordinance, we should not be surprised to find that it continues even in the New Testament, because the needs of man's body for a weekly day of rest were no less in the New Testament than they were at creation.

If anything, it's all the more important that we have a day of rest, since the curse has made our work all the more difficult and frustrating. Remember, when Adam and Eve fell, they were driven out of the garden and God cursed the earth because of man's sin, and now it's through painful toil that he will eat his food and by the sweat of his brow.

So the curse made things harder for mankind to work and to earn a living. And if Adam and Eve in a perfect garden environment needed as man, needed a day of rest, refreshment, all the more do we as fallen creatures living in a fallen and cursed earth.

We were never meant to work seven days a week. We were never created to work seven days a week. And that remains the same today as in day one of creation or day six when man was created. Furthermore, it's not only the needs of man's body that is still needing man's body that still needs a day of rest. It is man's soul that still needs a day of rest.

[17 : 20] And this too has not changed but only increased if anything. We now live in a world different from Adam and Eve when they first were put down on this earth.

We now live in a world that forgets God and would have us do the same. A world that would squeeze us into its mold and have us think like they do and live like they do.

To focus on things that are seen and temporary rather than on things that are unseen and eternal. That's the effect of the world. A deadening effect upon our soul's relationship with God.

So man is still in need of one day and seven to be set apart. To lift our eyes above the seen and the temporary and to lay hold of our God and worship and praise and serve him in our special worship that he calls us to.

To give him the praise that he's due. To realign our minds and affections and our will. To line up with God as the center of the universe and make sure that everything in our life is once again orbiting around him as the center.

[18 : 31] A day to remember him, Father and Son and Holy Spirit. To worship him for who he is and what he's done and what he said and what he will do.

A day to remember who we are, whose we are, whom we serve, why we're here, what we're to be doing, where we're going. Many things have changed but not our need to have our souls refreshed in God one day a week.

So there's still a day of blessing made for the benefit of man's soul and body, still a day answering to the limitations and weakness and needs of man for rest and for worship.

So though the day of the week has changed from the seventh to the first day, there is still a weekly rest, a weekly Sabbath, a day of rest and worship needed by us and required by God, which is simply to say there are still ten commandments to obey and not only nine.

rest. Now how do we keep the day holy, that God has made holy? Well, we rest then from our ordinary labors on this day.

[19 : 42] But secondly, we keep the day holy by worshiping God. It's not simply by not working. It's not like this is a day for inactivity or else that would mean that the guy who partied so hard last night and has slept in till noon today and spends the rest of the day just laying around the house and watching TV.

He's keeping the Sabbath day holy. After all, he's not working, is he? No, no, that's not all it means. Or the guy that just spends the day in recreation and sport and hanging out with friends.

He's not working. But is that keeping the Sabbath day holy? No, the Sabbath day is not a call to inactivity.

It's rather a call to rest from our activity, one activity of work, to give ourselves to a different activity of worship.

In the Bible, all days of rest were also days of worship. Leviticus 23.3 says, There are six days when you may work, but the seventh is a Sabbath of rest, a day of sacred assembly.

[20 : 59] You're not to do any work wherever you live. It's a Sabbath to the Lord. Again, in verse seven, notice day of rest, day of sacred assembly. On the seventh day, hold a sacred assembly and do no regular work.

You see how these two go together. If there's to be a day to worship God together, then there was to be a day to rest from our ordinary work. It's not just stop everything and that's how you keep the Sabbath day.

Even God didn't do that. Jesus says in John chapter five and verse 17, my father works until this very day. Well, what did he rest from?

He rested in the seventh day from his creating work. But don't think for a minute that he's inactive. He continues to uphold all things by his powerful hand or it would fly away into oblivion.

God rested. And gave himself to different kind of work, different kind of activity, we should say. And so, man, it's not just to go inactive and inert on the Sabbath day.

[22 : 05] No, that's not the purpose at all. It was to rest unto worship. It was a day to be set apart to the Lord. So, there's to be this specific Godward direction to it that is undistracted from the focus of other days when we continually seem to have to fight the bombardments of our work and our problems here and there.

Well, here's a day to call the time out, to step aside from that and to focus, to rest in order that we might worship him. So, the day is kept holy by setting it apart from ordinary work to give ourselves to the worship of the Lord.

There's the something not to do your ordinary work. There is the something to do the worship of God. And we saw this clearly in what Jesus did on the Sabbath day. How did Jesus use the Sabbath? We saw that last week. Not only did he close the carpenter shop, but he also went into the synagogue, the place of public worship and worship the Lord there. Luke tells us on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue as was his custom. In the synagogue, on the Sabbath day. That's what Jesus did.

[23 : 25] To be there with the gathered assembly, worshiping his father in heaven. It was the place where psalms and hymns were sung. It was the place where the word of God was on.

The scrolls were open and read and preached. Prayers were made. The day of rest was a day of corporate worship. And that remains the same in the New Testament day.

The Lord's day. The first day of the week. The day of Jesus' resurrection became the day of corporate worship under the guidance of Christ and his spirit through the apostles.

This became the first day of the week became the day of worship. The worship of our risen Christ. And so it's on this day that we come aside.

And we rest a while. And we worship our Lord and are refreshed as we go back to glorify God in our work for the rest of the week.

[24 : 27] Well, we're given this blessed day of rest unto worship. So what God makes holy, we're to keep holy by resting from our ordinary work and to worship God.

Now let me just apply and we're done. You and the Sabbath day. We've seen what Jesus did with the Sabbath day. We've seen what the command points us to, what the example of Jesus points us to, what the New Testament church points us to.

And now, lastly, five points. Treasure, number one. Treasure the weekly Sabbath day as God's good gift that it is.

It's a blessing. It's a benefit. How kind of God to have made this day. Yes, for our good, for God's glory, but for our good, as Jesus said, the Sabbath was made for man, for his advantage and benefit.

And how perfectly suited it is to the needs of my body and my soul to have such a day. So let's greet each reoccurring Sabbath with joy and gladness and gratitude to God.

[25 : 48] The words of Isaiah, let's call the Sabbath a delight and the Lord's holy day honorable. And then let's honor it. Let's set it apart.

Let's use it for what he meant it to be used for. But it all begins here. Are you treasuring it? Can you say with John Newton day of all the days, the best emblem of eternal rest?

Are you glad for the dawn of a new Lord's day? Does it bring you with gladness and joy, treasuring your opportunities that are yours this day?

That's first treasure it because what you highly value, you also guard, don't you? What you value, you guard and what you treasure, you guard.

And so secondly, make the keeping of the Lord's day a non-negotiable priority. A non-negotiable priority. Guard it. This is not up for grabs.

[26 : 49] This is a guarded day at my house. Why? Because this is a good gift that God has given me. It's a command. Yes, it's a good gift.

And I treasure what God has for me on this day. So make it a non-negotiable priority, just like you do the keeping of the sixth commandment. You shall not murder.

And the seventh commandment, you shall not commit adultery. Are you as committed to the fourth as you are to the sixth and the seventh or the tenth or the first? Are you as committed to the fourth commandment as you are the third commandment?

That you would not want to misuse the name of the Lord, your God. Are you as committed to not misuse the day of the Lord, your God? So treasuring God's day, now guard it from all intruders.

And they are legion. We live in a world that lives for the weekend. You know that. That's the world you live in. You see it. You hear it.

[27 : 53] And that weekend includes your Lord's day. So you must settle this matter in your heart right up front. This day is non-negotiable. This is one of those non-negotiables.

This isn't for sale. Because if keeping the Lord's day holy is a negotiable thing with you, then the world will eat you alive. They have all kinds of things for you to do on this day to keep you from its holy use.

And if the day is an open thing with you, then the world, the flesh, and the devil will be sure to fill it up and to keep you from its purpose.

There's a young lady. And she won't commit early in the week to a date on Saturday night. You go to her on Monday or Tuesday and ask her out for Saturday night and she's all non-committal.

Not sure. Call me back. We'll see. Why? Why won't she commit to Saturday night? Well, she's wanting to remain available unless a better in case a better offer comes along.

[29 : 04] And so she's open to that better offer. Are you like her? Remaining uncommitted on the Lord's day in case something better comes along.

Or do you say there isn't anything better that could come along? Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere. Is that what you say?

And therefore you block it out and you reserve it for him. For the Lord. It's a day to be with your Lord. So what the fourth commandment says, do. Keep it holy.

Set it apart as a non-negotiable priority. Here's your seven days. You got them every every week. Now set this one aside.

And do that in your heart as unto the Lord. You know, our old calendars used to have the first days of the week printed in red ink. It was a special day and it deserved special ink to set it apart.

[30 : 07] Even the calendar shows that it's different from the other six. Isn't that something? Where'd that come from? Well, that's something of our Christian heritage but it's gone. By and large. Not so much anymore in our calendars.

But in every Christian's mind those first days of the week should be circled in red. In our hearts. In our minds. Every week you come to, every new week has one day that's already taken on your calendar.

It's got written the Lord's on it. God's day. And so you guard it and you don't let anything in that doesn't belong there. You don't consider it your own to fill up as you wish or to let others fill up as they want for you.

It's his day and he fills it with himself. His day and he calls the hours his own. So settle it today. Settle it right here, right now.

Lord, this is your day. I want to guard and keep it set apart to you. I want it to be my happy habit, my custom, even as the Lord, the perfect man set apart one day in seven to worship his Father in heaven.

[31 : 21] Parents, it's by this that your children come to learn from you what is most important. Is it the Lord? Or is it what we want?

What's most important for you? What's important for them? What's important to God on this day? So treasure it, number one. Guard it by keeping it a non-negotiable priority.

Thirdly, let's consider the test then. The test for activities on the Lord's Day. How do we know what we should and shouldn't do on this day? You said, guard it and don't let anything in that doesn't belong.

Well, how do we know whether something belongs or doesn't? Well, we may like to have a list with all the do's and don'ts and we could just look it up in the index and read.

Oh, this is allowable. This is not allowable with every possible situation spelled out. You know, we'd all make good Pharisees and and the the Mishnah that had 24 chapters on the Sabbath 2000 years ago.

[32 : 29] Can you imagine how many chapters there'd be today? Over 2000 years of if every exact situation had to be spelled out for us to know God didn't do that.

Instead, he gave us the purpose of the day and that is to be our guide for the day. God's original purpose for the day. His own test.

Will it promote his purposes of the day or will it war against them? That's the test to put to anything that you do on the Lord's day. His purpose of resting in order to worship.

Will this thing help or hinder me from doing that? And if it interferes with that, if it interferes with the worship of God, it should be rejected out of hand.

If it's not a work of necessity, if it's not a work of mercy, if it's not a religious task, leave it for another day. Somebody says, but isn't that being legalistic? No, it's not being legalistic.

[33 : 32] I sincerely think that professing Christians in the western world are more afraid of being legalistic than they are of breaking one of God's commandments. This is not legalism. To be careful in keeping the Lord's day holy is not legalism.

It's the way you show your love for the Lord. It's the way that you show that you take him at his word, your faithfulness to him. It's the way Jesus lived perfectly.

Do you know Jesus was careful about keeping this command? So careful that even his enemies could only find three ridiculous accusations against him to say, you broke the Sabbath.

because he healed on the Sabbath. He told a man on the Sabbath to take up his mat and walk, to carry a mat, and he let his disciples pluck and eat the heads of grain of a field they were walking through.

Jesus was careful in keeping the day set aside for God's purposes on it. He was no legalist. It was God's law that he was careful about.

[34 : 37] Not man-made rules, and it was from the heart that he kept it and set it apart to the Lord. There was personal activity from his heart to the Lord.

It wasn't just outward motions with him. It was his heart giving the day over to the Lord.

Furthermore, Christian, it's not legalistic to be careful to keep the Lord's day holy because that is precisely why the Holy Spirit has been put into your heart to move you to be careful to keep God's commands.

Ezekiel 36, 27. That's why he came and took one of the reasons he took up office in your heart. It's to move you, to motivate you, to do what? To just be free and easy and loose?

No, to be careful to keep God's commands. And in keeping God's commands, you say that's freedom. This is the law of freedom, the perfect law of liberty. So I run in the way of God's commands because by his spirit he set my heart free to embrace them as what they are, the very best way in the world to live, as designed by the designer, God himself.

Oh, let's not consider it legalism to be careful that we keep our use of the day in line with his purposes for it. remember the Sabbath day by setting it apart, keeping it holy.

[36 : 12] So we're not losers then if we miss out on all that the world's got planned on the Lord's day. They're the losers. We're the gainers. Let's show that. We have the blessings of God from his day.

We have his rest. We have his smile, his fellowship, his joy, his strength. Let's unapologetically show the world that we delight in our God. And that what they have as alternatives and substitutes don't even come close to the joys that we have in the Lord's day.

When someone would pull you away from the worship of God on this day, by pressing you to come along with us and do something else, I trust we don't say, no, I can't.

I can't. I gotta go to church today. I gotta worship God today. You know what our hearts should be saying? Oh my, I've had six days to cram full with all of that stuff.

Today I get to do my favorite things. These are a few of my favorite things. To meet with God's people, to sing his praise, to hear his word read and preached, to fellowship together with the people of God, to praise him in song and prayers.

[37 : 30] the Lord has an appointment with me today and I wouldn't break it for the world. So prepare yourself for this day. Get your work done on Saturday night and to bed at a decent time so you're at your best as the Lord himself has come to meet with you and to bless you today.

Number four, make the most of this blessed day. Make the most of this blessed day. Why should we be minimalist when it comes to spiritual things?

Minimalists. How close to the world can I get? How closely do I have to follow Jesus? How far can I get from this straight line before I'm actually sinning?

How close to the world can I get? What's the least I have to do to keep the Sabbath day? That's a minimalistic attitude.

No, make the most. We don't come as minimalists to financial blessings, do we? Let's say there's this treasure chest filled with \$100 bills, free for the taking, all you can get on one grab.

[38 : 54] How do you come to that? You don't come with your finger and thumb just about that wide and you go in for a sweep and you get one bill. You stretch your fingers and you stretch them out as wide as you can and you push them down into those bills as far as you can and you squeeze and you bring out a gob.

You want the most. You're a maximalist when it comes to financial gain. Now, what do you do for God? What do you do for gold? Do you have a heart that is a maximalist with regard to serving him and gaining from him what he brings to you on this day?

His arms are full of blessing. Don't be a minimalist. He comes laden down with his own presence to reveal to you.

He who has my commands and obeys them. He is the one that loves me and he who loves me will be loved by my father and I too will love him and will show myself to him.

Oh, the Lord Jesus comes to show himself to us. He promises that where two or three are gathered in his name, there he is in their midst. That's a special presence that he hasn't promised elsewhere.

[40 : 06] There were two or three are gathered in worship of him in his name. There he is. He's come to meet. I want the most of his showing. There's more of Jesus to know.

there's more of his love to be gripped by. There's more of his word to understand. There's more of his word to renew my mind.

I want all I can get and here God has set aside a day for me to just devour these blessings this day to be set free from all these distracting cares.

Let's be maximalists. will this enable me to get the most out of the day? Well, God sure wasn't a minimalist when he came to us in Jesus Christ, was he?

He came and brought us the greatest gift, the gift of his son, the greatest gift. He gave us the law giver as our law keeper to save us law breakers.

[41 : 10] So let's meet his fullness with a heart seeking fullness in him. And then lastly, this fourth commandment then becomes a barometer of our hearts toward God.

If if this is a day to set apart from the other distractions and to give oneself to the worship of God, it becomes a very revealing thing, doesn't it?

Alistair Begg says the commandment confronts us in a peculiar way with our unwillingness to do what God says. So it may reveal that that principle of my way, not your way.

God claims the right to order our schedule, to rule our use of time, and we either submit or we disobey. Who is the Lord of Sabbath?

Is it me or is it the Son of Man? Is it my day or is it his day? That can be revealed, a barometer of how our hearts are toward God and his commands. It can also be a revelation of our heart of love for God.

[42 : 18] If God is our delight, then we find no problem to call the Sabbath a delight because it just calls us to the worship of him, to spend the day with him. We delight in the presence of those we love.

Walt Chantry writes, a heart that loves the Lord will leap for joy at the prospect of a day with him. Doesn't a young child love to have a day with his father?

Of course the worldly will loathe giving any time to God. The self-absorbed will regret any day spent in his presence. Oh, but you see, the one who loves God desires to be in his presence, in the ordinances, in the worship, in his promised presence.

This is a day off to be with the lover of my soul. And who is he? He's the one who without which nothing was made that was made.

He's the one that created the universe. He's the one who spent six days creating and then rested the seventh day. He's the one that brought Israel out of Egypt and that day took on new significance to remember their redemption from Egypt.

[43 : 34] He's the one who made the keeping of the Sabbath to be a special mark, a sign of the covenant between him and his people Israel. These are the people that are mine, God was saying.

And I am the God who created heavens and earth. It was a special sign for him. It's having more and more significance this Sabbath day. Jesus comes himself and he brings a greater redemption. And he brings a new creation. and now the day is changed from the seventh day to the first day in celebration of his new creation and his new salvation.

And it remains a forward looking ordinance to that heaven to come, which is set before us as an eternal Sabbath, an eternal rest.

rest. And so this day that has many layers of importance and significance throughout the ages remains for us. There remains a Sabbath for the people of God.

[44 : 42] And we're looking forward, we look back to the great creation, we look back to the new creation of Jesus and his resurrection from the dead and his redemption through his blood, but we also look forward to that coming eternal rest.

Amos recorded the words of the people of God in his day. A day for favorite hobbies and activities would be met with no complaint, but a day for the worship of God, well it was such a burden.

Listen to what they said, when will the Sabbath be over that we may sell grain and market wheat? You see, when will this be over so we can get to the things we really are about?

No one will delight in the Lord's day until their hearts delight in the Lord himself, who is the special focus of his day. To the unconverted heart, God's commands are burdensome.

They are a heavy, grievous thing to be born. That's why we must be born again. man. The misuse of the Lord's day may reveal then a heart that's sick and needs to repent and turn back to God.

[46 : 02] It may also reveal a heart that's spiritually dead. It could be the revelation of an unfitness for heaven. I say it could be. It could be that the reason there's no delight in the Lord's day is because there's no delight in God himself.

And that in itself could show one's unfitness for heaven. Hebrews 4 tells us that there is still this future rest to be entered by God's people.

It's yet future. So we keep the Sabbath day looking forward to a day when we will rest completely. Forever and ever. Doesn't mean that there won't be work, but it won't be like the work that we know here.

It will be all worship and all all so different from here and now. It is a day of future rest. Therefore, make every effort to enter that rest.

We haven't. We are in the process of entering. We've rested from our good works as a way to feverishly try to keep ourselves, save ourselves. We've rested from that, but we haven't entered into the rest of heaven where there will be no more sin.

[47 : 12] There will be no more frustration, no more curse, no more death, no more all the rest that makes this world such a burden. And so we keep that day looking forward to that rest in heaven.

And what is the center point of heaven? Is it not the Lord Jesus himself? And if I don't look forward to being with Jesus, am I really going to be with Jesus?

Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. as I was born into this world, I didn't have a heart for Jesus. And so the Lord's Day was a day of burden for me.

I have to go to church. But when God prepared my heart for heaven, he gave me a new heart that desires to love Jesus, to be with Jesus.

And now I love the Lord's Day and I can't wait to see him. The one who bore that bloody sweat for me in Gethsemane and for my sake prayed, Father, not my will but yours be done.

[48 : 23] The one who bore the bloody cross for me, so great his love. I'm looking forward to that day when I'll see him. That's because he changed my heart. He made me new.

He prepared me for heaven. A prepared place for a prepared people. Could it be the fact that you don't love the Lord's day is because you don't love the Lord? Could it be that you're not really looking forward to seeing the Lord Jesus?

C.S. Lewis wrote a book called The Great Divorce and in that book there's a bus and it takes people from the earth to heaven on a tour. And people are free to get out and go and stay as long as they want.

And what you find is that every unconverted person who goes on that trip to heaven, walks around, it's not long before they're bored and they want to go back and they get back on the bus.

Take me back. You see the delights of heaven, they center, they focus on Jesus. The lamb is all the glory of Emmanuel's land and they have no heart for him.

[49 : 27] What Lewis was simply echoing in his book is what Jesus told that religious man, Nicodemus, one night, you must be born again or you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

You wouldn't like it if you got in. You've got to be prepared for that place. Then, oh, my Lord, prepare my soul for that great day.

Oh, wash me in your blessed, precious blood and take my sins away. That's how we become prepared for heaven. We have our sins washed away in the blood of Jesus. We have a new heart given to us by the Lord Jesus.

Sing it with me in number 609. A few more years shall roll and we'll be there. A few more Sabbaths will pass and we'll be there.

And what should be our number one focus? Lord, prepare me for that great day. Wash me in your precious blood. Let's pray. Oh, Lord, we are people in the night without your word, and so we give you thanks for that word that is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.

[50 : 37] We thank you for the goodness of your laws, that they point us in the way everlasting. They point us in the best way. And oh, give us then ever more that heart that would delight to run in

the way of your commandments because you've set our hearts free.

Thank you for this Lord's day. Thank you for this appointment to meet with you. Now help us to savor that which we have seen of you, that which we have seen of your heart for us, your banner over us that is love.

Bring sinners to trust in this Savior and so to be a prepared person, a prepared people for that prepared place. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.