

A Day to Keep Holy (part 2)

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[0:00] Luke chapter 13, beginning in verse 10, we'll read through verse 17. On a Sabbath, Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues, and a woman was there who had been crippled by a spirit for eighteen years.

She was bent over and could not straighten up at all. When Jesus saw her, he called her forward and said to her, Woman, you are set free from your infirmity. Then he put his hands on her, and immediately she straightened up and praised God.

Indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, the synagogue ruler said to the people, There are six days for work, so come and be healed on those days, not on the Sabbath. The Lord answered him, You hypocrites! Don't each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or donkey from the stall and lead it out to give it water?

Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?

When he said this, all his opponents were humiliated, but the people were delighted with all the wonderful things he was doing. Well, here we are again, gathered to worship the Lord on the first day of the week.

[1:20] We were here seven days ago, and as we noted last week, the world's seven-day week cycle is God's fingerprint upon his creation.

He himself is appointed one day in seven, a weekly day of rest and worship for man. Now, from creation until the resurrection of Christ, the Sabbath day was the last day of the week.

But when Christ rose from the dead, it was changed to the first day of the week, which is called the Lord's Day. What I want to do this morning is to briefly review the ground we covered last week, and then go on to consider this change of the day, and then to finish with some applications.

So we start with review. Last week we saw that there is a progressive development of the meaning of the Sabbath day. It began at creation.

When God instituted the Sabbath, he did so by his own example. He created six days and rested the seventh, and set that as a pattern for man, his image bearers, to reflect in their lives.

[2:37] Furthermore, God blessed the seventh day. That is, he made it a source of good and blessing and happiness for man.

And he made it holy. He set it apart from the other seven days of work to be used especially in his service. So, from the beginning, man had a Sabbath, a weekly day to keep especially for God.

That's something that man has to keep all the way until the final eternal Sabbath, when we go to meet the Lord and rest forever in him.

So, whatever era of time man is in, from the very beginning, man as man needs a Sabbath, needs a day of rest and worship, and God gives it to him.

And so, whether it's Old Testament man, New Testament man, this is what man as man needs.

Then we saw in Exodus 20, that the command to keep the Sabbath day holy is included in the Ten Commandments, that summary of God's moral law.

[3:56] It's now written down with the very finger of God. It's spoken by the voice of God. And so, God, who blessed it and made it holy at creation, now makes it clear with his finger that man is to keep it holy.

Man is to set it apart and keep it set apart for the purposes for which God made it. Exodus 20, the Ten Commandments, is not the beginning of man keeping the Sabbath day any more than it was the beginning of children honoring their fathers and mothers, or men not committing adultery or not stealing.

No, those commands were there from the beginning. Written upon the heart of man or communicated to man, but now they are written down to God's redeemed people.

This is the summary of how you as men are to live before me, your Redeemer, Creator. And because in the Exodus God redeemed his people from bondage and laborious slave labor in Egypt, now this day is not only to be kept to remember God's mighty works in the creation, but now it's to be kept to celebrate God's work of redemption.

He's brought us out of bondage. He set us free. And so, Deuteronomy 5 and verse 15 says, Remember that you were slaves in Egypt, You see, their redemption was not their work.

[5:39] They didn't get out of Egypt by their revolt and their fighting. It was God, His work, that got them out. And so on the seventh day, they are to remember God's work.

First of all, in creation, how God had created all things. Did you know everything that you enjoyed this week, that's created, came from your God? Today you're to remember that and give thanks and praise Him for His work of creation.

He's made you. He sustained you. Worship Him as Creator. But He's also the one who brings His people out of bondage. Worship Him as such. It's His work to redeem His people.

So we worship a Creator and a Redeemer. And then we saw the Sabbath day during the times of Jesus. By this time, the rabbis and the Pharisees had turned the Sabbath day from a day of blessing and gladness into a day of oppression and gloom.

You saw it again this morning in our Scripture reading in Luke. They had made obedience to this command a way to earn their salvation.

[6:53] And because it's such a big thing then, if this is part of the way that we earn our salvation, we need to be very careful that we keep the Sabbath day holy. And so they added to God's commandments 1,500 commands of their own just on this one command of how to keep the Sabbath day holy.

1,500 commandments. That's a day of burden. It became a day of policing people to see if people were doing something that they shouldn't have.

And they forbid it all kinds of things. You couldn't unfasten a button on the Sabbath day. That was work. You couldn't trim your toenails. These are laws that were written down.

That's work. You couldn't carry anything heavier than a dried fig. There's the measuring stick for Sabbath. And they regarded the disciples we saw last week when they traveled through the fields and grabbed a handful of grain and rubbed it and threw the grain in their mouth.

They viewed that as harvesting on Sabbath, as threshing on Sabbath, as winnowing on Sabbath. And they accused them of breaking the Sabbath. And of course, healing was a work forbidden on the Sabbath by the Pharisees.

[8:10] So here's Jesus. He's the Lord of the Sabbath. You know what that means. He's the master. He's the God, the boss, the Lord of this day.

He's the one who from creation set it apart and blessed it. He's the one in the exodus of his people that said this is a special day to remember not only creation but redemption.

And now here he is and he's seeing what the Pharisees have made of his very good day, this day of blessing. It's his day.

It's meant for the good of man. And that's what he tells them. The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. And here you are turning it into anything but a day of blessing for man.

So in the Gospels, we have the record of six Sabbath wars that Jesus fought with the Pharisees. We've been reading them last week and again this week.

[9:15] We've covered, I think, three of those Sabbath wars in which Jesus uses his authority as Lord of Sabbath not to abolish this good day but rather to restore it to its benefit that he made it to be for man.

And so there's that lame man in John chapter 5 and he's unable to walk. He's been in this condition for 38 years. He's lying on his mat. And as Jesus looks at him, he knows that the mat he's lying on weighs more than a dry fig.

And so he says to him, pick up your mat and walk. His power to cure the man shows who he is.

His command to pick up his mat, which is heavier than a dry fig, and to carry it shows that he's Lord of Sabbath. And he determines how Sabbath is meant to be kept.

And he does not agree with what the Pharisees had done to his day. There's that blind man, blind from birth.

[10:31] And Jesus knows, even before he spits on the ground and stirs it up with the dust to make mud, that they have condemned that action as working on the Sabbath.

And so he purposefully spits on the ground and makes mud, applies it to the man and tells him to wash and be cleansed. Showing again, he's Lord and that he's Lord of the Sabbath.

He defends his men eating grain from the field. He heals the crippled woman on the Sabbath. He heals a man with dropsy on the Sabbath and a man with a shriveled hand. And his actions are saying, I am telling you as Lord of the Sabbath that such works of mercy, helping others' bodies to be restored and healed, such works of mercy and necessity, grabbing some food as you go through the field, were never forbidden by the fourth commandment.

We're never out of bounds for what is proper to be done on the Lord's day. You have gone further than my commandments. And he exposed their hypocrisy because they would show more tenderness toward their ox and their beast than they would allow to be shown to these human beings who were sick and diseased.

And the whole clincher of his argument is that he claims to do all this as the Lord of Sabbath. The one from creation who blessed it. The one who redeemed his people from Egypt.

[12:07] And the one who will change even the day on which this Sabbath is to be kept in celebration of his new work of redemption. So that's the summary of where we've been.

Now we come to the second part, the new material. The change of the day of worship from the seventh to the first day of the week. Now it's important for us to see that as the Lord of Sabbath, our Savior does not abolish the Sabbath day.

He defends it. He goes to no short ends to elevate it and bring it back to its original design. But he does change the day from the last day to the first day of the week.

Now what was so special about the first day of the week? And why does that constitute a change of the day of worship for God's people? Well, first of all, Christ rose from the dead on the first day of the week.

All four Gospels are very explicit to make that point. Each of them say it was the first day of the week on which our Savior arose. It's the only day of the week that's ever referred to by number.

[13:21] You never read about the second day of the week or the fifth day of the week. Only the first day of the week and it's the day of resurrection. Jesus' resurrection from the dead marked the completion of a whole new creation of which He, as the firstfruits, is the firstfruit of this new creation that He has accomplished.

The first day, the resurrection from the dead, marked the completion of His work of redemption. The work is over. Christ has lived the perfect life. He's died the perfect death.

And resurrection day marks the completion of God's work of the new creation and the new redemption. And so it's His resurrection that sets in the resurrection.

He sets apart a new day of rest for His new covenant people. A day to be refreshed in the finished work of Christ. Now it was on this same first day of the week that the Lord, the first resurrection day, that the Lord appeared to His disciples in the upper room.

And then He didn't appear to them for seven more days until the seventh day. And then He appears to them again on the first day of the week.

[14:35] He rises on the first day, He appears to His disciples on the first day. Then He does not appear to them for six days. And then on the first day, He appears to them again.

Jesus' own actions are marking a special day for His people. Seven weeks later, on the first day of the week, there came the day of Pentecost.

And you read about it in Acts 2. Did you know that was the first day of the week? And Jesus Christ pours out His Holy Spirit upon His church on the first day of the week.

Crowning gift of resurrection. Jesus Christ won the Holy Spirit for His church by His perfect life and death. And so Acts 2:33 says, He received from the Father and has poured out the Holy Spirit upon His church on the first day of the week.

And then the practice of the churches of Christ under the guidance of the apostles of Jesus was to make the first day of the week their day of worship rather than the seventh.

[15:45] Now that's quite remarkable because for centuries, it was the seventh day of worship that was kept. Indeed, after Jesus was buried, on the seventh day, they rested.

In obedience to the seventh day, Sabbath. But after Jesus rose from the dead on the first day, we find the church no longer meeting on the seventh day as their day of worship, but now meeting on

the first day.

In Acts chapter 20 in verse 7, you see it's stated of the church of Troas that they came together on the first day of the week to break bread. And in 1 Corinthians 16, 1 and 2, Christ's apostle Paul is instructing his people about giving gifts, about their financial support for their brethren back in Jerusalem, in Judea, who are needing money.

And he tells them to make the collection on the first day of the week. That was the day the Corinthian church worshipped. And not only the Corinthian church, but he says the same thing is true of all the Galatian churches.

The first day of the week was their day of worship observed. And this change wasn't just because a few people got together and said, wouldn't it be nice to worship on the day Jesus rose from the dead?

[17 : 11] No, this was under the oversight of the apostles whom Christ calls the foundation of his church, who were to guide his church in all truth. And it was under their oversight and guidance that the change of the day of worship went from the seventh day to the first day.

But then, turn to Revelation chapter 1. Here in Revelation 1 and verse 10, the first day of the week is called the Lord's Day.

Revelation 1 and verse 10. You're familiar with the book of the Revelation. The apostle John is the author. And he tells us about this wonderful revelation that was given to him.

And he tells us two things right up front. Where he was and when it was. These are historical markers. When, where were you, John, when you had this vision and when was it?

Well, where was it? Verse 9 tells us, I was on the island of Patmos. When was it? It was on the Lord's Day. Verse 10.

[18 : 25] On the Lord's Day. Now, what day is the Lord's Day? John gives no explanation to the churches in Asia Minor, the seven churches he's writing to.

He doesn't explain to them what this Lord's Day is. It's something he expects them to be aware of and to already know about. It was already their practice to meet on the first day of the week as their day of worship.

And so, he refers to this day as the Lord's Day. It's His Day. Now, that's not the first time we've seen this, have we?

We saw that though all days from creation, though all days are God's days, God in the creation, set aside one day from all the others and said, this is especially my day.

It's to be kept different from all the other days and kept for me in an unusual way, in a specific way. And now here, we bump into this same idea. Well, aren't all days the Lord's Day?

[19 : 29] Of course, they're all His. But they're not all called the Lord's Day or this would be nonsense. We wouldn't have any idea when it happened. But by saying it happened on the Lord's Day, He's telling us, He's giving us a historical marker when it happened and He's naming it the Lord's.

Again, this is not some fly-by-night guide out there. This is an apostle of Jesus under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit calling this day the Lord's Day.

This is His in a special way. This is His Day. Just as the Bible refers to the Lord's Supper, well, aren't all suppers the Lord's?

Of course, He provides them for us. He gives them to us. But there's one supper that is especially the Lord's. And it's the same word used here for the Lord's Day.

It's His. It's a strong word of possession. This is His day like the others are not. This is His supper as the other suppers are not. So when we read the Lord's Day, that's not the first time we've heard those words.

[20 : 42] We remember back in Isaiah 58, 13 that God refers to the Sabbath day as my holy day, as the Lord's holy day.

And here's the Lord of Sabbath saying through His apostle, this is my day. This is the Lord's day. A day especially set apart for Him each week.

So from the beginning of creation to the end of the age, man has a day to keep holy. And what happened on the first day of the week was so central to God's accomplishment of salvation that it became the new day of worship for the people of God.

And so it commemorates a new redemption. Not just the typical redemption of being released from slavery in Israel, but the true redemption of being released from slavery to our sin, slavery to the

wrath and condemnation of God.

We've been set free. This is a day to celebrate liberty in Christ, His redemption, complete. All the work has been done. You don't have to do anything.

[21:53] You just receive this salvation. He has finished the work. And we celebrate that on the Lord's day. And a new creation has been begun.

A new creation has been secured of which Jesus is the first fruits of this new creation. And everyone who is in Christ is a part of this new creation.

And so the change marks the end of the old Sabbath of seventh day worship and the beginning of the new covenant day of worship, the first day, the Lord's day.

There were two memorials to remind and to remember and to celebrate that redemption from Egypt. There was a meal and a day.

There was the meal of Passover and there was the Sabbath day. And both were days meant to worship God for redemption.

[22:53] In the new covenant, we have two memorials given to us to remember redemption. We have the Lord's supper to remind us of what Christ has done for us in his finished work.

And we have the Lord's day. Both the Lord's, both for us new covenant people to remember and celebrate the Lord's redemption. Now, there's differences between the old covenant Passover and the new covenant Lord's supper, aren't there?

There's differences. We don't shed blood of a Passover lamb. No, Jesus, our Passover, has come. And so, our day, our meal is different.

We take the bread and the cup as symbols of his body and blood. But it has continuity with the old Passover meal. When was it established? It was established at the Passover, wasn't it, that Jesus established the Lord's supper?

And they both point to Christ's redemption, his finished work. And by the day, they both point to a future meal, when those from far, north and south, east and west, will come and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and with Jesus.

[24:16] There is an eternal supper to be kept. And so, even now, new covenant people keep one supper special, looking backwards to Christ's body and blood, but also looking forward to that day when he will eat it with us in the kingdom of heaven.

And so it is with the day. There are differences between the old covenant day of worship and the new covenant day of worship. One was done on seventh day, the other is done on the first day. But they both memorialize the Lord Jesus' finished work of redemption. And by the way, they both point forward to a future rest.

Yes, the new covenant day of worship is better than the old. Jesus is our rest. We rest in him in this day in a way that's clearer and brighter than any old covenant man or woman had of Christ. rest. But we both use this day of rest and worship to celebrate his redemption and to look forward to an eternal rest that's coming.

[25:28] We're going to rest from our labors forever and ever. And so this day was given to us. Let's come then to application. So we're in a series of messages on back to the basics.

basics. And I believe that the Lord's Day is one of those basics. It informs us what we do one-seventh of our time here on earth.

I think that's important that we get that right. One-seventh of our time on earth. But for most this is one of the basics that's being forgotten or ignored.

There's been tremendous drift in American culture over the last century at this point. Some of you can remember when you were children that stores were not open for business on the Lord's Day. It wasn't that long ago, was it?

But now it's the biggest day for retail shops in America. It's a day packed full of sport and recreation and everything but the worship of God.

[26:34] And that drift has found its way into the church and affected the church use of the Lord's Day. Do you know that some churches have gone to Saturday evening services so that they can have the whole of Sunday to themselves?

Others have it on Thursday evening so you can have the whole weekend off. And others move it up real early Sunday morning so you can get your hour over and then get on to the things that really matter.

Now perhaps that's not the motive in everyone that keeps those hours. hours. But I fear that there's more reality to that than what we may have reckoned with.

What's happened? What's happened to the blessed day? The good day? The gift of God to his people? Well, God did not institute the weekly Lord's hour but the weekly Lord's day.

And sadly many think that one hour is too much to give him each week, let alone the day. And the voices are still heard as were heard in Amos' day.

[27 : 43] When will the Sabbath be over that we may market wheat? And that's to treat the Lord's day as a burden to be done with, to get it behind us, rather than to treat it as the blessing that it is to enjoy.

So there remains then a Sabbath rest for the people of God in the future and there remains a day of rest. We need a day of rest to help prepare us for that eternal rest.

What are we then to do with this day? Well, some would like a pastor to give them a list of do's and don'ts that they could carry in the front of their Bible and just whip out and say, oh, okay, I see now what I can do.

But you know where that leads? That leads back to the 1500 rules on the Sabbath, where men set rules for what can and cannot be done on the Lord's day.

And that easily degenerates into an external formalism of the Pharisees, getting the outward all straight, while the heart is far from God. That was God's complaint with Israel of old.

[28 : 55] It's his complaint when Jesus walked the earth. These people come near to me with their mouths, they honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is made up only of rules taught by men.

And so what you have when you've got the rules taught by men and everyone's kowtowing to the rules taught by men, you have people drawing near to God with their mouth, but their hearts are far from God.

And it's that situation that we don't want to go back there. No. The fact of the matter is God hasn't given us a list of do's and don'ts, where everything is spelled out for us.

Instead, you know what he gave us? A commandment and some basic principles, and he expects us to work them out in every detail of our lives, in our week, in our day, 2011.

Now that'll take some thinking, won't it? We're going to have to put our thinking caps on. That'll be good for us. We've got to think through this. Not just, okay, give me the list, John.

[29 : 56] No, it's take the command from God and think about it. And this thinking over what God has given us will keep our practice in line with God's purposes for the day, not with man's human rules that he has instituted.

It will keep us obeying unto the Lord, keeping the Sabbath day holy unto him rather than unto the police who are ever watching to see if we're carrying something heavier than a dried fig.

And that's the difference between godly religion and manly, man-made religion. Who do you do it to? The Lord. So we need to come back to the Lord of Sabbath and ask, what does the Lord of Sabbath want?

What does Jesus want us to do with his day? day? That's the one place we must go with our questions about the Lord's day. Well, back to his intentions and purposes in establishing the day. The first thing he tells us is keep it holy. Okay, that's the first thing he tells us. Keep it holy. He made it holy.

[31 : 10] Now we are to keep it holy. He set it apart from the other six days. Now we're to keep it set apart from the other six days. Isn't that simple? Isn't that clear?

So keep Sunday special. Keep it unique. Keep it like any other day of the week. Keep it different from all the other days. A day set apart for the two purposes for which God gave it.

Rest and worship. Rest, first of all. Set it apart by resting from your ordinary work. It's not a day for work.

Don't treat it like it is. It's a day to rest from your work. So rest. The exceptions that we've seen in the scriptures according to Jesus are works of necessity and works of mercy.

Works of worship. worship. But it's not a second Saturday. Don't treat it as such. It's not a day to get done whatever we didn't get done in the rest of the week.

[32 : 18] No, it's a day to rest from our labor. So guard it as much as is possible from all forms of work. And you know what work is for you.

We call it house work and yard work and homework and we have all kinds of names for the work but they're all work aren't they? And this is a day to just set aside from work.

Just to step away from it all. To say that's what I do these six days. Now this day set apart to rest from that. To be refreshed from my labor.

Someone has quipped that seven days of work make one week. W-E-A-K. seven days of work make one week.

Do you know you are not God. There's only one person in the universe. There's only one being that can work and never get tired and it's not you. It wasn't Adam in the garden.

[33:19] He needed as a perfect being from God's hand one day in seven to rest from his labors and to worship his creator. Do you think we after the fall are any less in need of a day to rest?

Oh we need this day and God is giving it to us as a day to rest from our labors. Make it a true day of rest so that come Monday your batteries are recharged and refreshed and you're ready to go back into another day another week of work.

But it's not a day of inactivity. God is not just saying well if you do nothing you keep the day. No it's resting from our work in order to give ourselves more fully to our worship.

And that's the second purpose for which God gave us the day. In the Bible every day of rest was a day of worship and that's the way it is with the Lord's day.

It's a day for worshipping the Lord both public and privately. We rest in order to worship. We rest in order to be refreshed and freed up from that to give ourselves to worship.

[34:38] Did you know that gathering with your spiritual family for weekly worship is not an option? It's not something to do when there's nothing else to do on this day.

Rather it is your duty to make sure that there is nothing else going on to interfere with this day. Keep it holy.

Don't treat it like the rest of the days. Set this day apart for me God is saying. Let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing but let us encourage one another and all the more as you see the day approaching.

We celebrate the resurrection of Christ. The finished work of Christ. We look back and celebrate God's work in creation and redemption.

We celebrate our present rest in Christ. I'm not here trying to work out my salvation. I'm resting on a finished work. And we look forward to a day when we will rest like we have never yet rested.

[35:52] Do you know there's coming a day when we'll rest from all of our struggles with sin. That's something we haven't achieved yet. We've not yet entered into that rest.

We need to labor to enter into that rest. We need to give every effort to make sure we enter into that rest. That day is still coming when we will never have any more turmoil with sin.

That frustration we studied from the book of Ecclesiastes we're going to rest from all frustration in our work. There will be no more frustration in our work in heaven.

It will be rest, perfect rest. So we rest on this day to worship God for what he has purchased for us. A redemption that we're enjoying now and a redemption that we will enjoy fully only when we step into that new heavens and new earth where only the righteous dwell, the one eternal Sabbath.

So this day is to be a foretaste of that day. It's a day to be refreshed in worship. The Puritans called it the market day for the soul.

[37:02] You know what market day was? All the vendors would come out and bring their wares. There's the fruit and the meat and the clothing and the wheat and you'd go on market day and you'd fill your basket up and head back home laden down with goods for the body.

That's how the Puritans viewed the Sabbath day only for the soul. And you come with your baskets and you come and you fill them with everything that Jesus himself is bringing to you on the Sabbath day on his day and his arms are loaded with good things to give you and so we treat it as the market day of our soul.

So every seventh day we're to stop put on the brakes and reorient our life for another week around the proper center the proper priority the proper purpose the proper person.

Do you ever get slightly off center with your priorities with your purpose for living why you go to work why you do the things you do does Jesus ever get a bit out of view with you or are you just always looking unto Jesus well you see we all tend to drift and so every seventh day God says time out let's come back together let's focus on the central things those things that we saw in the Sunday school for our emotional health oxygen truth for our health the character of God justification by the

righteousness of Jesus the coming eternal state of the safe we come and we focus again on the central truths and why we're here and where we're going and then we're ready to go back into the world so there's Asaph in Psalm 73 and he's been in the world all week and his feet are starting to slip because every day he wakes up to trouble and he's been noticing some of the wicked people prospering and he starts to envy them wouldn't it be nice if I could just trade places with them if I could be done with this hard work of holiness and fighting sin just give in to my urges and what I want to do like he does and she's she's sure prospering and he was about to go under he was about to chuck the whole thing until I went into the sanctuary was it another Sabbath that came around brought him into the sanctuary and there he had all of his thoughts and his emotions and his will realigned with the truth with reality and he comes away and he says I'm the blessed one I've got always with me I have God for me I have God helping me and that poor guy over there has God against him his feet are on slippery places he's soon to be in eternal hell he's to be pitied I'm to be envied and he's rejoicing again in the Lord that thing ever happened to you that sort of thing the mind clearing atmosphere of the sanctuary the drift recovering effects of the weekly

[40 : 29] Sabbath how many times has the Lord restored your soul on his day he's brought you here time out from that all that stuff come on let's focus let's let's call ourselves back to who we are what we are why we are and whose we are and oh then again we get our center we get our perspective and we go back out in six days again oh we need it we need it continually don't we and God gives it to us the Sabbath is an oasis in the desert of this world from the best bliss this world imparts we turn unfilled to be again so we do every seventh day the best things I've enjoyed I come back unfilled I need that water from heaven I need that blessing that blessing that only you can give the Lord's day is a field hospital where wounded and weary soldiers who've been beat up in the Christian battle find healing and rest and balm of the gospel have you ever during the week felt rushed in your devotions you're reading along and you see something there and you say

I'd like to know more about that I wish I knew more about what that meant but I've got to get off to work I've got to take the kids to school I've got to do this and that and so you don't have time for it and then once a week God calls time out from much of that rat race that keeps us running for six days he says here's a day get out that book study that subject dip into my word deeper slow down meditate commune with me here's a day to do this what a gift from heaven so that's it a day of rest and refreshment both for your body and for your soul to be refreshed in God it's really quite basic pursue that agenda for the day prepare for it go to bed at a decent hour on Saturday night so you don't come into the Lord's day already weary!

would help you determining whether something should be done on this day or not does this activity promote rest and worship the very purposes for which God gave me the day or does it interfere with rest and worship is it clear that my day is planned around the Lord's purposes for this day are those non negotiables with me is it a work of necessity is it a work of mercy are my motives in line with his heart or am I pursuing my will over his will for this day will this activity refresh me or wear me out do you know some activities refresh one guy and wear out another guy you know what that tells me there will be some activities that may be wrong for you and might be right for your brother and we need to give ourselves give one another liberties in these areas as we work out these principles of resting unto worship but we live in a post

Christian world and if we are to keep the Lord's day holy we're going to have to guard it we're going to have to put fences up around it high fences with barbed wire with guards on duty we're going to circle the Lord's day on our calendar and say this is not for sale and my children need to know this day is not up for trading this day is the Lord's day he calls the hours his own so this day is special in our house it must be special because God has made it special and it's not ours it's his and so you treat it like you do a planned vacation you've already got the tickets and the reservations for that place down in Florida and somebody says hey why don't you come over to the house we'll have a good time together and what day I'm sorry I'm on vacation that day I'll come back afterwards and we'll spend that day you guard it you're not going to be swerved that's where you're going it's for this purpose and we must!

have that tenacity with the Lord's day to keep it holy means that you're going to have to say no to a whole lot of things that are going on because the present evil world has scheduled everything it pleases on the Lord's day as if it were their day to use in any way that they desire they indeed treat it as if it's just another day to do what I want to do but then we would expect that of the world they are the world after all and the Lord is not Lord of Sabbath with them the Lord is not Lord of anything

with them he's not the Lord of their time of their work their worship and so we expect it of the world and so when the world is setting the agenda in many areas of activity we're going to have to constantly be saying no no no and that's what Paul wrote to Titus and says that the grace of God that brings salvation teaches us to say no to ungodliness and evil desires and so we must be willing to say no to the world if we're to keep it set apart for the

[46 : 17] Lord it happy it's the blessed day it's the day Christ has blessed he's made it a channel for our good for our happiness it's a day to rest from our work to do what to spend with who with the blessed God the happy God Father Son and Holy Spirit it's a day for rejoicing in God's works of creation!

Redemption the coming eternal Sabbath those are all grounds for serious joy so joy is to be the atmosphere of the day Isaiah 58 13 call the Sabbath a delight and if you do so and you put God's things first and his agenda for this day rather than yours you will find your joy in the Lord when you read the Psalms you find Psalm 92 a song for the Sabbath day it's called and this is what it reads It's good O Most High to proclaim your love in the morning your faithfulness at night for you make me glad by your deeds O Lord I sing for joy at the works of your hands today to rest from our works in order to remember his works and to rejoice in them there's no works like his to produce joy and so the psalmist is away from Jerusalem he's way far away and can't make it to the temple he's perhaps running for his life somewhere else in

Psalm 42 4 he says how I remember how I remember those days how I used to go with the multitude leading the procession to the house of God with shouts of joy and thanksgiving among the festive throng did you hear that the festive throng a celebratory mood marked the people of God David writes I was glad when they said unto me let us go into the house of the Lord shout for joy to the Lord worship him with gladness come before him with joyful songs so joy is to be the predominant note sounded on the Lord's day it's a happy day the best of days and if that was true in the old covenant how much more is true in the new this is resurrection day Christ is alive his work of redemption is accomplished the new creation is certain and secured eternal life is guaranteed rejoice in the Lord it's gospel rest and gospel is good news news to rejoice in and Jesus fought hard and long to maintain the joyful character of his day and he went to the mat with those Pharisees and he freed it up from all their trash that they had added to the day that would take it away from being a day of blessing and happiness for man a day for his holiness yes a day for his happiness let's see to it that in our keeping of the day we maintain Jesus attitude of joy and gladness and not dreariness and heaviness and we'll do that as we keep Christ to us with special blessings let's give him thanks and worship you know one reason a person might not see this day as a happy day and a weary day is because Jesus is not your joy and his works don't make you glad what makes you glad is out there something else maybe it's because you've not yet submitted yourself to this

Lord yes he's Lord of time Lord of worship Lord work but you've not submitted your heart to him and your will to him he welcomes you to repent of your sins and to come and to receive free and full salvation a new heart to love him to love his day to love his worship let's turn in our hymnals to number 609 a few more years shall roll and then we're going to be in that eternal sabbath and that is part of our perspective on the Lord's day to encourage one another it won't be long brother it won't be long sister we'll be where work knows no frustration where struggle with sin is forever gone where we will forever be with the Lord let's stand and rejoice in our Savior and what he's purchased!

[50 : 51] for us finished work of salvation we worship you for your amazing work of creation all that we have enjoyed from your hand and we thank you most of all for the Lord Jesus who's purchased all of this for us what we've just sang of a day in heaven to rest from the storms of life to rest from the frustration and the sin of this life to rest forever!

rest from their labors for salvation and rest their soul entirely upon Christ who welcomes us to come to him and to find rest we pray in his name amen