The Lord's Sabbath Rest — Delivery Transcript

Genesis 1:31–2:3 (ESV) · Wes Terry · Sunday, January 29, 2023 · *In The Beginning*

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All right, well thanks to the team for leading us this morning. If you have your Bible, you can open it to the book of Genesis. We're going to be in Genesis chapter one this morning and making our way into the first three verses of Genesis chapter 2. And as you're turning there, I want to kind of make a statement that I hope won't be too controversial. And that is that we have more technology, more tools, more conveniences in this generation than I think any generation before us. Can we agree on that front?

Like the kinds of things that we have available to us today to make our life easier is unlike ever before. You just take the iPhone alone and you've got encyclopedias in your pocket. I remember growing up in Roby and like we would buy encyclopedias from traveling salesmen. And like if you got a really good deal, you'd get one of them encyclopedias and you'd have to go and look. I remember being trained on writing research papers. How do I— take my note card and go to the physical book and turn to the physical book and get the copyright information?

Well, we don't have that. We don't have to do that anymore. You young ones don't have to have the kinds of things that we did growing up. We have more tools, more conveniences, more technology available to us today than at any other point in human history, and yet human beings are more distracted, more tired, and mentally unwell in this generation than probably any other generation before us. Particularly young people growing up with tools like social media and things of that nature. There's crippling anxiety, so many people being treated for various different types of mental illness, mental unwellness.

And why is that? Why is it that we're supposed to have it easier than we've ever had it before and yet we're more tired and physically unwell and socially unwell than we've ever been before. There's something about modern life that is not conducive to human flourishing. Is that controversial? Can we all agree on that? That there's something happening to us that's

not right. And people are breaking in front of us. And I mean literally breaking, like even not just unchristian people or unholy people, even Christian people, even pastors, like people I know in my little circle who are breaking.

Physically, morally, socially, and so on and so forth. Something about modern life is not conducive to human flourishing. I heard someone the other day use the illustration of a boat, how with a boat, if you just keep pressing on the gas pedal, or I guess it's not a pedal, is it, on a boat? If you take that throttle and you keep pressing it higher and higher and higher, eventually the speed gets so strong you're hitting those waves with such force that eventually it just hits and you fly backwards and your boat tips over and you crash.

And I feel like that's what's happening in our culture. We're just going so fast and people are so hurried and so distracted and so uptight and tense that the speed of our lives is actually an enemy to the depth that we need and significance and meaning in life. All of that's just kind of drifting away and dissolving and we're hurry, hurried, hurried, busy, busy, busy, but none of us have any depth and none of us have any significance in our lives. Individually and culturally, that sickness is having a devastating effect on us all.

And so how do we fix that problem is what I want us to look at this morning. And just like if you had a problem with a product, you'd go back to the owner's manual and try to figure out what's the original design. That's kind of the way I'm thinking about this series in Genesis. Genesis 1 gives us God's original design for human flourishing, for man and woman, for marriage, for creation, for all of it. And so if we go back to the owner's manual, what do we see in Genesis 1 that God might provide as a clue for human flourishing?

And what we're going to see in Genesis chapter 1 and the beginning of Genesis 2 is that God has actually woven into the created order a healthy rhythm for creation. He's provided a sustainable pace for us that if we'll just heed it and practice that rhythm, then we'll actually flourish as he has originally designed us to flourish. And so let's read our passage starting in chapter 1, verse 31. I really think this passage belongs in chapter 1, even though there's a chapter break right there at the second verse, but they didn't consult me when they were putting in the numbers.

So—and rightly so, I probably would have jacked the Bible up—but they jacked it up here. Whoever that was, Stephen Langton[1] or whatever his name was. Y'all know that, right? The numbers are not inspired. The numbers were not in the original. Everybody know that? Okay, just so you know. Genesis 1, starting in verse 31: "God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was" an "evening and" a "morning, the sixth day." And "thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done."

And "so God blessed the seventh day and" he "made it holy, because on it God rested from all" of "his work that he had done in creation." Now, this is the creation of the seventh day. We talk about the Sabbath oftentimes in Christian culture. You know it's a very big deal in religions like Judaism. And if you look in the Old Testament, the Sabbath is huge and so usually when we work through a text we just take the text we deal with it and we make application but because this text is talking about a core doctrine the Sabbath we actually want to see what is Genesis saying and how does what Genesis says inform the rest of scripture.

And so we'll do a lot of work going through Old and New Testaments this morning. It's kind of an atypical message in that regard. But first let's try and figure out what is Moses actually saying about the Sabbath in Genesis 1 and 2. And if you just take a minute and you look at the creation of God on the seventh day compared with the creation of God on days one through six, You immediately see some things that are very unique about the seventh day. One of those things is that God blesses the seventh day.

He does not bless any other day. He does bless things on day five[2] and day six. He blesses the sea animals and says, "Be fruitful and multiply." And he basically says the same thing to mankind on day six. But the days weren't blessed. But here in Genesis 2, it says the seventh day was blessed by God, uniquely blessed. And it's also the only day where Genesis says that he made it holy, or he sanctified it. So it's special in that way. It's also special in that the number seven is used over and over and over again.

If you take a look at this list, every single one of the other days of the week, you have this little formula at the end on day one, evening and morning. First day. That's the only time the word number one is used is right there at the end. Same with day two, same with day three and four and five and six. Evening, morning. And then the number of the day is mentioned. However, when you get to the seventh day, look what he does. He uses the number seven, not once, not twice, but three different times.

That's intentional. He's saying there's something special about this day, the seventh day. And the other thing that's interesting is notice what's present in days one to six that's absent in day seven. It's the phrase, there was an evening and there was a morning. It's almost like, well, all the other days had like an ending point, and yet now on day seven, it never ends. This is the song that never ends. Anybody grow up on that song? It's the day that never ends. There is no evening, there is no morning. That's bad, you know, biology or bad science, but it's great theology.

What is he trying to do? This is one of the reasons, by the way, I don't think you should read the Bible like a science book because this is not him trying to do science. This is him trying to communicate a theological point, namely God's purpose in creation was realized on the seventh day. And so he stopped and he said, "Let's enjoy this forever and ever." And what are

they enjoying? They're enjoying the perfect world that God has made. He says it is very good on day six. They're enjoying their responsibility to cultivate the creation and glorify God through that act.

And they're enjoying, literally enjoying the presence of God and communion with God in this world that He has made. That is the eternal state, that is the sweet by-and-by, that is the forever and ever that we were originally designed to experience with God. And you know that's the case because if you read to the very end of the Bible in Revelation 22, it's exactly what you see. God creates a new heaven. I'm sorry, Jesus creates a new heavens and a new earth. He redeems a special people. Those people glorify him in this new world that he has made, and they enjoy him forever and ever and ever, and the day never ends.

So you open with paradise—seventh-day paradise, seventh-day rest— and the Bible closes with the same. That's what the seventh day is meant to be. There's these verbs in Genesis 1 and 2 that kind of highlight this same idea. Audra and I went to Comfort, Texas last weekend. That's one of the reasons that Taylor was preaching, which Taylor did a great job, by the way. Thank you for preaching. But there was a preaching prof out at that weekend. They called the weekend the Refreshed Retreat, which is somewhat of a misnomer. But Audra went up on the third floor and she hung out with a bunch of pastors' wives for two and a half days and they talked for two and a half days straight.

And then the men went down to the bottom floor and there was like twelve pastors and we talked for like two and a half days straight about ministry and it was really interesting. They kind of get in your grill and you have to debate and defend your position and if you have a view, you better dang well believe why you believe what you believe or they're taking you to task. But I love that stuff. I just thrive on it. But anyway, one of the—like, why am I sharing the story? Here's the point of the story.

One of the mentor pastors there at that retreat was talking about his preaching students. He's a preaching prof, and he says, "Man, I will fail any student who comes into my preaching class and who doesn't read the text and from that preaching text give me the connective tissue, the loud nouns, the important verbs, and cross-references that only illustrate the text and don't bounce and give a new idea from it." And like he was passionate about it. And all of us were like, "We're all terrible preachers. Please don't look at our sermons ever again."

But loud nouns, important verbs, pretty good, pretty good schematic for developing a good sermon. There are some important verbs in Genesis 2 that give us a framework. You might think of them as like four pillars to explain why God made the Sabbath. So if you look in verse 2, you see the verb God completed. The Sabbath is a day of completion. You see after that that God blesses the Sabbath. So you might think of the Sabbath as a gift. After that it says that God made it holy or he declared it holy.

Right after saying he blessed it says he made it holy. And then at the end it says, actually at the end in the beginning in the middle, it says that God rested. And so I want to give you a fourfold framework for understanding why God made the Sabbath. The Sabbath number one is a destination. It was that sweet by-and-by. It was the eternal state that we were supposed to enjoy with God forever and ever. It was also a gift from God, just like God says to the sea animals, "Be fruitful and multiply," and to mankind, "Be fruitful and multiply," he's saying to this day, "Give life, produce refreshment, energize my world."

That's why the Sabbath was given. It was a gift of God's blessing and life. It's not just a gift though, notice it's also a sign God takes on the Sabbath. He makes it holy. When you think of sanctifying, God's sanctification isn't necessarily Him giving us something, it's him taking us away and setting us apart. Kind of like if you had a coffee mug that you didn't want to be like all the other mugs. "Okay, don't wash my coffee mug. Don't put my coffee mug in the dishwasher ever again. I want it taken out of there, because I like how different days of coffee ground buildup creates new flavors in my mug, so I want it to be set apart."

Does anybody else do this? If you don't wash your mug and it gets nice and grimy and brown, new flavors every day, it's a constant surprise. You're sanctifying your coffee mug, you're taking it apart. That's what God's doing with the Sabbath. It's kind of not exactly a parallel, but he's taking on the Sabbath. He's setting it apart. He's saying this is unique and special. So yes, God gives on the Sabbath. But he also takes on the Sabbath. The Sabbath is a destination, absolutely. It's a place to which we will one day arrive, but it's also a boundary because God is saying, "Stop. Cease and desist here and no more."

The Sabbath is a warning light on your vehicle saying, change the oil or else. It is the necessary margin between the beat and the next beat. In music, you don't just want constant beating. That is not art, but if you create structure, space, you sense this thing that was once just chaos now has order and beauty and structure. That's what the Sabbath was: God weaving into the rhythm of the universe beauty and structure and order just like lines on a coloring page. You've got to have the lines to give the color to life.

That's what God does with the Sabbath. He says, "Stop here, cease on this day. Don't go any further, so that the energy and the blessing that I want to give you is actually received on this day." That's why God gave us the Sabbath. But if you keep reading in the book of Genesis, you realize real quickly that is lost. If you keep reading Genesis two on to Genesis three, God says to mankind that you can eat of any tree in the paradise, any tree in the garden except one tree: "Do not eat from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And he says, on the day that you eat of that tree, you will surely die."

In other words, this gift of eternal fellowship with God is going to stop, and you're going to not live forever anymore. On this seventh day, you're going to become compost and you're going to die and I'm going to have to bury you and it's going to be really bad. And so they

received the warning and instead of listening to God and obeying God, they listened to the lie of the serpent. In Genesis 3, he says, "Did God really—did he really say you'll surely die? Or is he afraid you're going to be like him? You won't surely die."

So they listen to the serpent, and then God's warning comes true. And he curses the ground. Everything that the Sabbath was supposed to give them, their sin corrupts. The Sabbath was supposed to give them rest, and instead, what do they get in Genesis 3:16–17: by the sweat of your brow, you will toil the earth. The Sabbath was supposed to give them the paradise, the garden, Eden. And now because of their sin, they're cast out of the garden, east of Eden, they're cut off from the tree of life. The Sabbath was a sanctifying.

It was a setting apart. They were holy, set apart to the Lord, but now because of their sin, they become aware of their nakedness. They feel guilt, they feel shame, and so they lose that Sabbath communion. The blessing of God was corrupted by the stain of sin in the fall of man in Genesis three. The Sabbath is still theirs to enjoy but it will never be the same. And what God created man to do, which was to guard the garden, now the garden is being guarded from man. This tremendous reversal, this kind of irony of ironies.

They were supposed to be in the garden enjoying fellowship with God, the tree of life. Now they're cast out of the garden, and there's these angels that are protecting the Garden of Eden from them. They were supposed to cultivate the earth and now they're going to become compost in the earth. I guess they're still cultivating through their ashes. But not as God originally intended to do. And so when you leave Genesis 3, you're left with this theological question: when will God's Sabbath rest be restored? Because even in Genesis in chapter 3, verse 15, God says to Adam and Eve, "You jacked up, but from the seed of the woman will come a man who will crush the head of the serpent."

That's a paraphrase, Wes Terry paraphrase. He didn't say you jacked up. But he did say from the seed of the woman will come a Messiah, a deliverer, who will crush the head of that serpent, and he is going to restore this communion that you lost. And so you're asking the question when you leave Genesis 3 and really when you leave the book of Genesis in general, okay, now when? And how is God going to restore this Sabbath rest that was lost? And if you keep reading, you find that God promises rest to his people.

He creates a special people for himself. He redeems them out of slavery to Pharaoh in Egypt, and as they are in the promised land—I'm sorry, as they're making their way to the promised land—in Genesis chapter—Exodus chapter 16, God brings back this Sabbath. And he tells them, "Go out and collect the bread." Every day he would provide fresh manna from heaven. And they were supposed to, on the sixth day, get two days' worth of bread, because the Sabbath "tomorrow is a day of solemn rest, a holy Sabbath to the Lord." So he's reintroducing this theme from Genesis and he's saying, "I don't want you collecting food on the Sabbath day, because it's holy. And I want to show you something about you, and I want

to show you something about me on this Sabbath day. And I don't want you to ever forget it. So do not violate this Sabbath."

Now a couple of them did. God got really angry. But the point remains, God in the wilderness is using the Sabbath to teach his people a core truth, namely, they need him and only he can provide. They have a need that only he can provide, and God is uniquely faithful to provide for their need. And if they would just trust him, and if they would just do what he asked them to do, then they will experience his perfect provision on the Sabbath. And so in the wilderness the Sabbath reminded God's people that he's faithful.

And then if you keep reading, you get the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20. And the fourth of the Ten Commandments is a commandment about the Sabbath. And all the stuff from Genesis gets repackaged in Exodus 20, and that it's a destination and a sign—all that stuff is reintroduced. And then if you read a little bit further in Genesis—Exodus chapter 31, verse 13—you see Moses and the Lord speaking with one another, and Moses is saying, "I know you've promised us rest. I know you're taking us to the promised land. Lord, if you don't go in front of us, if you don't go before us, we don't want to go."

And the Lord basically says to Moses, "Don't you worry about it. I will be with you. I will give you rest,"[3] "but I need you to do something." It's what he says in verse 13. "You are to speak to the people of Israel and say"—notice this—"above all" else. The most important thing, Moses, you as a leader, to convince your people: above all else, keep my Sabbath, because it is a sign of the covenant "between me and you throughout" every generation, "that you may know" something, namely, I am the one that sanctifies you.

"I am the one that sets you apart. I'm the one that makes you holy. And lest you ever forget it, every week on the seventh day of the week I want you to stop. I want you to think and remember how I delivered you, I redeemed you, I set you free from the slavery, and I'm the only one who can make that happen in your life. I alone sanctify." And just in case they forgot it, if you keep reading in the book of Deuteronomy, which is *deuteros*, *nomos*. *Deuteros*, number two.

This is kind of interesting. *Deuteros*—number two, junior high humor, sorry. And then *nomos*, for law: the second law. The Ten Commandments are given again in the second law of Deuteronomy. And guess what he says of the Ten Commandments in the second giving of the Ten Commandments, number four, look at what he says of the Sabbath. This is chapter 5, verse 15: "You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and" that "the Lord your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day."

So in the wilderness, the Sabbath is a sign, a reminder of God's gift of provision, that "I will meet your need." And now in the Ten Commandments and in this law that was given to the

people, he's saying, "I want you to keep the Sabbath because it's a sign of the covenant. It is something that if you ever wonder does God love me? Do you ever wonder will God sustain me and free me and forgive me? Then all you got to do is look to the Sabbath and remember on that day how I set you free from Egypt, how I opened the Red Sea, how I brought manna down from heaven, how I sustained you in the wilderness, and how I brought you to the promised land."

And he did. He got them to the promised land, and they had rest from their enemies in the book of Joshua at the very end. And then they lost it. And they say, "God, give us a king." And so they get a king and they get a little bit of rest. David, king David, God promises David, "I will make you a house and I will give you rest." And they have it and then they lose it. And like this, here's the whole Old Testament, this up and down, merry-go-round, roller coaster of rest, lost, rest, lost, rest is lost.

It's given for a little while, taste and see, and then they lose it. And it's not until Jesus shows up in the Gospels that things really begin to change. What ended up happening in the Old Testament is that all of these extra rules and regulations were added on top of the Sabbath. Not things that were scriptural, but things that they added on top of Scripture. And the Sabbath had become a burden. We just read about it in our scripture reading today, how the Pharisees were being super uptight and legalistic about harvesting wheat, even though they weren't really even harvesting.

They were so letter of the law, kind of uptight about everything. Jesus comes in and says, "That's nonsense. I'm getting rid of that." And so Mark chapter 2, Jesus—he's on his way to the temple or to the synagogue and he's with his disciples and they start threshing grain with their hands. If you're taking notes, this is Jesus restoring God's original design of the Sabbath. Are you ready? The Pharisees say, "Why are you doing this?" And Jesus says, "The reason I'm doing this is because the Sabbath was given for man, not the other way around. You're making man exist for the Sabbath. That's not God's original design for the Sabbath. The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath."

And then he follows that pretty keen insight with something semi-blasphemous when he says, "And by the way, the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath," which they could have taken as Jesus saying humanity in general is Lord of the Sabbath, but that would have been a generous read. More likely what he's saying is he's assigning to himself this title, Son of Man, which is from Daniel chapter 7, talking about the Messiah, the one who rides on the clouds and establishes God's kingdom, this figure that is one with God and glorious.

Jesus saying, "I'm that guy. And I'm the Lord of the Sabbath." And you can just imagine the religious leaders going, "Oh no, you didn't." You know, that's like a big no-no. And in case they were confused, if you read one chapter later, Mark chapter 3, it's almost as if Mark is intentionally making this point. Jesus sees a guy with a withered hand. I've got to grab my

strong hand. It's sitting there. It's totally inappropriate. But the Pharisees[4] are like, "Jesus, don't heal the man, it's on the Sabbath, don't heal him."

And Jesus is like, "Well, I think I should heal him. I mean, the Sabbath is for healing." He heals, and his hand's fixed, and the religious leaders get super upset and it says that it was because of this him restoring his hand that they held counsel with the Herodians. These are the Jews that are pro-Rome. And they said, "How can we destroy this guy? We got to get rid of Jesus because he's jacking up the Sabbath." And Jesus is saying, "I'm not jacking up anything. I am restoring God's original design for this day of rest. It is for man, it is for healing, and you have ruined it."

Keep on reading. John chapter 5, another example, the man, lame man, he's at the pool of Bethesda. There it is, Bethesda. I kept jacking it up in the other services. Jesus says to the man, "Do you want to be well?" And the man says, "Yeah, I'd love to be well, but every time the water gets stirred, someone beats me to the water, so I can't ever be healed." And Jesus says, "Well, it's your lucky day, brother. Get up, take your mat, and walk." Which, guess what, was a violation of the Sabbath.

Not a biblical requirement, but all the extra rules and fences they had added on. And so he's like, "You got it." He picks up his mat, a miraculous healing, he begins to walk, and the religious leaders see him walking, the Pharisees, and they say, "Who told you you could pick up your mat and walk?" And the guy goes, "I don't even know his name. He just told me to get up and walk, and I was miraculously healed. Why are you asking me that? Why aren't you asking me why I'm well?"

And they didn't care about him being well, they cared about the violation of the Sabbath. And then the guy figures out that it was Jesus, and so he goes and he tells the religious leaders, "Oh yeah, it was Jesus." And they get furious: "Not only do you think you're the Lord of the Sabbath, not only do you think that you are the Son of Man..." Now Jesus says—this is why they were persecuting Jesus—and Jesus, to their rage, says, "My Father is working until now, and I am working." To which they said, "Oh no, you didn't," again.

And they were enraged. Look at what it says in verse 18. "This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God." So for those who say Jesus didn't really believe he was the Son of God, that is absolute nonsense. He knew the claims that he was making were claims of divinity. The things that he was doing were blasphemous to anyone who took their Judaism seriously, and it got him crucified.

And so they, right after that, they figure out how to kill Jesus. And they figure it out, they figure it out. And Judas betrays him for thirty pieces of silver. He gets arrested, he gets crucified, beaten within an inch of his life. All because Jesus' relationship to the Sabbath

showed that he is both Lord over the Sabbath and He is one with the God who originally gave it. The destination, the sanctification, the gift, the boundary, all of that is in me. And if his disciples were a little bit confused about that on the night before he's betrayed or the night of his betrayal, right before his crucifixion.

He's with his disciples. It's leading up to the Passover.[5] They're they're hanging out there in Jerusalem. And Jesus is going to celebrate the Passover meal with his disciples. The day of atonement was the day, the biggest kind of celebration every year where they would sacrifice a goat. And they would take the blood of that goat and they would put it on the mercy seat to make atonement for the sins of Israel. And then they would take the scapegoat and they would speak the sins of the people onto the goat, and the goat would be released.

Symbolic of God forgiving or postponing judgment for the sins of the people. And every year they would celebrate the day of atonement, and they would celebrate Passover as a Sabbath above all Sabbaths. It's kind of like our ultimate rest because it reminds us God delivered us from Egypt because we took the blood of the lamb and we put it on the post and then God's death angel passed over us. That's the context for Luke 22, Lord's Supper, what we're doing today. That was the Passover meal. What's crazy, though, is that Jesus, on this Sabbath above all Sabbaths, he takes the bread, which was supposed to be symbolic of the manna and falling down and the suffering of God's people in the wilderness, and he says, "This bread isn't about that. That is about me. This bread is my body broken for you. I'm your provision. I'm the faithfulness of God made manifest. I'm the one who can do for you and meet your need in a way that you cannot do yourselves."

And then he takes the cup, which was supposed to be symbolic of the blood of the innocent, the spotless lamb that was slaughtered, and the blood of the lamb put on the doorpost so that God would pass over and not judge his people. Jesus says, "That blood of the innocent is about me. I'm the lamb. I'm the sinless, spotless Son of God. I'm the goat whose blood makes atonement for sin. I'm the one who wipes away your sins so that God forgets them as far as the east is from the west. It's my blood and it's a new covenant. So everything in the Old Testament—Moses, Israel, Egypt, Passover, Noah, flood, temple, sacrificial system, everything—all of that was pointing you to someone else, and I am that someone. It's always been about me."

The Passover was supposed to remind you I have a debt I cannot pay, and Jesus says I pay it. And Passover was supposed to remind you I have a need that I cannot meet, and Jesus says, I'm the one who meets it. And Passover is meant to remind you that I have guilt I can't atone for. I have this shame I can't shake. And Jesus says, "I'm the one who forgives you of your sin and wipes away that shame. It's always ever been about me." Everything in the Old Testament has been pointing and preparing us for Jesus.

And he says that Judas walks out, betrays him, Jesus gets arrested. Beaten within an inch of his life and then on the cross cries out, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Because he who knew no sin was becoming sin for us so that we could become the righteousness of God. He was making atonement. The blood of bulls and goats cannot take away our sins. The book of Hebrews makes that clear. The blood of bulls and goats was symbolic. It was pointing to this one moment in human history when the Son of God, who is God's ultimate Sabbath, would lay his life down on the cross so that we who are sinful could be made righteous.

And we who were alienated from God could be reconciled. And we who were tired and weary and heavy laden because we couldn't ever measure up or do enough could come to Jesus and take his yoke upon us and learn from him because his yoke is easy and his burden is light and we'll find rest for our souls. That's what's happening on the cross. Jesus is becoming our ultimate Sabbath. He is fulfilling in his life perfectly, to a T, exactly what the Sabbath was meant to accomplish for us all the way back in Genesis.

And that theology changes his disciples, it changes them utterly forever. And it's that concept that takes a guy like the Apostle Paul and really encourages him to write in Colossians chapter 2, we're not under the Sabbath. Look at what he says real quickly, then we'll be done. I know we're late. "You, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made" you "alive together with" Jesus, "having forgiven us all" of "our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands." In other words, he was our atoning sacrifice.

All of that guilt, shame, sin, he set aside, nailing it to the cross, disarming rulers and authorities and putting them to open shame by triumphing over them in him. In other words, Jesus' death was sufficient, it was acceptable to God, and so through his death he destroyed death, and the one having power of death, that is, the devil.[6] "Therefore"—verse 16—"let no one pass judgment on you." Interesting application. "Let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink"—in other words, food sacrificed to idols—"or with regard to a festival," "new moon," or what?

"Or" "Sabbath." Now some say this is not the weekly Sabbath, it's like an annual Sabbath, but it's not. It's annual festivals, monthly new moons, weekly Sabbath. He says, "Don't let people trouble you about the Sabbath." We're not under that covenant anymore. That was Mosaic covenant, that was Old Testament law, that was necessary as a sign to prepare us for the new covenant in Jesus, and now Jesus is our rest. So for us today, do we keep the Sabbath? I think the rule of the Sabbath is over. So for Christians who say, "You shouldn't ever work on a Sunday, or you're a heathen," you know, I just don't think the text supports that.

And for those who say to Christians like us, "Y'all all are disobedient to God because you don't worship on Saturday, you worship on Sunday." Or to the Christians who in response to that say well now Sunday is the new Sabbath because Jesus rose on Sunday, so we still keep the Sabbath but we're not under the Sabbath like that under the Sabbath, but we're still kind of under the Sabbath and even when they say that they don't really practice it all that well. It's over. The rule is over. The Sabbath has been fulfilled.

Rest in Jesus. The rule no longer applies, but the wisdom of the rhythm is still a gift. And so absolutely take a Sabbath. Absolutely take Sunday if it's a day of rest. Which for me it is not, as you can see from the sweat of my brow. But for you, if it's a day of rest, rest. But don't just rest in the Lord. Rest in Christ. Let Him renew your affections. Let Him open your eyes to the glory of Christ. Let this day be a day not just where you cease from activity, but when you have your heart renewed in God's love for you in Christ.

And if Sunday's not going to work, then do Saturday. And if Saturday's not going to work, then do whatever other day of the week you want to do because you're not under the rule. The rhythm, though, can still be a gift. Because it is part of creation. It is part of the ordinance. Just like man is made for woman and will always be made for each other, so also will man need a Sabbath. We need to rest. We are mortal. And if you keep on with the speed that you are on and all the distractions and all of the demands and all of the stress, you will break.

And God didn't make you to break, God made you to rest in Jesus. And the best thing we can do as Christians is to not work until we rest, but to work from a constant place of rest. Because we're not striving, we're not trying to earn. Our identity is not in our work. Our identity is not in what our family thinks about us. Our identity is in Jesus Christ alone. And so we can rest. And as we take the Lord's Supper this morning, what an opportunity and a reminder for us that on that Passover, Jesus redefined it and said, it's about me.

And today, on the Sabbath or not a Sabbath. But today as we think about and talk about the Sabbath, we can be reminded that we can rest in Jesus. And if you've never given your life to him, if he's not Lord and Savior, then the Holy Spirit may be calling you this morning to repent of your sin and to put your faith in Jesus and to rest in Him and never have to wonder again, was I good enough or did I do enough? Or does God accept me? But to know without a shadow of a doubt He accepts me and loves me, not because of what I've done, but because of what Jesus has done for me through his death on the cross.

And if you've not made that decision, the altar will be open for you to come and make that response to the Lord. I'm going to ask our ushers to come to the front as we get ready to pass out the elements. And just right there where you are, if you want to bow your head and close your eyes, I want to lead us through a time of response. Scripture says when we take the

Lord's Supper, not to take it in an unworthy manner, but to let a man examine himself first, to judge himself so that he won't be judged.

And I don't know what an unworthy manner means fully, but I know this morning if you're not resting in Jesus, if you've kind of shifted into a fleshly mindset of "God doesn't love me unless I perform," or "He doesn't accept me unless I live a certain way." You can repent of that this morning and rest easy knowing it's never been about your righteousness. It's always been about Jesus Christ. He is my hope, my life, my all. My one defense, my righteousness, Christ alone. If there's a repentance of sin that needs to take place in your heart, you can do that even now as we prepare for the table.

And the altar's open. If there's a burden or a need that you want to have prayed about, you can do that as these gentlemen pass out the elements.

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1. Transcript note: spoken as "Sylvanias"; the chapter divisions in today's Bibles go back to Stephen Langton, who divided the Latin Bible into chapters around 1203–1207, and the verse numbers were added later by the printer Robert Estienne (Stephanus) in his 1551 New Testament and 1555 complete Bible. Source: Hong, "Chapter and Verse Divisions in the Bible: Their Origins, and Their Use in Today's Common Language Translations," *The Bible Translator* 48, no. 4 (1997), translation.bible. ↩
2. Transcript note: spoken as "day three"; God blesses the sea creatures and birds ("Be fruitful and multiply") on the fifth day. Source: Genesis 1:20–23 (ESV), BibleGateway. ↩
3. Transcript note: spoken as "Exodus chapter 31, verse 13" for this conversation; the exchange where Moses asks the Lord not to send them on unless his presence goes with them, and the Lord answers, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest," is Exodus 33:14–15, while the Sabbath command Wes reads next ("Above all you shall keep my Sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you") is Exodus 31:13. Source: Exodus 31:12–13; 33:12–16 (ESV), BibleGateway. ↩
4. Transcript note: spoken as "the disciples"; in Mark 3 it is the Pharisees who watch to see whether Jesus will heal on the Sabbath so that they can accuse him, and who then plot with the Herodians. Source: Mark 3:1–6 (ESV), BibleGateway. ↩
5. Transcript note: spoken as "the day of atonement"; the Last Supper took place at Passover ("the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called the Passover"). The Day of Atonement, the "Sabbath of solemn rest" with the goat offered for sin and the scapegoat, falls on the tenth day of the seventh month, while Passover falls on the fourteenth day of the first month. Source: Luke 22:1, 7–8; Leviticus 16:15–22, 29–31; 23:5, 27 (ESV), BibleGateway. ↩
6. Transcript note: spoken as "the one having power of death, that is sin"; Hebrews 2:14 says Christ died "that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil." Source: Hebrews 2:14 (ESV), BibleGateway. ↩