

Open your Bibles to Exodus 20:8-11.

- We are continuing our study of the doctrine of the Christian Sabbath.
- Today our focus will be on the Sabbath command (Fourth Commandment) as Moral Law.

Now, before we begin, I think that I need to define some terms:

1. What is a Moral Law?

- A Moral Law is an eternally binding law that has its origin in the righteous character of God.
- A Moral Law is a law that is binding on all men at all times, regardless of what covenant they live under, because God's righteous character never changes.
- Sometimes Moral Law is called Natural Law.
- And it's called that because Moral Law can be deduced from the light of nature and human reason.
- That is, we have an instinct about right and wrong and just a little thought on those things will lead us to understand what is good and evil.

Some Examples of Natural/Moral Law:

- It is manifestly clear that it is wrong to murder people. To take someone's life without cause is a bad thing. We don't want that done to us, so we ought not do it to others. And we would cease to exist as a human race if everyone murdered everyone else.
- It's manifestly clear that murder is morally wrong.
- Likewise, since we know that God exists, it is wrong to refuse to worship Him or to think that we can simply choose for ourselves how we will worship Him. He is God and ought to be worshipped. And since He is the One being worshiped, we ought to ask Him how we should do it in order to please Him.
- Likewise, since God exists, we know that it is wrong to be disrespectful toward Him. Since He is our Maker, we ought to

have the highest respect and reverence for Him and His awesome wisdom and power.

Again, Moral Law is eternally binding Law for all men at all times.

- And the basic principles of the Moral Law are revealed by the light of nature and human reason.
- They are self-evident truths for people made in the Image of God.

2. Another definition: What is a Positive Law?

- Positive Laws are those laws given by God that are not intrinsically moral.
- Positive Laws cannot be known from the light of nature and human reason, but must be POSITIVELY given by God to human beings or we would never know to obey them or how to obey them.
- Now, once God gives a Positive Law, it becomes morally binding on whoever He gives it to, because God is God and ought to be obeyed.
- But, nevertheless, Positive Laws are not inherently moral.
- And, because they are not inherently moral, they are subject to change or be abolished altogether, as God deems fit and commands.
- God can put them into effect. And God can take them away or alter them as He chooses, when He chooses, unlike the unchangeable Moral Law.

Examples of Positive Laws:

- The Ceremonial Laws of the OT were Positive Laws.
- The laws about cleanliness and washing and dietary restrictions were all Positive Laws.
- The laws about sacrifices and who could offer them and where and how were all Positive Laws.
- Likewise, the Civil Laws of the OT were Positive Laws. The punishments in Israel for breaking the law were Positive.

- These laws could not be known to anyone by nature. God had to reveal them through prophets and then they were put into effect and became binding to the Jews.

- And those laws were abolished when Christ established the New Covenant in His death.

- Those laws could go away at a certain point in time because they were NOT INTRINSICALLY MORAL.

Some other Positive Laws:

- The command to not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was a Positive Law.

- There was nothing inherently immoral about eating the fruit of that tree. It was simply fruit! But once God positively gave the command forbidding Adam and Eve from eating, the law became binding.

- Likewise, the command to be baptized is a Positive Law. You would never know that God wanted you to do that, without God telling you in His Word. And one day, at the end of time, baptism will cease.

- Likewise, the command to take bread and wine, bless it, and eat it in remembrance of Christ is a Positive Law. We would never know to do that without God telling us. And, like baptism, one day the Lord's Supper will cease.

So, again, Moral Law is eternally binding on all men. And it can be deduced from the conscience and human reason.

- But Positive Law is not inherently moral. And it must be revealed by God and instituted in order for us to know it. And it can also be repealed or altered by God, as He desires.

Now, why is this distinction important for us to know? What does that have to do with the Sabbath?

- Well, many people claim that there is no Sabbath for Christians under the New Covenant.

- They claim that the command to keep one day in seven holy to the Lord was only given to the Jews under the Mosaic

Covenant and, therefore is not a MORAL LAW.

- And, since it is not a Moral Law, it is not binding on all people at all times.

- They claim that the Fourth Commandment, the Sabbath Commandment, was a merely Ceremonial Law. That is, it was a Positive Law. And that it passed away when Christ died and put an end to the Old Covenant and the laws that were peculiar to it.

- And, if that is true, if the commandment to keep the Sabbath is a merely Positive/Ceremonial Law given to the Jews under the Mosaic Covenant, then indeed that law has no bearing on the Christian today.

BUT, if it can be shown that the Fourth Commandment is MORAL and not merely Positive, then it remains for us today.

- If it is Moral in its substance, even if it is positive in some other regard, then the command to keep one day in seven holy to the Lord is forever binding on all men because the Moral Law never goes away.

And today, I intend to show you from Scripture that the Fourth Commandment is a Moral Law.

- I plan to show you that it is not merely Positive or Ceremonial.

- I hope to show you that the substance of the commandment to keep the Sabbath holy is Moral, but the day on which the Sabbath is to be kept is Positive.

- And, in so doing, I hope to show you that the Fourth Commandment was not only for the Jews under Moses, but is for all men at all times.

- And if it is for all men at all times, then it is for us to keep and obey as Christians.

- May God bless the preaching of His Word today and sanctify us through it.

If you would, and are able, please stand with me now for the reading of the inspired, inerrant, and infallible Word of God.

Exodus 20:8-11

[8] “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

[9] Six days you shall labor, and do all your work,

[10] but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates.

[11] For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

(PRAY)

*Our Heavenly Father,
We come before you now asking that you would bless the ministry of your Word.
Use the preacher to proclaim your Word with faithfulness and accuracy.
Bless the hearers as they humble themselves before your Word.
Clear away our prejudices and grant that we would gladly receive whatever you have said.
Command what you will. And give grace for what you command.
Have mercy on us and teach us this morning.
Glorify yourself in us as you sanctify us by your Word and Spirit today.
We ask these things in Jesus’ Name and for His sake.
Amen.*

1.) What I just read to you is the Fourth Commandment.

- It is one of the Ten Commandments.
- And it is part of the Moral Law of God for all men, in all places, at all times.

Now, with that declaration comes an immediate question for most people.

•Question: How is the Fourth Commandment moral if you believe that the day that the Sabbath is to be observed has changed from Saturday to Sunday? If the Moral Law is unchangeable, and the Fourth Commandment is a Moral Law, then how did the day change?

•That is a good question. It's a really good and honest question for any thoughtful Christian to ask.

•And here is the answer: It is a Positive-Moral Law. (That's the language our Confession uses.)

But what does that mean?

•It means that the Fourth Commandment is partly Moral and partly Positive.

•Or, to put it another way, it is Moral in it's substance and Positive in its application.

Allow me to explain: Here is the Moral substance of the Sabbath Commandment. Here is what we can know from our consciences and human reason:

1. God exists and has made Himself known to man. Therefore, He should be worshipped by men.

2. In order for God to be worshipped by men, we must set aside time to worship Him.

3. In order to worship God, we must cease from what we would ordinarily do with our time in order to give ourselves over to worshipping Him.

•Those three points are the Moral substance of the Fourth Commandment. We can come to see those things as true by basic human reason and conscience.

But here is where the Law has a Positive aspect:

- We should worship God. And we must take time to cease from our ordinary work in order to worship Him.
- But when should we do so?
- And how often should we do so?
- What day and with what frequency?

We need God to give us special revelation to answer those two questions.

- So, while the substance of the command is in our conscience and reason, we need God to positively tell us when and how often we are to worship Him.
- And God did so when He instituted the Sabbath at creation.
- In Genesis 2:1-3, God told us, by His own example, that one whole day in seven is to be given to Him in worship.
- And He positively chose the last day of the week to commemorate His work of creation.

But, since the day itself is positively chosen by God, it is possible for it to be changed at some point in time while the moral substance of the Law remains unchanged.

- That is, the day of observance can change, but the principle of setting aside one day in seven for worship remains as the moral aspect of the Law.
- Hear me: The particular day of observance is NOT intrinsically moral. No day is intrinsically different from another day. All are simply 24-hour periods of time.
- A particular day becomes binding for religious observance only because God commands that day to be observed.

So then, brothers and sisters, the substance of devoting one day in seven to the worship of God is moral and instituted at creation.

- The day itself is positively chosen by God and, therefore, can change to another day, if God so wills it.

- And we know that it can change, in part because IT DID CHANGE under the New Covenant. That's why we are gathered here TODAY by Apostolic example and institution. (But this to be proven more in later sermons.)

- But, again, the day change does not alter the morality of the command. It only changes the positive aspect of it.

So, the Sabbath command is partly Moral and partly Positive.

- The substance is Moral. But the specific day to be observed is positively chosen by God.

- This is why our Confession calls it a Positive-Moral Commandment.

- Again, the Moral substance is this: Time must be set aside and ordinary works must cease in order for us to worship the Lord. And God has appointed one day in seven for that time.

Consider this as well: The nature of this Law requires a Positive Command in order for it to be properly observed and obeyed.

- Again, though we intrinsically know that time must be set apart for worship, God must tell us when.

- God MUST positively institute the day of worship or we cannot know how to properly keep this Moral Law.

- In other words, without a Positive Command, there is no shape to the Moral aspect of the Law. The positive choosing of a day is necessary in order for the Law to be kept.

- So then, this Law is, OF NECESSITY, partly Moral and partly Positive.

NOTE: Before you think that this is odd or a stretch of theology, let me show you that there is another command like this that you already embrace: The Second Commandment.

- The Moral principle of the Second Commandment is that God is to be worshipped according to His will and not the ideas or imaginations of men.

- BUT in order for us to keep the Second Commandment, we need God to further reveal Positive Laws to tell us HOW He wants to be worshipped.

- And, obviously the laws concerns how to properly worship God can change because the worship under the Old and New Covenants are very different.

- But that doesn't change the Morality of the Second Commandment.

- Both the Second and Fourth Commandments require some kind of Positive Laws in order to give them their shape so they can be obeyed.

- And the Positive aspects of those commandments are subject to change depending on what covenant you live under.

So then, if you believe that the Second Commandment governs our worship, you should have no problem with the Fourth Commandment containing a positive aspect for application.

- And that is because, though we require a positive element in order to keep the Second Commandment, none of us would say that the Second Commandment is a Positive Law.

So then, brothers and sisters, let me say this again:

- The Fourth Commandment is partly Moral and partly Positive.
- The substance of the command is Moral. But the particular day to be observed is Positive.

2.) I will now give a brief exposition of the Fourth Commandment in order to show you the Moral principles contained in it.

[8] "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

[9] Six days you shall labor, and do all your work,

[10] but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates.

[11] For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

This commandment tells us that we are to keep the Sabbath day holy.

- That is, we are to keep it separate from the other days of the week. We are to show it reverence as the day God has set apart for Himself and His worship.

- Remember, to “sanctify” or “make holy” means to set something apart for worshipping God.

- So we’re being commanded here to use the day for holy purposes. We are to use the day for worship.

But how are we supposed to do that?

- Well, the commandment actually goes on to tell us:

- We are to labor and do all our work in the six days leading up to the Sabbath day.

- We are to make the best use of our six days and get our affairs in order and our work done to the best of our ability so that we are prepared for the Sabbath day.

BUT the seventh day, the day after our six days of ordinary labor, is a Sabbath to the LORD our God.

- That is, it is a day of ceasing. That’s what it means to “sabbath.” (To cease.)

- It is a day that we cease from our labors that we engaged in the prior six days.

- And that’s why we’re told that we are not to work on it: “On it YOU shall not do any work...”

But notice that we aren’t the only ones who are forbidden to work on the Sabbath:

- “On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates.”

- You are to cease from your labors. And you are to ensure that everyone under your authority does likewise.

- You don't work on the Sabbath. And you don't allow others to work who are under your authority. And you don't hire out other people to work. (This applies to heads of homes and EMPLOYERS.)

- And notice that this isn't just for Jews. Even the non-Jew is to Sabbath. Even the sojourner who is within your gates is to Sabbath.

- So the principle is this: You don't work. And you don't make anyone else work, either.

- You take the day off from work. And you make sure, to the best of your abilities, that everyone around you gets that day off, too.

- Everyone is entitled to the Sabbath day. Everyone is entitled to God's appointed day of rest. And we are to protect the rest of others by refusing to make them work, or even permitting them to work, even as we also do not work on the Sabbath.

- Everyone has the right, by God's grace, to rest and engage in worshipping Him on His day.

- See this: God protects the right to rest and the right to worship in this commandment.

But are we to do nothing on the Sabbath?

- No! We're to engage in the worship of God on the Sabbath day.

- Again, we are to "keep it holy." It is set apart for worship.

- Notice also in v10 that it "is a Sabbath TO the LORD your God."

- The Sabbath is TO GOD. That is, the day is Godward. It has a heavenly focus. It is a day that is oriented in a special way toward the Lord.

- That is, once again, a day of worship.

- And let me point this out: It is the Sabbath DAY; not the Sabbath morning or evening. It is the whole DAY.

- So then, the whole of the day is to be used for the worship of God, as much as we are able as finite and weak human beings.

And why are we to do this?

- Because, as v11 says, God did it first. We are to imitate Him in His working six days and resting one at creation.
- We are to do this because it is something that God instituted for all mankind IN THE BEGINNING.
- And we are to keep the day because God Himself has tied a blessing to it. And He Himself has made the day a sacred day that we dare not profane.

Allow me to issue a challenge before we go any further:

- To any who would claim that the Sabbath command is merely Positive or Ceremonial, I ask you to show me what portion of the Fourth Commandment, aside from the day of observance, is Ceremonial?
 - Are we no longer obligated to keep holy things holy?
 - Do we no longer need to set aside a day for worship?
 - Is it now morally permissible for an employer to work his employee 365 days a year?
 - Is it now morally acceptable to keep someone from worshipping the Lord by making them work for or serve you instead of attending His worship?
 - Does the rest of men and the worship of God no longer need to be protected and guaranteed by divine Law?

Brothers and sisters, none of this is ceremonial.

- The Sabbath command protects and promotes the worship of God while also protecting man's right to rest from his labors and worship the Lord.
 - That's all Moral stuff. Only the day itself is Positive.
 - The Commandment is clearly Moral in substance.

3.) Now, allow me to make a further case that the Fourth Commandment is Moral Law.

- We all agree that there were many laws under the Old Covenant that passed away with the coming of the New Covenant.
- All of the OT rituals and ceremonies and sacrifices and all that have gone away. In other words, the Ceremonial Law has passed away.
- But we believe that the Moral Law continues.
- And I believe that the Ten Commandments summarize the Moral Law of God.
- And I believe that we can know that the Ten Commandments are the summary of God's Moral Law, in part, because of HOW HE GAVE THEM AT SINAI.

What I mean is this:

- God gave the Ten Commandments in such a special way, and with such solemnity, that He intends us to see and understand that these Ten Laws are NOT LIKE THE OTHER LAWS HE GAVE that were peculiar to the Old Covenant and passed away when it ceased.

1. First, have you ever considered that the Ten Commandments were audibly spoken by GOD HIMSELF at Sinai?

- Exodus 20:1 says, "And God SPOKE all these words, saying..."
- Deuteronomy 5:22 underscores that ONLY THESE COMMANDMENTS were uttered by the divine voice: "These words the LORD spoke to all your assemble at the mountain out of the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness, with a loud voice; and HE ADDED NO MORE..."

There is a special dignity given to these Laws because God personally and audibly spoke them to His People and NO OTHERS were spoken.

- All other OT Laws were revealed through Moses as a prophet and mediator.

- God spoke to Moses and Moses spoke to the people for all the other laws. But God Himself IMMEDIATELY spoke the Ten Commandments.

- This tells us that these Laws are different from the others. And the Fourth Commandment is one of them.

2. Second, the Ten Commandments were written by God Himself at Sinai.

- Not only did He speak them, but He wrote them, too.

- Exodus 31:18 says, “And He gave to Moses, when He had finished speaking with him on Mount Sinai, the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.”

- God wrote them with His own finger.

- Now, that is clearly a human way of speaking about God, because the divine nature has no literal fingers. But the idea that is being conveyed to us is that these Laws are near to God.

- He wrote them personally. They are immediately connected Him. They belong to Him in a special way.

- He took the time to write them down Himself.

3. Third, as we just read in Exodus 31:18, the Ten Commandments were written by God on tablets of STONE.

- Out of all the things that they could’ve been written on, God chose STONE.

- Now, they had animal skins and a primitive form of paper back then. But God decided that these Laws need to be inscribed in STONE.

- And stone doesn’t go away. We often use the phrase, “It is written in stone,” to signal that something is here forever. If it’s written in stone, it’s permanent.

Consider that, in ancient times, setting up stones or a stone pillar was used to symbolize an abiding agreement

that was to never go away.

- Or it was used to symbolize a work of God that was to be remembered forever.

- We read of Jacob and Laban setting up a stone pillar to represent their agreement.

- We read of Jacob setting up a stone pillar at Bethel to commemorate God's grace toward him.

- We read of Samuel setting up a stone and calling it Ebenezer to commemorate God's help to His People.

- We read of Absalom setting up a stone for His own remembrance because he had no son.

- Stone is significant. It signals that something is to be remembered forever.

So then, there is something symbolic for us to see in the fact that the Ten Commandments were written IN STONE.

- Especially when you consider that the OTHER LAWS OF THE OT WERE NOT WRITTEN IN STONE.

- They were written in a book. (Exodus 24:4-7). Clearly, that is not stone. Not a stone book.

- The Ten Commandments ALONE were written in stone, because they alone would continue after the Old Covenant had passed away.

4. Fourth, the Ten Commandments were placed in the Ark of the Covenant.

- Deuteronomy 10:4-5 says, "And he wrote on the tablets, in the same writing as before, the Ten Commandments that the LORD had spoken to you on the mountain out of the midst of the fire on the day of the assembly. And the LORD gave them to me. Then I turned and came down from the mountain and put the tablets in the ark that I had made. And there they are, as the LORD commanded me."

The Ark of the Covenant was God's throne.

- The Ark was placed in the Holy of Holies. And there God promised His special presence to be above the Ark.
- That God told Moses to place the Ten Commandments in the Ark shows that it has primacy over other laws.
- And that is highlighted by the fact that all the other laws of the OT were placed, not in the Ark, but on the side of the Ark.
- We read in Deuteronomy 31:26, “Take this Book of the Law and put it by the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against you.”
- The Ten Commandments are not like the other Mosaic Laws.
- They are placed in God’s very throne, while the other commandments were not given the same pride of place with the LORD.

In summary so far: These Laws are clearly different from other laws that God gave to Israel.

- They are near to God. They are special to Him in a way that the other laws were not.
- And the Fourth Commandment is one of them.
- These Laws are a reflection of God’s character and Moral will for all men at all times. And that doesn’t go away.
- So this commandment of one day in seven belonging to the Lord hasn’t gone away, either.

Furthermore, let me add this:

- The content of the Ten Commandments is manifestly Moral and NOT Ceremonial.
- The Fourth Commandment is surrounded by Moral Law.
- Setting aside the Fourth Commandment, there is not a single Christian who would argue that the other Nine Commandments are not Moral.
- The subject matter of this set of Laws is clearly Moral in nature.
- It would be UTTERLY SHOCKING to find that, embedded in the middle of nine other commandments that are exclusively Moral, the Fourth Commandment is exclusively Ceremonial.

Brothers and sisters, surely we don't believe that these are all coincidences, do we?

•That these Laws are different from the other laws of the OT is plain to see for anyone who is willing to see it.

4.) Let me pursue this even further:

•Did you know that the NT presupposes and refers to the continuation of the Ten Commandments as Moral Law?

•They are cited over and over again as valid and binding for the Christian (and all people).

•There are so many examples that I could give, but I'll limit myself to three.

1. Jesus Christ points to the Ten Commandments as God's standard for life in Matthew 19:16-22.

•There, the Rich Young Ruler came to Jesus and asked "Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?"

•And Jesus said to him, "If you would enter life, keep the commandments."

•The man asked, "Which ones." And then in Matthew 19:18-19 Jesus said, "You shall not murder, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother, and You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

•Brothers and sisters, Jesus directed the young man to the Ten Commandments as the summary for Moral Law.

•The fact that Jesus only quoted the Second Table of the Law doesn't matter. Jesus is clearly telling us that the Ten Commandments tell us how to live.

•And the Fourth Commandment is one of them.

2. In Romans 13:8-10, and 1 Timothy 1:8-10 Paul is talking about the Law of God that we ought to obey and that condemns men as sinners.

- And there, if you'll read it, you'll see that the Apostle actually follows the order of the Ten Commandments.

- There is actually even an argument to be made that, in 1 Timothy 1:8-10, Paul may be referring to every single one of the Ten Commandments IN ORDER.

- But, regardless, the Apostle appeals to the Ten Commandments as the standard for living.

- And, again, the Fourth Commandment is one of them.

3. Lastly, I want you to consider Romans 7:7.

- There Paul writes, ...Yet if it had not been for the LAW, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the LAW had not said, "You shall not covet."

- Here Paul is talking about the LAW revealing his sin. And then he immediately quotes the Tenth Commandment.

- So when Paul talks about "the Law" he is thinking of the Ten Commandments.

- And that's interesting because in Romans 3:19 we read Paul say, "Now we know that whatever the LAW says it speaks to those who are under the LAW, so that every mouth may be stopped and the whole world may be held accountable to God."

- Here, Paul tells us that the Law is the means by which God will render the whole world guilty in the Judgment.

- And what is that Law? Well, Paul's use of the phrase, "the Law," elsewhere in the book tells us that he is talking about the Ten Commandments.

- So then, brothers and sisters, the Ten Commandments are the standard by which God will judge the world.

- The Ten Commandments are then the summary of God's Moral Law.

- And the Fourth Commandment is one of them.

Brothers and sisters, the Ten Commandments are FOR US TODAY.

- They haven't gone away.

- The NT appeals to them as the standard of living for Christians.

- And it appeals to them as the standard by which God will judge the world in righteousness.

5.) At this point, I want to now appeal to your hearts.

- Church, did you know that one of the blessings of the New Covenant is that the Ten Commandments are written on our hearts?

- Jeremiah 31:31-33 says,

Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD.

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

The LORD promises that He will write His Law on the hearts of all the members of the New Covenant.

- And we know that Jesus Christ instituted the New Covenant in His blood at the Cross.

- So this prophecy is referring to the age of the Messiah. It's referring to the age in which we live, the New Covenant era.

- So then, this is talking about US.

Notice that God promises to write His Law on the hearts of every single New Covenant member.

- And this promise is made IMMEDIATELY AFTER a reference to the Exodus and the Mosaic Covenant.

- God mentions bringing the Israelites out of Egypt, making a covenant with them, and that they went on to break the covenant.

- Now, how did they break it? They broke it by disobeying the Law of God. (You can read that in the prophets.)
- But now God promises to write His Law on the hearts of every single person in the New Covenant.
- And what Law would that be?
- Clearly, in the context and immediately preceding reference to the Exodus and Mosaic Covenant, God is promising that the TEN COMMANDMENTS would be written on the hearts of His People.

At Sinai, in the wilderness, after God brought the People out of Egypt, the Law was written on tablets of stone.

- Under that covenant, the vast majority of the people were not believers and, therefore, did not obey God.
- But in the age of the New Covenant, everyone in the covenant is a true believer, knows the Lord, and has His Law written internally on their hearts.
- And notice that it is written within them instead of on tablets of stone!
- The New Covenant is superior to the Old one.
- And one of the reasons is that its members have the Moral Law of God written within us so that we can obey it sincerely, with love and faith, even if not perfectly.

What other Law would God be referring to here?

- What other Law would God write on our hearts?
- Surely, we don't believe that a desire to set aside time to worship God is not written on our hearts.
- Of course it is!
- The Fourth Commandment is within every single person who has come to faith in Christ.

And let me prove that to you:

- Every Christian sets aside time to assemble with God's People and worship Him.

- That's what we're doing right now. That's what you've done today.

- Every Christian sets aside at least some time, lays down their secular labors and recreations, and devotes some time to the Lord and His worship.

- Specifically, most of them set aside time on the Lord's Day to do so.

- THIS is an expression of the Fourth Commandment, the Moral law, having been written on your heart.

- I do not know any true Christian who believes that they can forsake the worship of God.

- Such a person would be a false professor and knows nothing of the mercy and salvation of Jesus Christ!

So catch this: Even people who aren't Sabbatarian are at least a little Sabbatarian.

- They think that all Christians are to set aside time to go to church and worship God.

- They believe that all Christians need to put down their work for at least a few hours and go worship the Lord.

- And because of that, we see that the Law has been written on their hearts, praise God!

- They just need to grow in it!

- The seed is there! They just need nudged out of the way so that it has room to grow into full Sabbath keeping.

Brothers and sisters, this is in us.

- It is in us to keep the Sabbath.

- Every Christian does so to some degree. And all of us know that devoting an entire day to the Lord, assisting others to do so, and resting from our work is a moral good.

- It's just that most modern Christians need to recover a greater keeping of the Sabbath day.

- Most of us need to move out of the way, clear our hearts of the world, clear the Lord's Day of unnecessary stuff, and allow

the Sabbath seed that God has planted in our hearts the room to grow and bloom for His glory!

My dear brothers and sisters, the Law is within you.

- Don't fight it. Submit to it.
- And honor the God who has saved you by grace through the work of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Obey the God who has written His Law on your heart.

6.) As I near the close of this sermon, let me say a few more things:

The Fourth Commandment is Moral Law.

- And so, you must treat it as such.
- It is a serious thing to break the Sabbath. It is a sin to use this day however you want.
- You must keep the day holy and use it as God has appointed in His Word.
- Please hear me: This isn't an optional thing for you. To break the Fourth Commandment is just as serious a thing as breaking any of the other Ten Commandments.
- This is not just a theological thing. This is ethical. This has to do with righteousness before the Lord.

And so, you must repent of your Sabbath breaking.

- Just as I call you to repent of breaking any of the other Ten Commandments, now I call you to repent of profaning the Lord's Day and treating it as common.
- You must turn your foot back from the Sabbath. You must not trample down God's holy day with worldly actions.
- You must give Him His due. You must honor His day.
- And so, you must repent when you do not do so.
- This is serious, brothers and sisters. God does not treat this as a light thing.
- Sin and righteousness are on the line. Keep the day holy.

This all reminds us of how much we need the Lord Jesus.

- Not a one of us have ever perfectly kept the Sabbath holy.
- Maybe we have externally, but not internally.
- Like every other Commandment, none of us have kept this one perpetually or perfectly.
- And so, like with every other Commandment, we need the righteousness of Christ given to us by faith.
- And we need His blood to cleanse us of our disobedience.

And, praise be to God, Christ has done this for us just as He has done with every other commandment of God.

- Our Lord perfectly kept the Sabbath for Sabbath breakers like us.
- Our Lord honored the day and gave Himself to worship in our place so that, by faith in Him, His righteousness would become ours.

And He Himself bore the penalty for our profaning of the day.

- He suffered the wrath of God for our disregard of God's day and worship.
- He was punished as if He had robbed God of worship.
- He was punished as if He had insulted the majesty of God.
- He was punished as if He had kept others from worship.
- He was punished as a Sabbath breaker in order that He might atone for the sins of Sabbath breakers like us.

Truly, the Fourth Commandment reveals to us once again how much we need the Lord Jesus Christ.

- And, praise be to God, He has fulfilled all righteousness on our behalf and made a full atonement for our sins!
- Trust Him! And look to Him always!

And as you look to Him for forgiveness and mercy, be encouraged and energized to continue on striving to obey Him.

- As you have received mercy in Christ for your wasted Sabbaths, endeavor from now on to keep the Lord's Day holy, for your Lord has saved you from your sins.

- Honor the One who has saved you by spending the day with Him each week.

May God grant us all to look to Christ always for our salvation.

- And may He help us to keep the Law out of gratitude for the forgiveness we have received from His hand.

- Amen.