

“The Ten Commandments (Part 5 – Remember to Rest)”

The Fourth Commandment calls us to honor God with our time. The LORD says in Exodus 20:8-11: “**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 the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. ¹¹ For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.” This Commandment, more than the others, is either dismissed as an outdated rule, or followed with legalistic fervor. Here’s the main idea: *we are to set apart one day in seven to stop what we are doing to remember the LORD as Creator and Redeemer as we look forward to the eternal rest only Christ provides.*

The LORD warns us here to against intentionally neglecting *the stop-working day*. People are so busy; often, too busy. Sabbath is designed to be a gift, not a grind. God calls us to rest because He Himself rested on the seventh day after completing the work of creation in six days. God didn’t need to rest because He was tired or exhausted, He rested to enjoy what He created. This Command beckons us to align with God’s desired rhythm for our lives. There should be a balance between work and rest, labor and leisure. Sabbath is to be more than just rest, though, we remember the stop-working day by observing its sacredness. It is intended for worship and honoring the Lord as much as for well-being. For the sake of our own souls, it’s good to set aside a day to focus on how God has redeemed us from the slavery of sin. Sabbath also reminds us of our dependency upon God, as we trust and believe that He will take care of us when we do things His way.

As New Testament Christians, we follow Jesus’ lead in viewing the Sabbath. It was Christ’s custom to **gather for weekly worship**. If this was a priority to Jesus, it should be a priority to us. Jesus teaches us to **do good** on the Sabbath (like how He healed many on the Sabbath). Jesus proclaimed Himself as **Lord of the Sabbath**. Since He owns it, we are free to do acts of mercy for others and not be bound by a thousand prohibitions. Jesus also teaches us that the Sabbath is **for our benefit**. The Sabbath was never intended to be a burden, but rather a blessing. The Sabbath was given to people as a gift from God. This day of rest was to be a time of refreshment, not a day of restriction, a delight, not a duty. Jesus absolutely followed the Sabbath commandment, but He purposely showed the emptiness of unleashing man-made rules and regulations upon it.

Since there is no stipulated day of worship in the New Testament, the early church voluntarily set aside Sunday as the Son’s Day. This shift begins in the Gospels and picks up steam in the practice of the early church. One theologian said, “*Christ took the Sabbath into the grave with Him and brought the Lord’s Day out of the grave with Him on the Resurrection.*” Paul points out to the Galatians that *people are not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ alone* (see Galatians 2:16). In Galatians 4:9-10 he confronts believers for *turning back to the weak and miserable*

principles of the Mosaic Law from which Christ has set us free. In Romans 14 Paul gives us freedom to worship on any day of the week, as long as we observe it in honor to the Lord.

Discussion Guide/Action Steps

1. Let's preserve the Sabbath principle by setting aside Sunday, or another day, as the Son's Day.
2. Make Sundays special by making Sunday the Son's Day.
3. Make Sundays a "*holy day*" instead of a "*holiday*."
4. Consider giving 10% of your time (or four hours a week) to serving Christ and His kingdom.
5. Prepare for worship before you arrive. Treat Monday through Saturday as preparation for Sunday Worship.