

“Why We Need the Sabbath”
(Mark 2:27)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

This morning,

We saw that the Sabbath continues:

The day God established

And blessed at the beginning for our good;

That He gave again to His people

When it was taken from them in Egypt,

After He brought them out;

That He included in His Ten Commandments,

When He spoke to them at Sinai;

Because He said in the Old Covenant,

Not only that it would continue in the New,

But that those who kept it would be blessed;

That it would mark and be a celebration

Of the day His Son would rise from the dead;

Because Jesus declared Himself

To be the Lord of the Sabbath

And taught us how to keep it;

Because He said it would continue

Even after His earthly ministry was done;

Because the author to the Hebrews
 Tells us it stands as a reminder
 That we may still enter
 Into the rest of heaven by faith
 Because of what Jesus has done.

And because God gives us
 The desire to keep this day holy
 By His Spirit in the New Covenant.

B. Preview.

This evening,
 Let's consider why God gave us the Sabbath,
 And so why it's still so important we keep it today.

II. Sermon.

A. Jesus tells us in our passage why He made it: for us.

“The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath” (Mark 2:27).
 He intends it for our blessing.

In the context,
 The Pharisees were accusing Jesus' disciples of breaking the Law
 Because they were picking grain on the Sabbath –
 Something that was actually lawful for them to do
 Since they were traveling.

Jesus said this to reprove them –
 The Father never intended His people to go hungry
 For the sake of keeping the Sabbath –

He didn't make man for the Sabbath –
 So that he could keep it –
 He made the Sabbath for man –
 That he might be blessed by it.

We saw this morning,
 How the Lord gave the Jews
Enough manna on the sixth day –
 And allowed it to keep for two days –
 So as not to go hungry on the Sabbath –
 He didn't intend it to be a hardship.

Jesus gives us another example
 To show that our well-being is in mind:
 That of David and his companions
 Eating the consecrated bread.

If someone who wasn't a priest
 Ate that bread under any other circumstances,
 He would have been guilty:

But not when life was a stake.

The point is
 God didn't give us the Sabbath
 To put our lives at risk:
 He gave it to bless us.

B. So how does this day do that?

1. First, it gives us time to rest.

God didn't make us

With the ability to go nonstop –

Those who do usually end up dying early:

Their minds and bodies aren't able to repair themselves;

This might explain

Why some of our spiritual forefathers

Lived such short lives –

We need sleep every night –

God made day and night

To cycle as it does

And designed our bodies to respond accordingly,

Because He wants us to rest.

We also need rest every week –

And so He established this day

At the end of the Creation week

As we saw this morning:

Moses, "Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts. By the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made" (Gen. 2:1-3).

Just as God worked six days and rested on the seventh,

So we are to work six days and rest on the seventh.

God didn't need to rest –

Just as He didn't need six days to create –

He worked six days
 And rested on the seventh
 To set the pattern for us.

2. Second, it gives us time to worship.

Worship is what we owe God
 By virtue of the fact that He created us,
 And redeemed us.

This is how our first parents used the Sabbath:

Moses, “So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the LORD of the fruit of the ground. Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and for his offering; but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard” (Gen. 4:3-5).

Here we see *worship* was taking place –
 Cain and Abel brought offerings to the Lord –

We see there was *a standard* in place
 Of what was acceptable and what wasn’t –
 Abel’s blood sacrifice was accepted,
 While Cain’s grain offering was not –

The fact that God told Cain,
 “If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up?” (v. 7),
 Implies that he knew why his offering was rejected,
 As well as why Abel’s was accepted.

They would have learned from their parents,

Who learned it from God's example,
When He first killed some of His creatures
To cover their nakedness with the skins.

And we see there was *a time* for worship:
The NASB reads "in the course of time."
Literally, the Hebrew is "at the end of days,"
Which most likely refers
To the end of the weekly cycle God gave them –
Or the seventh day.

We see this is how Jesus
And the Jews observed the Sabbath –
Jesus went on that day to the synagogue –
Where God's people had gathered to worship –
To teach/evangelize them.

We also see Paul –
In his missionary journeys –
Going to the synagogues on the Sabbath
To do the same.

The Lord gave us the Sabbath
To rest and worship.

For the Jews
It was the seventh day of the week
To commemorate the completion of the Old Creation;
But for the church

It's the first day of the week

To commemorate the completion of the New Creation.

3. Finally, worship is a blessing

Because this is how we have *communion* with God –

a. When we talk about using the means of grace –

The different ways the Lord has given us

To get the help of His Holy Spirit –

We're really talking about

Spending time with God.

That's what we're doing now:

Having communion with Him;

Having relationship with Him;

Talking with Him, and He with us.

He speaks to us in His Word:

He tells us about Himself –

He does through the Creation,

But here much more clearly –

He tells us how much He loves us;

How we can love Him;

What He likes and doesn't like.

If we don't read His Word,

It's like turning a deaf ear –

Shutting Him off.

Prayer is how we speak to Him:

It's one way we tell Him we love Him;

It's how we ask for His help,

For His wisdom.

We can actually have a conversation with God

In our more private times of worship:

We can ask questions,

And He will answer them –

Not through Bible roulette;

But by bringing us to the right passages,

Or reminding us of what we've read.

When we sing,

We express our love and devotion to Him.

When He gives us the sacraments,

He expresses His love to us.

b. Something wonderful happens

When we worship the Lord –

In faith and by the power of His Spirit –

The more we commune with Him,

The more we become like Him.

Remember what happened to Moses

After spending those forty days

With the Lord on Mount Sinai?

“It came about when Moses was coming down from Mount Sinai (and the two tablets of the testimony *were* in Moses’ hand as he was coming down from the mountain), that Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because of his speaking with Him” (Ex. 34:29).

Something similar happens to us:

We begin to radiate more of His character,

We begin to share something more of His heart,

And we begin to live more like He calls us to live.

Remember how the Lord lifted the prophets up into heaven –

Such as with Isaiah –

Or came down to earth –

Such as with Moses –

To reveal His glory to them:

He did this to prepare them for ministry

Before He sent them to proclaim His message.

The Lord commands us to worship Him

That He might prepare us.

When we see His glory through faith,

He transforms us into His image:

Paul, “But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit” (2 Cor. 3:18).

This is why He gives us the Sabbath:

Why He wants us to keep it holy –

To set it apart from all the other days of the week,

And to set ourselves apart from the things of this world –

Because we will only receive this blessing if we do:

Isaiah, “If because of the sabbath, you turn your foot from doing your *own* pleasure on My holy day, and call the sabbath a delight, the holy *day* of the LORD honorable, and honor it, desisting from your *own* ways, from seeking your *own* pleasure and speaking *your own* word, then you will take delight in the LORD, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; and I will feed you *with* the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken” (Isa. 58:13-14).

And so let’s receive it

As He intends it: as a blessing –

Let’s spend time with the Lord every day;

Let’s learn to walk with Him throughout the day;

But let’s also commit ourselves

To worshiping Him publicly,

And spending the whole Sabbath with Him. Amen.

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