

Dec 06, 2015



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks
Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:
Our rest day gives meaning to the rest of the week

POEM FOR THE WEEK:
When we take time for fun and play,
For rest along life's busy way,
And when we pause to kneel and pray—
We'll be renewed from day to day. —DJJ

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:
And He said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.

(Mark 2:27 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", Feb 21, 2014)

Series: SACRED GIFTS AND HOLY GATHERINGS

UNIT: What We Bring to God

NEXT WEEK

Acceptable Offerings
(Lev 22:17-25, 31-33)

The Sabbath Day Exodus 20:8-11; 31:12-16

Aim and Application of the Lesson

The lesson teaches the how and why **The Sabbath Day** was established. The **study's aim** is to observe that an order of life prescribed by God has multiple rewards, benefits and cautions. The **study's application** is to make it our habit to honor God's Word and ways, including the Sabbath. *(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)*

Lesson Introduction and Background

The Hebrew word "rested" is the root word for "sabbath." It means to cease from busyness. Exodus 31:17 says that God "ceased from labor, and was refreshed." The fact that God blessed and sanctified ("set apart") this day at the completion of creation implies that we are to set apart one day in seven to be different from our normal routine. On that day we who are made in His likeness are to cease from the work of the other days and be refreshed in body and soul as we spend time worshiping our Creator. There is a big difference between the rest God intends for us and the so-called "rest" of pursuing leisure and recreation. We probably have more leisure time and recreational equipment than any other culture in history, and yet we're burning out like light bulbs. Lots of people are "stressed out." I can't help but wonder if a major part of our problem is that we're neglecting God's ordained cycle of a weekly day for rest and worship, when we cease doing "our thing," and devote the day to taking delight in the Lord (Isa. 58:13-14). Recreation may refresh the body, but we need worship to refresh the soul. Recreation is often self-centered, but worship focuses us on the Lord. That God sanctified and blessed the seventh day means that it is a special day, set apart from the other six days. Since He sanctified and blessed this day, it belongs to Him, not to us. It should not be a day for doing what we normally do, but rather a day to take the time out of our busy lives to spend with the Lord and His people. Often we're so busy during the week that time with the Lord gets squeezed out or hurried. We don't take time to read God's Word, to pray, or to reflect on whether our lives are pleasing to Him. Taking time to spend with someone is a way of saying, "I love you, you're important to me." Taking one day each week to be with the Lord says, "Lord, I love you and want to get to know You better because You're first in my life." On this set apart day, we should rest from our normal work and take the time to be with the Lord and to worship with His people.

Must Christians keep the sabbath? Here the controversy rages! There are three main views. Seventh Day Baptists and Seventh Day Adventists say that Christians must strictly observe Saturday as sabbath as ordained by God at creation and in the Mosaic law. A second view, following the Westminster Confession, transfers sabbath observance to Sunday, making it a Christian sabbath. The third view is that the sabbath was a part of the law of Israel; since we are not under the law, it is not applicable to the church at all. This is probably the view of most evangelicals in our day. I'm somewhere between the second and third view. I do not believe that Sunday should be a strictly observed Christian sabbath; but neither am I comfortable casting off the sabbath principles altogether. Sunday is the Lord's Day (Rev. 1:10); this means it belongs to Him. There are principles in the sabbath, both as established at creation and under the Mosaic law, which apply to the Christian observance (or celebration) of the Lord's Day. While we are not under the law, there is much in the law which applies beneficially to us. The prevailing view today, which sees Sunday as a day to go to church and then do whatever you please, is robbing God's people of the blessing He intended at creation by setting apart one day in seven to cease from our work and to focus on our Creator and Redeemer.

(Adapted from "God's Day Of Rest" by Steven Cole)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

THE SABBATH'S INSTITUTION (EXODUS 20:8-11)

It is holy (8)

Holy because God blessed it (Gen 2:3)

Holy because it is sacred (Lev 23:3)

Holy because it is honorable (Isa 58:13)

Holy because God commanded it (Jer 17:22)

Holy because God is holy (1 Peter 1:14-16)

Holy through God's Law (Neh 9:14)

It is a day of rest (9-11)

A rest that God commanded (Exodus 16:23)

A rest from work (Exodus 23:12)

An eternal rest that is peaceful and secure (Isa 32:18)

An eternal rest that is a blessing (Rev 14:13)

An eternal rest from burdens (Matt 11:28-30)

An eternal rest in Jesus' presence (Exodus 33:14)

THE SABBATH'S IMPORTANCE (EXODUS 31:12-16)

It is a sacred sign (12-13)

A sign between God and man (Ezek 20:12)

A sign to make God known as our Lord (Ezek 20:20)

A sign as a memorial (Josh 4:6)

A sign that represents that Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath (Mark 2:27-28)

A sign of rest from slavery (Deut 5:15)

A sign of denial (Lev 23:32)

A sign of rest even for land (Lev 25:4)

It has a punishment if disobeyed (14-15)

Punishment of death (Exodus 35:2)

Punishment of calamities (Neh 13:16-18)

Punishment of God's wrath (Ezek 20:21)

It has a covenant obligation (16)

A covenant obligation through God's promise (Acts 2:39)

A covenant obligation through belonging to God (Gal 3:27-29)

A covenant obligation through being a part of Jesus' flock (John 10:14-16)

A covenant obligation through trust in God (Rom 10:10-13)

A covenant obligation through God's mercy (1 Peter 2:10)

A covenant obligation that we are joined together with God (Jer 50:5)