

## **The Sabbath**

### **John 5:1-17**

After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 2 Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. 3 In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. 4 For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had. 5 Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. 6 When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?"

7 The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me."

8 Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your bed and walk." 9 And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked.

And that day was the Sabbath. 10 The Jews therefore said to him who was cured, "It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed."

11 He answered them, "He who made me well said to me, 'Take up your bed and walk.'"

12 Then they asked him, "Who is the Man who said to you, 'Take up your bed and walk?'" 13 But the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in that place. 14 Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you."

15 The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

16 For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath. NKJV

As we had studied this passage we realize that the Sabbath day is very important in understanding it. Jesus could appeal this man on the knee day of the week but I think he chose the Sabbath day to make a point

In order for us to understand this we need to know a little bit about how the Jews kept the law. The Jews over the last several hundred years had come up with what they thought was a foolproof interpretation of the law. To them the law seem to be ambiguous. And they felt that that was the reason that the Jewish people had not kept it in the past. Therefore they developed what was referred to as the Oral Law. The Oral Law was much larger than the law itself because it took all the commandments of Moses and Jewish wrote out an interpretation for them. And concerning the Sabbath day they had developed quite an elaborate system that they felt would guarantee that people were keeping the law. Jesus never broke the law although he was accused of breaking it on several occasions by the Jews. It was not the law that Jesus was breaking but rather it was there Oral Law or what Jesus referred to as their traditions.

For you and me today Sabbath keeping does not seem to be such a big deal. But a couple of generations ago it was even in America. At my first church I had an older gentleman who told me how the boys were not allowed to play baseball on Sunday afternoon. Then backing Puritan days keeping the Sabbath was not only a religious thing it was something you could be punished by the secular government for not doing. And in Jesus Day we see that they planned to kill him because he healed on the Sabbath day

- I. An example of the Oral Law
  - A. The law said that a man was not to travel on the Sabbath day, Exodus 16:29
  - B. But what was traveling?
    1. In answering this question they've been developed the concept of a Sabbath day's journey which was roughly 1000 yards.
    2. So a man could walk that far on the Sabbath but to walk more was a sin.
    3. If however, a rope was tied across the industry than the whole street technically became one house; and a man could walk 1000 yards beyond the rope.
    4. Or if he deposited enough food for a meal at any given place on Friday night, on the next day he could walk to it, eat his meal (thereby technically establishing a home), and then walk 1000 yards more.
    5. If he were clever enough at this, I suppose that a determined man could walk half way across Palestine. Source-the Gospel of John volume 2 James Montgomery Boice.
  - C. Or take the matter of carrying the burden
    1. Jeremiah prohibits carrying the burden on the Sabbath day.
    2. Is a handkerchief a burden?
    3. The answer is yes if it was carried.
    4. But no if it was an article of clothing.
    5. So the way to move a handkerchief from upstairs to downstairs was to take it from the drawer tie it around your neck, at which time it became clothing, go downstairs take it off and fold it and put it away.
  - D. In Matthew's Gospel, when Jesus disciples were accused of harvesting on the Sabbath day Jesus gave this answer.
    1. He referred to David, when David was being chased by Saul.
    2. He came to the high priest at Shiloh and asked if there was any bread for his soldiers.

3. The priest responded that all they had was the show bread that had been taken from the tabernacle.
4. They gave it to David and he and his men ate it.
5. The question then was to David break the law.
6. Jesus very plainly says it was not lawful for David to eat the bread.
7. But what was most important the bread or the life of the future king.
8. Therefore Jesus assured them that it was okay for David to eat that bread.

## II. Formalism the enemy of grace.

### A. Formalism is worried about keeping rules regardless of the circumstances.

1. Jesus said that the Pharisees had taken the law of God and made a burden that no one was able to bear.
2. They had convoluted the law far beyond what it originally intended.

### B. Jesus did much to straighten that out.

1. In the example of murder Jesus said it was wrong to hate your brother.
2. If hate was forbidden than murder would never happen.
3. But for the formalist anything is acceptable up to but excluding murder.
4. Jesus had to remind them that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath.
5. They were opposed to him healing on the Sabbath day but as Jesus said if their donkey fell in a ditch on the Sabbath they would surely pull it out.

## III. Are Christians under the law of the Sabbath?

### A. Christians are called to a higher law.

1. We are not only called to not hate our brother, but we are called to love our enemies.
2. We are called to go the extra mile even when it's not required.
3. The Christian is not governed by laws written on tables of stone, but by the law of God written on our hearts.

### B. It was the first day of the week it became the Christian day of worship.

### C. Lewis Sperry Chafer notes for us 11 important events that happened on the first day of the week.

1. Us Jesus Christ rose from the dead

2. He first appeared to the disciples on the first day of the week
3. He ascended into heaven on the first day of the week
4. It was on the first day of the week Jesus first broke bread with his disciples who had gone to Emmaus.
5. It was on the first day of the week that Jesus open the understanding of his disciples so that they might understand how the Scriptures taught concerning him.
6. Us it was on the first day of the week that Jesus commissioned his disciples to the task a world evangelization, John 20:21 as the father has sent me so send that you
7. It was on the first day of the week it Jesus breathed on the disciples imparting the Holy Spirit to them, John 20:22
8. It was on the first day of the week that the Holy Spirit descended from heaven at Pentecost.
9. It was on the first day of the week the Holy Spirit directed Paul to gather believers together and preach to them in Acts chapter 20
10. It was on the first day of the week Paul said that the Corinthians should lay buying in-store such as God had profited them, thus establishing an offering to be taken on the first day of the week.
11. And it was on the first day of the week the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to the apostle John on the Isle of Patmos.

The first day of the week is for Christians the day warship. Many Christians refer to it as the Sabbath although technically it is not.

Christians are to gather together on the first day of the week as was the custom in New Testament times. As matter of fact the writer of Hebrews is somewhat harsh concerning those who would not assemble. Heb 10:23-30

23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.  
 24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

26 For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. 28 Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? NKJV