



13 Every Tired Heart Wants to Rest in His Love

People who come to Christ because they appreciate His love revealed at the cross do so not because they want a reward or because they are afraid of hell. They appreciate His sacrifice for them, and give themselves to Him with no selfish fear or even hope of reward.

In the early centuries after the death of the apostles, a pagan love gradually crept into the church. Paul warned that "after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock" (Acts 20:29). He said there would come a great "falling away" (2 Thessalonians 2:3). When the New Testament idea of love became obscured with fear-laden *eros*, all kinds of false doctrines crept into the church from heathenism.

Confusion came first on this matter of love; then many other ideas not taught in the Bible followed, such as Sunday for the sabbath in place of the true Lord's Day, the seventh day; the reverence for images, the veneration and virtual worship of the Virgin Mary, and others.

God cares about which day we keep, not because of a legalistic concern for details, but because only through "keeping the truth" can we receive and rest in His love, and receive Christ fully. He has "blessed . . . and hallowed" only one day as His holy sabbath (Exodus 20:11). There we find rest of soul. No salvation comes from any counterfeit, only in "keeping the truth" (Isaiah 26:2).

1. Which day of the week is God's appointed rest day? Exodus 20:8-11, and Genesis 2:1-3.

ANSWER: _____.

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Here is a typical month in our calendar:

Genesis tells how our week of seven days began: "And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made [creation of the world]; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day,

and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all his work which God created and made" (Genesis 2:3,4). Each day consists of "the evening and the morning" (Genesis 1:5,8,13,23,31), so that the sabbath, God's holy day, is "from even [sunset] unto even [sunset]" (Leviticus 23:32). This coincides with our Friday sunset to Saturday sunset (see Luke 23:54-56, *The New English Bible*, also the *Good News Bible*). Based on these Biblical facts, the weekly cycle has been handed down to us from Eden, with Sunday being the first day of the week and Saturday the seventh.

2. *Every Christian wants to accept Jesus as his true Example. Which day of the week did Jesus observe as the sabbath? Luke 4:16.*

ANSWER: "As His custom was, He went into the synagogue _____."

3. *Is there a day that New Testament Christians should observe as a rest day? Revelation 1:10.*

ANSWER: "I was in the Spirit on the _____,"

4. *Which day does the Bible specifically designate as the "the Lord's" or "His day"? Isaiah 58:13,14.*

ANSWER: "If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on _____, ... The mouth of the Lord hath spoken."

The sabbath is a day that belongs only to God Himself. It is referred to in Scripture as "My sabbaths" (Exodus 31:13; Ezekiel 20:12 and 44:24), and "the sabbath of the LORD thy God" (Exodus 20:10; Leviticus 23:3; Deuteronomy 5:14). Christ, when accused by the Jews of breaking the sabbath, said that He was the Lord of the sabbath (Mark 2:23, 24, 27, 28).

5. *According to Jesus, is it possible that human beings can call another day the Lord's Day? Mark 2:27, 28 and Matthew 12:8.*

ANSWER: "The Son of man is Lord even of _____"

The popular idea that Saturday is the Jewish sabbath and Sunday the Christian sabbath is a contradiction of the Scriptures. Men may choose one day in seven to rest or even worship God, designating it as the "Lord's day," but this must not be confused with the Scriptural sabbath or Lord's day. Man, for whom this world was created, played no part in the creation of this earth. It was all the work of God. Even though God's sole purpose in creating this world was for the benefit of man, in no way did our first parents contribute towards this creation. When they first opened their eyes at the end of the sixth day, they saw a perfect and finished creation. All that they did and could do was to enter into the joy of a perfect and finished work done for them by God.

6. *The book of Acts records a total of 84 seventh-day sabbaths observed by the apostle Paul. Look at a few examples in Acts 13:14, 44; 16:13; 17:2; 18:4,11.*

FILL IN THE BLANKS: "Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and _____ reasoned with them out of the scriptures." (Acts 17:2) In the Gentile city of Philippi, "on the _____ day (Acts 16:13, margin) we went out of the city by a river side, where ..." Acts 16:13.

Has time been lost? Is our seventh-day the same as the one that Jesus and His apostles so faithfully observed? History says there has never been the slightest change in the weekly cycle since the days of Christ. Astronomers can vouch for this. Neither was there any lost time before Christ, for He and His apostles would not have been so confident about the true "Lord's Day" if the weekly cycle had been lost since the days of Adam.

Does the New Testament Say That Sunday Became the Lord's Day?

7. *There are three days pinpointed in the story of Jesus' death and resurrection: "Good Friday" is observed by Roman Catholic and many Protestant churches in honor of Christ's death; and Sunday, they say, they observe in honor of His resurrection. According to Scripture, which day is the sabbath? Luke 23:54-56 and Luke 24:1.*

ANSWER: "The sabbath drew on" as Friday drew to a close. Before "the first day of the week" dawned, Christ's followers "rested _____ according to the _____."

Let us look at this passage as translated in the American Bible Society's *Good News Bible*: "It was Friday, and the Sabbath was about to begin ... On the Sabbath they rested, as the Law commanded. Very early on Sunday morning the women went to the grave..." The Lord's true rest day is the day that comes between Friday and Sunday.

The death of Christ on the cross brought to an end His atoning sacrifice on behalf of sinful men. When all was fulfilled He cried out, "It is finished" (John 19:30). By this He meant that the sacrifice that brings us salvation was finished. Christians generally recognize that the death of Christ took place on the afternoon of the sixth day (i.e. Friday), so that throughout the seventh day (i.e., Saturday) Christ rested from all His work.

8. *Could Jesus change the Law, or move the sabbath to some other day? Matthew 5:17-19.*

ANSWER: _____.

The Goodspeed translation reads: "I tell you, as long as heaven and earth endure, not one dotting of an 'i' or the crossing of a 't' will be dropped until it is all observed."

The righteousness that the law demands is beyond the reach of sinful man, and therefore our only hope is found in Christ and His righteousness. We can receive it only by faith when we put away all confidence in the flesh (our own ability) and rest entirely in His saving grace. This is the true meaning of the sabbath rest.

**In Christ
We Have—**
Rest
Blessings
Sanctification
Holiness

**The Sabbath Shows Us
How We Receive—**
Rest
Blessings
Sanctification
Holiness

We see that the sabbath is a sign of our union with our loving Saviour, and that we are "accepted in the Beloved" (Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:8-11; Ezekiel 20:12, 20; Ephesians 1:6).

As we rest on the sabbath day, we testify to the world that we are on God's side, choosing to live in conformity to His commandments. Thus we recognize as our Sovereign the God who made the world in six days and rested on the seventh, and the Saviour who has redeemed us, again resting on the sabbath day. The sabbath is the clasp which unites God and His people.

9. Did the apostles change the Law or move the sabbath to some other day? (There is no text that says they even dared to try to do so.) According to Paul, can we take tradition or the commandments of men as our guide? 2 Timothy 3:16,17.

ANSWER: "All _____ is given by _____ of God, ... That the man of God may be _____, throughly [thoroughly] furnished unto _____ good works."

Since Sunday-keeping is not a part of the "good works" that please the Lord, it is not "profitable for doctrine" or "instruction in righteousness," therefore, it is contrary to genuine "righteousness by faith."

10. Is there any hint of Sunday considered as holy in the New Testament? Here are the eight texts that mention the "first day of the week." See if you can find such a hint: Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1, 2, 9; Luke 24:1; John 20:1,19; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2.

YOUR ANSWER: _____.

Most of these texts only mention that Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week. But the apostles taught that baptism, not the observance of the first day, is the true memorial of Christ's glorious resurrection (see Romans 6:3-7). The meeting mentioned in Acts 20 occurred on Saturday night, the dark part of the Bible "first day." The *Good News Bible* says: "On Saturday evening we gathered together for the fellowship meal." The "collection" mentioned in 1 Corinthians 16:1-3 had nothing to do with public meetings. It was a special collection: "Lay by him in store," Paul said. The GNB says, "On the first day of the week each of you must put aside some money, in proportion to what he has earned." They figured their accounts on Sunday, and laid something aside either at home or at their place of usual business, in preparation for Paul's special visit.

11. What sabbath blessing still remains for all who have faith in Jesus? Hebrews 4:9.

ANSWER: "There remaineth therefore a _____ to the people of God."

This verse should read, "There remains therefore a sabbath observance for the people of God."

12. What does true sabbath rest signify for those who believe in Jesus? Hebrews 4:3,4.

ANSWER: "For we which have believed do _____, as He said, if they shall _____"

We must never confuse the term "rest" as applied to the sabbath, with the common idea of holidays. The latter has to do with sleeping or relaxing, while entering into God's rest has a spiritual meaning. It involves total dependence on God's perfect and finished salvation. To be more specific, it means complete surrender to Christ our righteousness.

13. What does the Lord say about observing any customs such as Sunday observance, which are not taught in His Word? Matthew 15:3, 8, 9.

ANSWER: "Why do ye also _____ of God by your tradition. ... In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines _____." (Compare Matthew 7:21-23).

There is truth and there is falsehood; there is a true Christ and a false christ; there is a true Holy Spirit, and there is the counterfeit. There is a true sabbath, and there is a counterfeit.

14. Of what is the sabbath forever a sign? Ezekiel 20:12, 20.

ANSWER: "That they might know _____"

15. What beautiful future lies before us "in Christ"? Isaiah 66:22, 23; Revelation 22:1-4.

ANSWER: _____

Behind the sabbath rest for this sinful world lies the final goal of the gospel—a perfect and finished re-creation: "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, saith the LORD, . . . from one sabbath to another [weekly sabbath], shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the LORD" (Isaiah 66:22, 23, also Revelation 21:1-4).

This work of redemption was formed in the mind of God before the foundation of this world. It was fulfilled in Christ, and will be fully realized at the end of the millennium in the

lives of those who believe. "Therefore if any man be in Christ [united to Him by faith], he is a new creature [creation]: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

The Law of God in the New Testament

I "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve" (Matthew 4:10).

II "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." "Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone graven by art and man's device" (1 John 5:21; Acts 17:29).

III "That the name of God and His doctrine be not blasphemed" (1 Timothy 6:1).

IV "Pray ye that your flight be not in winter, neither on the sabbath day." "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath." "For He spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all His works." "There remaineth therefore a keeping of a sabbath to the people of God. For he that is entered into His rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His." "For by Him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth" (Matthew 24:20; Mark 2:27, 28; Hebrews 4:4, 9, 10 margin; Colossians 1:16).

V "Honor thy father and thy mother" (Matthew 19:19).

VI "Thou shalt not kill" (Romans 13:9).

VII "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Matthew 19:18).

VIII "Thou shalt not steal" (Romans 13:9).

IX "Thou shalt not bear false witness" (Romans 13:9).

X "Thou shalt not covet" (Romans 7:7).

16. *Does your heart desire to respond to God's grace, and to "enter into His rest"?*

ANSWER: _____.

"Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you." 1 Peter 5:7 "Pray without ceasing." 1 Thessalonians 5:17

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