

Sabbath confusion

- ✓ Did Jesus violate the Sabbath?
- ✓ Do Sabbath laws apply today?
- ✓ Is Sunday a Christian Sabbath?
- ✓ Is Sabbath Rest about a day or is it about an inner spiritual posture?
- ✓ Is this a fundamental of our faith?
- ✓ What does “rest” mean?

Exodus 20

“⁸ 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 a sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, . . . ¹¹ For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.”

Sabbath calls us to respect the finished work of God in creation.

The creation narrative in Genesis works to a point - Sabbath.



At the heart of Israel is Torah

At the heart of Torah is Sabbath



Sabbath was given to Israel as a sign.



Exodus 31

“You shall surely observe My sabbaths; for this is **a sign between Me and you** throughout your generations, that you may know that I am **the Lord who sanctifies you.**”

Jewish zeal for the Law went beyond the letter and spirit of the Law.

ORAL

Exodus 34:21
 “You shall work six days, but on the seventh day you shall rest;”

Exodus 35:2
 “whoever does any work on it shall be put to death”

TRADITION

Jesus respected the letter and spirit of the Law but not the oral tradition.

Mark 2

“²³ And it came about that He was passing through the grain fields on the Sabbath, and His disciples began to make their way along while picking the heads of grain. ²⁴ And the Pharisees were saying to Him, “See here, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?” ²⁵ And He said to them, “Have you never read what David did when he was in need and became hungry, he and his companions: ²⁶ how he entered the house of God in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the consecrated bread, which is not lawful for anyone to eat except the priests, and he gave it also to those who were with him?” ²⁷ And He was saying to them, “**The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.** ²⁸ Consequently, the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.””

Mark 3

“¹ And He entered again into a synagogue; and a man was there with a withered hand. ² And they were watching Him to see if He would heal him on the Sabbath, in order that they might accuse Him. ³ And He said to the man with the withered hand, “Rise and come forward!” ⁴ And He said to them, “**Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save a life or to kill?**” But they kept silent. ⁵ And after looking around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, He said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored. ⁶ And the Pharisees went out and immediately began taking counsel with the Herodians against Him, as to how they might destroy Him.”

Observations

1. **Jesus ignores the traditions of the law but not the spirit of the law.**
2. **Jesus seems to taunt the religious leaders with his words and deeds.**
3. **Jesus is not the one on trial here.**
4. **Jesus is showing us how to keep the Sabbath.**

Three popular views

1. Saturday - Sabbath as holy.

- This is the Jewish position as outlined in the Old Testament.
- It is also the position of a small number of Christian groups.

2. Sunday - Sabbath as Lord's day.

- This is the predominant official Christian view.
- This reflects the worship pattern for much of the church.

3. Spiritual - Sabbath as faith / work.

- This is suggested in Hebrews, Romans, and Colossians.
- It is the real point of the Sabbath.

The spiritual-Sabbath position

- It was defined and ordained as a celebration of the finished work of God - (creation. Gen.2:2-3)
- Its observance is tied to the Law of Moses. Ex.20:8-11
- As a day it was a sign to Israel only. Ex.31:12-17
- Jesus challenged the Sabbath law tradition, while honoring the spirit of Sabbath.
- The change in days of worship mirrored the change in covenants.
 - **The Mosaic Law had ceased.** 2 Cor.3:7-14
 - **Paul advocated freedom with respect to Sabbath practices.** Rom.14:5-8, Col.2:16-17, Gal.4:9-10
 - **The true Sabbath is a life of faith in God's work for us in Christ.** Heb.4:1-16
 - **The Sabbath (day) is the only commandment not endorsed in the epistles.**

*Sabbath calls us to respect the finished work of God at creation **and at the Cross.***



John 19:30 “It is finished!”



Sunday - the first day of the week commemorates the New Covenant.

Hebrews 8:13

“When He said, “A New covenant,” He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.”

Hebrews 7:12

“For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also.”

The **early church** met on the first day of the week (Sunday) out of respect for the finished work of Christ.

Acts 20:7

“On **the first day of the week**, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul began talking to them intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight.”



Example of Jesus being IN but not OF the world.

Bring a spirit of rest to your work in a restless world.

Implications

- ✓ The Christian life is best understood not so much in terms of rules of conduct as in a **faith relationship** with the living Christ.
- ✓ A technical understanding of God’s law without a **faith relationship** with Christ will make an anxious pharisee.
- ✓ A special & regular day of rest, reflection, and renewal is wise but not a substitute for finding your hope and life in a **faith relationship** with Christ.
- ✓ The hope of rest for man’s soul comes not from the law of the Sabbath but from a **faith relationship** with the Lord of he Sabbath.

Some applications for our day

- ✓ Walk in **grace** toward self and others.
- ✓ Demonstrate **freedom** to give, serve, and love without fear, anxiety, or selfishness.
- ✓ Bring the **Sabbath** to your family, work, and other relationships.
- ✓ Make **time** to worship - reflect, give thanks, and encourage others.