

Intro: Likely the same Sabbath as 2:23-28, where the object lesson is fleshed out in a real-life scenario: “The Sabbath was made to meet the needs of people, & not people to meet the requirements of the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord, even over the Sabbath.” By doing good & saving life, the Son of Man validates His authority as Lord of the Sabbath. If David had authority to do what was apparently unlawful, how much more the Son of Man! If David was not chastised for doing good to his men, how much less should the true Messiah be for doing ‘good’ to His people?

Our text this morning shows us 3 important things:

- 1. The Sabbath’s Purpose** – to provide Restoration & Rest for God’s Creation
 - ⇒ Defines ‘doing good’ & saving life (“Good News” of 3:1-6 [cf. 1:1])
 - ⇒ B/c of sin & the Fall, restoration *must* precede rest!
 - ⇒ Goes back to Gen. 2:1-3 – God ‘rested’ w/ His completed creation.
 - ⇒ No mention of Sabbath, or rest, but 7th day – associated w/ *completion*.
 - ⇒ But in Gen. 3 this ‘rest’ was disrupted by man’s sin. Ever since, all of creation, including this man’s shrunken & paralyzed [unrestored] hand, has been groaning for restoration & rest w/ their Creator.
 - ⇒ Why *most* of Jesus’ healings occur on the Sabbath! It only makes sense that God brings about *restoration & wholeness* on this day.
 - ⇒ The Sabbath is a type for *salvation* (cf. Matt. 11:28ff.).
 - ⇒ Cf. the link of the Sabbath w/ the previous salvation narratives.
- 2. The Sabbath’s Lord** – Jesus Christ, the Son of Man
 - ⇒ Ultimately, it pointed beyond itself to its truest expression, Jesus Christ
 - ⇒ At its root, the Sabbath was about *re-creation* (not recreation).
 - ⇒ Man brought unrest & chaos into the world through his sin. Only God could bring rest & order back through His righteousness.
 - ⇒ As Lord, the Son of Man is able to provide restoration & rest for His His creation as He as 2nd Adam reverses the curse incurred by the 1st.
 - ⇒ John 5:39 – “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness to Me.”
 - ⇒ *True* rest is found only in the Son (Matt. 11:29; Heb. 4:3)
 - ⇒ The Sabbath is but a shadow of the true substance (Col. 2:16-17)
 - ⇒ In 2:23-28, Jesus uses the example of David, Israel’s anointed king, to show the Pharisees that in their midst stood someone w/ an even greater authority than David. The difference between ‘lord’ & ‘Lord.’
 - ⇒ Just as in 2:10-12, Jesus heals by a mere Word to authenticate His lofty & authoritative claim, He does so again, providing tangible proof that His claim as Lord, even of the Sabbath, a title no mere man would dare claim! (cf. “My Sabbath” in Exo. 31:13; Lev. 19:3; Eze. 20:12-13, etc.)
 - ⇒ John 5:17 – Just as God the Father is working till now, so is God the Son.
- 3. The Sabbath’s Enemies**
 - ⇒ In fulfilling the purpose of the Sabbath [restoration], Jesus proves that He, the Son of Man, was indeed Lord over all, including the Sabbath.

- ⇒ Since the Sabbath was merely a shadow of the true substance, its *primary purpose* was to point Israel to put their faith in Him as Lord.
- ⇒ Instead of repenting & believing the gospel – the Good News of restoration thru the Son of Man – their hearts are hardened (Isa. 6:8-10) & accuse the One whose authority transcends that of both David & Moses
- ⇒ *This* is the sad irony: instead of celebrating the new wine of forgiveness that the Bridegroom has brought, they are griping & murmuring like their forefathers of old; like them they are doing harm & killing on the Sabbath
- ⇒ [See Watts] 3:4 is an allusion to Deut. 30:15, part of Moses’ last speech to Israel in their exodus into the Promised Land. His appeal in these 2 chapters is for covenant faithfulness & calls for a decision from the people. If they, like their forefathers, disobey, they will be cut off from the promises of God. But if they turn to Him w/ all their heart, He will have compassion on them & restore them back to the Land.
- ⇒ Here, then, in the new exodus, & after an awesome display of mighty deeds & authoritative words, Jesus’ question, like that of Moses, calls for a decision. Both the Torah & Jesus offered Israel life & good. Thus to reject Jesus is to reject the heart of the Torah & choose death.
- ⇒ Despite all of Jesus’ authoritative words & works, He too was rejected, as Yahweh was by Israel of old. Now the same question is posed to the reader: who do you say Jesus is, and what will you do w/ Him?

Some Gleaned Principles from Scripture:

- The Sabbath controversy must be interpreted in light of its context in 2:18-22.
 - ⇒ Thus, ALL of the OT *must* be interpreted in light of Christ’s coming. As Lord, He is the true Lawgiver, & thus has the final & ultimate authority to transcend & define what Law-keeping really entails (not Moses).
 - ⇒ The new wine bursts the old, rigid wine skins of the old covenant (Moses)
 - ⇒ Jesus not only fulfills the concepts of sacred space (Temple), people (priesthood), & acts (sacrifices), but also sacred time (Sabbaths, festivals)
 - ⇒ Therefore, we read the Bible as *Christians*. Heb. 1:1-3; Matt. 5:17
- In OT, God commanded that the willful breaking of the Sabbath was punishable by death. The irony is that the bridegroom will be violently taken away, not for breaking the Sabbath, but for *truly* keeping it [i.e. by doing good & saving life]. Further NT witness goes even further to show that it is only by the sacrificial death of the Son of Man that God again is able to enter into His rest w/ His creation, for the Son’s work has truly been finished/completed (John 19:30). Indeed, the Bridegroom must 1st be taken away as Isaiah prophesied (53:8).
- We enter into God’s rest by faith in Christ (Heb. 4:3, note previous context). Sabbath keeping is at its heart a heart issue. How many of us in unbelief ‘keep’ the Sabbath outwardly, yet miss it inwardly? Only trusting in Jesus brings rest.
- Hardened hearts simultaneously grieve & anger the Lord Jesus.

Conclusion: This fallen world filled w/ chaos is in dire need of restoration & rest. Perhaps your heart is in the same condition & you are longing for a true & lasting

rest that nothing will be able to quench. Unbeliever, come to Christ for the only rest that will satisfy your soul (Matt. 11:28-29). Believer, look again to the cross & remember the rest that Christ has purchased for you & rest in His finished work. However, like Israel of old, you must choose today either blessing or cursing!