

## INTRODUCTION

The Ten Commandments are so prominent in the Old Testament and New Testament scriptures, and are so recommended to us by Protestant Christian tradition, that we believe it is right to take them seriously, to learn them ourselves, and to teach them to our children and to the Lord's disciples.

In working through The Ten Commandments, we have come to consider the fourth commandment of the ten. Because the fourth commandment is the most complex of the ten, and because it is so often misunderstood, I am devoting substantial time to expounding it for you.

The fourth commandment deals with sabbath-keeping and work, which we know to have been instituted at creation for the whole human race, when God made arrangements for our happiness: work and sabbath-keeping, along with marriage and childbearing. When we sinned in Adam, we caused those arrangements to be marred by our sin. God, being gracious to us, allowed us to keep using those arrangements. But, as the generations went by, men and women from long ago showed that they would dishonor God and injure one another by their repeated mis-use of those arrangements.

So we rejoice to see those things addressed by God in The Ten Commandments.

- Remember the sabbath day
- Honor thy father and thy mother
- Thou shalt not commit adultery
- Thou shalt not steal

The Ten Commandments convict us of sin regarding those things, leading us to seek forgiveness from God, which He provides in Jesus Christ. The Ten Commandments regulate men's conduct, so that society in general can continue to use work and sabbath keeping, marriage and childbearing, without the mis-use of them completely ruining them for our race. The Ten Commandments also guide us, the disciples of Jesus Christ, so that we can enjoy those things in this life, resisting temptation to ruin ourselves and our families by sinful mis-use of those things.

Because of how it seems that men easily forget about the sabbath day, and the relation between work and sabbath keeping, we find it very fitting that God should command us to remember the sabbath day.

As people think about sabbath keeping, and as men teach others what they think about it, confusion often ensues when some things seem to be attached to sabbath keeping that really are not attached to it. So, to clear up some of that confusion, we considered together what things we, the disciples of Jesus Christ in the New Testament, do NOT think that the fourth commandment commands us.

- We do not think that our sabbath keeping today is attached to the penalties, rules, and precedents from Israel's Old Covenant legal system. That legal system is gone, but the sabbath keeping God gave us at creation remains.
- We do not think that our sabbath keeping today is attached to the Old Covenant ceremonial system of festivals or holy days, with its many sabbaths. That ceremonial system is gone, but the sabbath keeping God ordained at creation remains.
- We do not think that our sabbath keeping today is attached to any man-made system of rules illegitimately imposed on people. Man-made sabbath-keeping rules never were binding on us, and we rightly reject them. But the holy, blessed sabbath keeping God gave us at creation remains.

We are the disciples of Jesus Christ. We recognize Him as the greatest man who ever lived, and as the very Son of God. We know that He lived the perfect life of love that no one else ever has lived. We know that everything He said was the truth, and that He spoke the truth like no one ever had done before. We know that He made the ultimate sacrifice when He died on the cross to suffer what we deserved, so that we could be saved from the wrath of God. We have turned from following the ways of the world to follow Jesus Christ. We believe in Him; we trust ourselves to Him; all our hope for the future is that He will come back for us one day, and we will be with Him forever.

Until He comes back, we want to follow His example, to imitate Him, to walk as He walked. We want to think His thoughts after Him, to be conformed to His image.

Regarding any commandment in God's law, we know that Jesus obeyed it perfectly.

-the ancient Israelites probably didn't obey it perfectly; their example is mostly a warning what we should NOT do

-the Pharisees and Sadducees from the time Jesus came probably didn't obey it; Jesus warned us to beware their hypocrisy regarding God's law

-other men, whether in history or in the present, don't obey God's commandments perfectly

But of our Lord Jesus we know that He never sinned, but obeyed God's commandments in all righteousness, blamelessly, perfectly.

So our main concern regarding the fourth commandment, regarding sabbath keeping, is to know what our Lord Jesus did, that we may follow in His steps. So we want to learn from the gospels what our Lord Jesus did to obey the commandment.

But there is a catch to that. Once we know what our Lord Jesus did, how do we know exactly what we are to do to imitate Him? Jesus lived as a Jew in Galilee and Judaea 2,000 years ago during the days of the Old Covenant. How are we---who are not Jews, who live far from where He lived, so many centuries later, when the Old Covenant has expired and the New Covenant has been established---how are we to follow His example? Are we to do exactly as He did, or somewhat differently? How are we to know? Who can tell us, who is sure to steer us in the right direction? Whom can we trust to show us the right way on this?

## TEXT

Luke 4:16-21

## BODY

- I. We Read the Fourth Commandment About the Sabbath Day - Ex 20:8-11
  - A. We want to obey it
  - B. We have questions about how

We read the fourth commandment about the sabbath day

- II. We Read What Our Lord Jesus Did To Obey The Commandment - Luke 4:16-21
- A. The Bible says many things about the sabbath day
  - B. We know that what Jesus did is the perfect obeying of it all
  - C. He is our Lord; we are His disciples; we want to follow Him
  - D. How did our Lord Jesus keep the sabbath?
    1. He went into the synagogue
      - a) synagogue referred both to the building and to the people coming together
      - b) from the verb G4863 *sunago* - compound word together + lead, bring = bring together = assemble
    2. He read and preached from the scriptures
    3. He did more on the sabbath day, but for today we'll keep it to just those things
    4. He did not stay home
    5. He did not seek solitude
  - E. However, there are some things about His example that leave us still with questions
    1. He lived under the Old Covenant, which is now expired
    2. He lived where most people were Jews, and there was a society-wide observance of the Sabbath Day
    3. He kept the Sabbath on the seventh day of the week

We read the fourth commandment about the sabbath day

We read what Lord Jesus did to obey the commandment

But how can we know what to do, to follow His example of obeying the fourth commandment, when we live in a context so different from His?

- III. We the Disciples of Jesus Christ Learn How to Follow Him Largely Through His Apostle Paul, Whom He Appointed for that Purpose
- A. [Jesus speaking about Paul] Acts 9:15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:
  - B. Acts 22:21 And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.
  - C. Galatians 2:9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.
  - D. 1 Corinthians 11:1-2 Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. (2) Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.
    1. Paul is our more immediate example to follow
    2. Paul delivers Christ's ordinances to us
  - E. 1 Corinthians 14:37 If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.
  - F. Paul gives the same orders to all the churches
    1. 1 Corinthians 7:17 But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. And so ordain I in all churches.
    2. 1 Corinthians 16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.

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We learn how to follow Jesus Christ's example in our different context largely through His apostle Paul, whom He appointed for that purpose

IV. What Example Did Paul Set for Us to Follow Regarding the Sabbath?

Acts 20:6-7 And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days. (7) And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

- A. Paul and the disciples of Jesus Christ came together
  1. G4863 *sunago*
  2. they assembled; they congregated
- B. Paul and the disciples came together not on the last day, the seventh day of the week, but on the first day of the week
- C. Paul and the congregation in Troas did essentially what Jesus and the synagogue in Galilee did
  1. Jesus and Paul preached
  2. the congregation listened
  3. (there is more, but just this for now)
- D. Since this is what Paul and the congregation did together, we can understand that it was right and not wrong
- E. Since Paul ordained the same thing in all the congregations, we can know this is what he ordains for this congregation, also

## CONCLUSION

We read the fourth commandment about the sabbath day

We read what Lord Jesus did to obey the commandment

But how can we know what to do, to follow His example of obeying the fourth commandment, when we live in a context so different from His?

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What Jesus did regarding the synagogue, we do regarding the church.

What Jesus did on the seventh day of the week, we do on the first day of the week.

Stephen - Call to Worship and Opening Prayer - Psalm 42

~~Thad~~ Jeff - Scripture Reading - Exodus 20:8-11

Alex - Congregational Prayer

Angie - Prelude "As the Deer"

Angie - Trinity 676 "More About Jesus"

Ava - Trinity 547 "My Jesus, I Love Thee"

Ava - Trinity 186 "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" - Alvin lead

We Jesus taught about sabbath keeping, we apply to our sabbath keeping.

We study what our Lord's apostles taught us about the first day of the week, and understand that to be our Lord's will regarding our sabbath keeping.

If we see the apostle Paul and the congregation assembling on the first day of the week to do what our Lord Jesus and His congregation did on the seventh day of the week, we can conclude that

-we rightly obey the fourth commandment not by sabbatizing on the seventh day of the week, but by sabbatizing on the first day of the week

-we rightly obey the fourth commandment not by staying home, but by assembling with the congregation

-the rest of the Sabbath is not a rest from all activity, but a rest from some normal activities in order to be able to engage in some special activities

We can read The Ten Commandments and know what the fourth commandment says.

We can read the gospels and know what our Lord Jesus did to obey it.

But how do we know what to do, to follow the example our Lord Jesus has set for us regarding sabbath keeping, when we live in a context so different from His?

We the disciples of Jesus Christ learn how to follow Him in our different context largely through His apostle Paul, whom He appointed for that purpose

Luke 4:16-21 So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. 17 And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: 18 "THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE HAS ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR; HE HAS SENT ME TO HEAL THE BROKENHEARTED, TO PROCLAIM LIBERTY TO THE CAPTIVES AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET AT LIBERTY THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED; 19 TO PROCLAIM THE ACCEPTABLE YEAR OF THE LORD." 20 Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the

attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. 21 And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

Acts 20:6-7 But we sailed away from Philippi after the Days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days joined them at Troas, where we stayed seven days. 7 Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.

Our Lord Jesus lived in a society that observed the sabbath day.

But His apostle Paul travelled in a society, and many of the early Christians lived in a society that did not observe the sabbath day, and certainly not on the first day of the week.

So, from the instructions and accounts of the apostle we can learn what are essential practices. From the Lord Jesus we can learn what are practices if the situation allows.

Gospel or evangelical sabbath keeping

Isaiah 56:1-7 Thus saith the LORD, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. 2 Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. 3 Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree. 4 For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; 5 Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. 6 Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to

the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; 7 Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.

Is 56:1 ...my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.

Henry:

the great salvation wrought out by Jesus Christ...typified by the salvation of the Jews from Sennacherib or out of Babylon

The law revealed that righteousness of God by which all sinners stand condemned, but the gospel reveals that by which all believers stand acquitted.

Trapp:

Christ...himself is here called not only God's salvation, but his righteousness

Poole:

that eminent salvation by the Messiah

Gill:

Christ and his salvation...published in his Gospel

Barnes:

the language is appropriate to the coming of the kingdom of God under the Messiah, and the whole scope of the passage requires us to understand it of that event.

Though the actual coming of the Messiah at the time of the exile was at a period comparatively remote, yet the commencement of the great work of their deliverance was near at hand. They were soon to be rescued, and this rescue was to be but the first in the train of deliverances that would result in the entire redemption of the people of God, and was to be the public pledge that all that he had promised of the redemption of the world should be certainly effected.

Is 56:2 ...that keepeth the sabbath

Calvin:

sabbath...synecdoche, the Sabbath includes all the exercises of religion.

keeping his hand...synecdoche, to describe the duties which men owe to each other.

Geneva: Under the Sabbath he comprehends the whole service of God and true religion.

Trapp:

i.e., that performeth the duties of both tables, of piety and of charity; that maketh conscience of keeping the Sabbath especially. The Fourth Commandment standeth fitly in the heart of the Decalogue, and between the two tables of the law, as having an influence into both

Poole:

And the sabbath seems to be put here, as sacrifice is elsewhere, synecdochically for the whole worship of God, whereof this is an eminent part, and the bond of all the rest.

Henry:

But it being required more generally of man, and the son of man, it intimates that sabbath-sanctification should be a duty in gospel times, when the bounds of the church should be enlarged and other rites and ceremonies abolished.

Gill:

This is put for the whole of instituted worship under the Gospel dispensation, and for any day or time in which the church of Christ meet together for religious worship:

Is 56:4 ...the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths...

Deu 23:1

Henry:

...as the taking down of the partition wall, contained in ordinances, admitted the Gentiles, so it let in likewise those that had been kept out by ceremonial pollutants.

Isaiah 58:8-14 Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy reward. 9 Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; 10 And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday: 11 And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not. 12 And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in. 13 If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: 14 Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

What have we learned together so far?

The Ten Commandments are so prominent in the Old Testament and New Testament scriptures, and are so recommended to us by Protestant Christian tradition, that we believe it is right to take them seriously, to learn them ourselves, and to teach them to our children and to the Lord's disciples.

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Those truths now being fresh in our minds, I am eager

our connection to sabbath keeping through our Lord Jesus Christ and His apostle

We believe that the fourth commandment commands us to do as our Lord Jesus Christ did, and as His apostle showed us to do.