

The Sabbath Day

{Part One}

Exodus 20:8-11

Intro:

The Doctrine of the Sabbath is one of the most controversial among Evangelicals today.

Historically, Reformed Christians almost uniformly held to the biblical continuity of the Sabbath day for the Christian Church.

But in recent years a new view has arisen which has challenged this established position among the Reformed family.

This new view has been spearheaded in recent years by the “Sovereign Grace Movement”

One Example of this is Gary D. Long of “Sovereign Grace Ministries”

We will make some reference to his arguments this evening.

Our hope is to show this evening that the Scripture clearly teaches the ongoing principle of one day in seven to be a day set aside for the Public, Family and Private worship of God.

Our method will be simple and clear. We will look at the key scriptures of the Old and New Testaments in order to establish a broad biblical view of this Doctrine.

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Argument 1

The Sabbath is a Creation Ordinance.

Read Genesis 2: 1-3

Gen 2:1 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

Gen 2:2 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.

Gen 2:3 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.

Q1. What Work did God end and rest from in verses 2 & 3?

Answer = The work of Creation.

*and he **rested** on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.*

***rested** from all his work which God created and made.*

“rested” = “SHAWBATH” from which we get the English word Sabbath.

{God did not rest from his work of Upholding all things by the word of his Power}

Now:

Let me at this point quote from Gary D. Long:

He writes:

"if it can be established that God did not give the Sabbath commandment to Adam in Eden before the fall (not to mention whether "a one-day-in-seven worship cycle principle" is inherent in mankind by nature), then the affirmation that God has appointed one day in seven for a holy sabbath as "a positive, moral, and perpetual commandment, binding all men in all ages" is biblically refuted."

Then he Goes on to give his first argument:

1. The Bible Does Not Teach That Adam Received a Positive Commandment from God to Observe the Seventh-day Sabbath, Much Less That He Knew by Nature to Observe One Day in Seven as a Sabbath.

a. If Adam had been given a positive command by God at creation to observe the Sabbath (or even if he had known by nature that he was to rest and worship God in a special way one day out of every seven), he would have been morally bound to keep it before the seventh day was even created, much less sanctified by God as a day of rest.

Now,

Let us ask the question:

Q. Is it only when God gives a positive command that men are morally bound?

What about the rest of the Ten Commandments which had not been given at this stage?

Q. Could Adam have murdered Eve and not be guilty?

Q. What about Cain?

There was no positive command to bring an animal as a sacrifice to God!

But there was God's positive example!

Gen 3:21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

Therefore Cain was "bound" and "morally responsible" to follow God's example as if he had given a command!

He goes on to make a childish comment:

"Since Adam was created on the sixth day he would have by positive command or nature observed a Sabbath day of rest on Friday, seven days after his creation, not on Saturday, the seventh day."

Argument 2,

The Sabbath Commanded & Observed before the Giving of the Decalogue

Note,

The 10 Commands were given the 3rd month after the Exodus from Egypt.

But in chapter 16 which was the middle of the second month we read:

{Read Exodus 16: 25-30}

Note esp:

*Exo 16:29 See, for that the LORD **hath given** you the sabbath, therefore he **giveth you** on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.*

See the contrast between the past tense with regard to the Sabbath and the present tense with regard to the Manna!

Argument 3,

The Sabbath is part of the Moral Law which is binding on all men in all Ages!

First,

We will look at the Moral law in general.

Gary Long disagrees with this he writes:

“The Whole Decalogue Is a Covenant Given Only to Israel”

{This is blatant Dispensationalism}

It is:

A} Binding on all men {not just Israel} to prove their Guilt:

Rom 3:19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

B} To Prove its powerlessness to Justify:

Rom 3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

C} Its Binding on all Believers in the Realm of Sanctification:

*Rom 3:31 Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: **yea, we establish the law.***

Note,

This also shows the distinction between the moral, Ceremonial and Judicial Laws!

Faith does not establish the Ceremonial Laws of the OT!

But it does establish the Moral Law!

Also;

*Rom 6:22 But now being made free from sin, and **become servants to God,** ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.*

Also:

Mat 5:17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

Mat 5:18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

Mat 5:19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Mat 5:20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Also:

Jer 31:33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Secondly,

The Sabbath specifically:

Exodus 20: 8-11

*Exo 20:8 **Remember** the sabbath day, to keep it holy.*

*Exo 20:9 **Six days** shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:*

*Exo 20:10 But the seventh day is **the sabbath of the LORD thy God**: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:*

*Exo 20:11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and **rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.***

Note,

Three things here:

- 1} The Remembrance {looking back}
- 2} The Reasonableness {Six days out of seven to do our work and desires}
- 3} The Recognition {It is God's Sabbath day not ours}
- 4} The Reason {It is based on Creation}

Argument 4,

Even in the OT the Sabbath is presented in the context of God's Salvation, Righteousness and Joy!

{We have seen this already in the giving of the 10 Commands = given to a redeemed people}

Read Isaiah 56: 1-8

Also:

Isaiah 58: 13-14

We must contrast how these passages speak of the Sabbath as part of God's Moral law with the following:

*Psa 40:6 **Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire**; mine ears hast thou opened: **burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.***
Psa 40:7 Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me,
*Psa 40:8 I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, **thy law is within my heart.***

Our Confession of faith makes this distinction between the Moral Law and the Ceremonial and Judicial or Civil Laws.

See Chapter 19: 3-5

Argument 5,

The Purpose of the Sabbath is The Blessing of Man.

Read Mark 2: 23-28

Note 1,

“Made” not “Commanded”

Note 2,

“For Man” not just for Israel!!!

Note 3,

“Lord of the Sabbath”

Q. Is Our Lord still Lord of the Sabbath?

This is one of the Reasons the Christian Sabbath is called “The Lord’s Day”

David Brown notes:

*“In what sense now is the Son of man Lord of the sabbath day? **Not surely to abolish it - that surely were a strange_ lordship,** especially just after saying that it was made or instituted for MAN - but to own it, to interpret it, to preside over it, and to ennoble it, by merging it in the “Lord’s Day” (Rev_1:10), breathing into it an air of liberty and love necessarily unknown before, and thus making it the nearest resemblance to the eternal sabbatism.”*

May God bless his word to our Souls. Amen!