

## INTRODUCTION

Everything our Lord Jesus has told us is for our good, for our benefit.

When we read His word, and hear it, and keep it, we are blessed.

Of nothing is this more obvious than Our Lord's Gospel, the good news.

Jesus Christ has died on the cross in our place, for our sins.

He Himself is innocent, but God appointed Him to endure the wrath of God that we deserved.

He died, and was buried.

But on the third day, being the first day of the week, He rose again to live forevermore.

Now He sends His servants all over the world proclaiming forgiveness of sins from God for all who repent of their sins, turning to serve God; proclaiming eternal, everlasting life for all who believe in Him.

But it is not only His gospel promises that are good for us, but also His commandments. Whatever He has commanded us is for our benefit.

So, as we study The Ten Commandments, we find them not a burden, but a blessing.

I hope that is your experience already regarding the fourth commandment, about the sabbath day. Or maybe you have not yet understood or experienced the blessings from God that accompany the observance of His sabbath day. Either way, consider the sabbath day with me today in light of how God has ordained it to be for our benefit, for our good, as a blessing to us from His hand.

## TEXT

Mark 2:23-28 Now it happened that He went through the grainfields on the Sabbath; and as they went His disciples began to pluck the heads of grain. 24 And the Pharisees said to Him, "Look, why do they do what is not lawful on the Sabbath?" 25 But He said to them, "Have you never read what David did when he was in need and hungry, he and those with him: 26 how he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the showbread, which is not lawful to eat except for the priests, and also gave some to those who were with him?" 27 And He said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. 28 Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath."

## BODY

- I. Seeing the Sabbath As Good for Us Comes from Its Original Institution
  - A. Men have filled the world with wrong ideas and practices regarding the sabbath day; from these we can get the idea that sabbath keeping means people miss out on good things in order to keep the sabbath; or, what is good for sabbath keeping is bad for man's happiness; seeing the sabbath as beneficial does not come from examining those wrong ideas and practices of men; instead,
  - B. Seeing the sabbath as beneficial comes from examining its original institution, as our Lord taught us when He said, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."
  - C. There our Lord was referring to the first pages of the Bible
    1. Genesis 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.
    2. Genesis 2:1-3 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. 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. 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.
  - D. Note how the Lord Jesus taught the same way regarding marriage: Matthew 19:3-6
  - E. Follow the line of reasoning
    1. man cannot have been made for the sabbath, to serve it, to do it good, because man was made first, when the sabbath did not yet exist
    2. therefore the sabbath must have been made for man, to serve him, to do him good
  - F. Note how the apostle Paul followed the same line of reasoning regarding marriage - 1 Corinthians 11:7-10a

Seeing the Sabbath as good for us comes from its original institution

## II. The Sabbath Is Good for Us Body and Soul

- A. Rest from labor for the benefit of the body seems obvious, but let it not be overlooked
  1. that this is an important part of sabbath keeping, see in the law - Exodus 23:12  
Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed.
    - a) animals have no soul, but still need a sabbath day
    - b) refreshed - Hebrew literally to breathe or be breathed upon like a fresh breeze
  2. see that our Lord Jesus and His disciples could not rest the body completely
    - a) they had to walk to get to the synagogue
    - b) they had to get food ready
  3. but they and others rested from their usual labor
    - a) carpentry
    - b) fishing
  4. even in The Garden of Eden, where Adam's and Eve's work was not laborious, God made the sabbath day for man
  5. how much more, then, do our bodies need the benefit of one day's rest from six days' work?
  6. APPLICATION
    - a) do not let the strength God has built into us mislead you about the benefit of a day's rest each week
    - b) do not let the special help God gives us in times of need mislead you about the benefit of a day's rest each week
    - c) let this truth help you understand whether or not the ancient sabbath day is still with us, or whether God has taken it away

B. Rest from labor for the benefit of the soul is even more important

1. note what the Lord Jesus is doing (here we hook on to what we learned last time): He is synagoging, congregating, assembling for worship, centered on the reading and preaching of the Bible
2. see again from Paul what it was that the Jews were doing in their synagogues on the sabbath day
  - a) Acts 13:14-15 But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and sat down. (15) And after the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent to them, saying, "Men and brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say on."
  - b) Acts 13:27-30 For those who dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they did not know Him, nor even the voices of the Prophets which are read every Sabbath, have fulfilled them in condemning Him. (28) And though they found no cause for death in Him, they asked Pilate that He should be put to death. (29) Now when they had fulfilled all that was written concerning Him, they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb. (30) But God raised Him from the dead.
  - c) note the reading of the scriptures every sabbath in the synagogue
  - d) note that when Jesus and Paul synagogued, there was also preaching of the gospel!
3. most of our time on most days is rightly taken up in doing our normal work; so the Lord knows that we need one day each week when we can devote time to worshiping Him, especially in the hearing of His word read and preached
4. also our minds are rightly focused on our normal work most days, and rightly so; but the Lord knows that we need a day for our minds to be dis-engaged from those things, to be focused on spiritual things
5. what benefits do our souls derive from hearing the word of God read and preached? Psalm 19:7-11 The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; (8) The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; (9) The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. (10) More to be desired are they than gold, Yea, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. (11) Moreover by them Your servant is warned, And in keeping them there is great reward.

Seeing the Sabbath as good for us comes from its original institution

The Sabbath is good for us body and soul; and

### III. The Sabbath Will Continue to Be Good for Us Until the Lord Comes Back

- A. Our Lord Jesus taught us that marriage is still for our good as long as this age lasts,
  - 1. it was instituted for our benefit at creation; so as long as the creation continues in its present state, marriage continues for our good
  - 2. but one day the Lord Jesus will come back, and raise us from the dead, and change us to be fit for eternal life,
  - 3. in the age to come, there will be no more marriage as we know it; Mark 12:25 For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.
  - 4. instead, we will enjoy a never-ending marriage to Jesus Christ - Revelation 21:2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- B. Similarly, the sabbath still functions for man's benefit until the resurrection
  - 1. because the sabbath was made for man, that is, to serve man, for man's benefit, sabbath keeping will still be in the world until the end of it
  - 2. but one day the Lord Jesus will come back, and destroy the word by fire, and make it all gloriously new
  - 3. in the age to come, there will be no more six days of work and one day of rest as we know them now
  - 4. instead, we will enjoy a never-ending rest in Jesus Christ

### CONCLUSION

Seeing the Sabbath as good for us comes from its original institution  
The Sabbath is good for us body and soul; and  
The Sabbath will continue to be good for us until the Lord comes back

Rita - Prelude

Rita - Trinity 198 "Jesus Christ Is Risen Today" - Alex lead

Journey - Trinity 580 "It Is Well with My Soul" - Andrew lead

Rita - Trinity 207 "Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands"

Roel - Call to Worship and Opening Prayer - 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

Dillon - Scripture Reading - John 3:14-21

Stephen - Congregational Prayer

Trapp:

That is, for man's safety and advantage.

Wesley:

And therefore must give way to man's necessity.

Bengel:

The origin and end of things is to be kept in view. The blessing of the Sabbath, Gen\_2:3, has regard to man.

Henry:

for he was made a day before the sabbath was instituted...but he was not made for the sabbath, so as to be tied up by the law of it, from that which is necessary to the support of his life.

Hawker:

What man? Not only as a mere rest for the whole race of men, but for the LORD's people, as a sacramental ordinance of the LORD's rest from the works of creation. The rest is in CHRIST.

Barnes:

For his rest from toil, his rest from the cares and anxieties of the world, to give him an opportunity to call off his attention from earthly concerns and to direct it to the affairs of eternity. It was a kind provision for man that he might refresh his body by relaxing his labors; that he might have undisturbed time to seek the consolations of religion to cheer him in the anxieties and sorrows of a troubled world; and that he might render to God that homage which is most justly due to him

On that holy day the poor and the ignorant, as well as the learned, have undisturbed time to learn the requirements of religion, the nature of morals, the law of God, and the way of salvation. On that day man may offer his praises to the Great Giver of all good, and in the sanctuary seek the blessing of him whose favor is life.

Man was made "first," and then the Sabbath was appointed for his welfare, Gen\_2:1-3. The Sabbath was not "first" made or contemplated, and then the man made with reference to that. Since, therefore, the Sabbath was intended for man's "good," the law respecting it must not be interpreted so as to oppose his real welfare.

Spurgeon:

a day of blessed rest and holy service for God

Ryle:

Now the conduct of our Lord on this occasion ought to be a pattern to all His people. Our grand reason for our faith, and practice, should always be, "Thus it is written in the Bible." "What saith the Scripture?" We should endeavor to have the word of God on our side in all debateable questions. We should seek to be able to give a scriptural answer for our behavior in all matters of dispute. We should refer our enemies to the Bible as our rule of conduct. We shall always find a plain text the most powerful argument we can use. In a world like this we must expect our opinions to be attacked, if we serve Christ, and we may be sure that nothing silences adversaries so soon as a quotation from Scripture.

Let us however remember, that if we are to use the Bible as our Lord did, we must know it well, and be acquainted with its contents. We must read it diligently, humbly, perseveringly, prayerfully, or we shall never find its texts coming to our aid in the time of need. To use the sword of the Spirit effectually, we must be familiar with it, and have it often in our hands. There is no royal road to the knowledge of the Bible. It does not come to man by intuition. The

book must be studied, pondered, prayed over, searched into, and not left always lying on a shelf, or carelessly looked at now and then. It is the students of the Bible, and they only, who will find it a weapon ready to hand in the day of battle.

We see, in the last place, from these verses, the true principle by which all questions about the observance of the sabbath ought to be decided. "The Sabbath," says our Lord, "was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."

There is a mine of deep wisdom in those words. They deserve close attention...

God made it for Adam in Paradise, and renewed it to Israel on Mount Sinai. It was made for all mankind, not for the Jew only, but for the whole family of Adam. It was made for man's benefit and happiness. It was for the good of his body, the good of his mind, and the good of his soul. It was given to him as a boon and a blessing, and not as a burden. This was the original institution.

MacLaren:

But note that our Lord, even while thus defining the limits of the obligation, asserts its universality. 'The Sabbath was made for man'-not for a nation or an age, but for all time and for the whole race. Those who would sweep away the observance of the weekly day of rest are fond of quoting this text; but they give little heed to its first clause, and do not note that their favourite passage upsets their main contention, and establishes the law of the Sabbath as a possession for the world for ever. It is not a burden, but a privilege, made and meant for man's highest good.

This is not an abrogation of the Sabbath, but, on the contrary, a confirmation of the universal and merciful appointment.

#### IV. Learn This Way of Reasoning from the Scriptures

##### A. Method

1. there is some question about the way the Bible applies to our lives today: at home or at work or in the government or in the congregation
2. someone claims that something from the Bible applies in a certain way
3. [appeal to an historical episode in the scriptures]
4. appeal to the original institution

##### B. Example

1. 1 Corinthians 11:7-10 For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. 8 For man is not from woman, but woman from man. 9 Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man. 10 For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels.

#### V. Follow This Way of Reasoning in This Case

##### A. Consider this pattern, how it plays out regarding marriage

1. God ordained it at creation
2. it was neglected by sinful man
3. God commanded its right observance in The Ten Commandments
4. God further enforced it by other laws for Israel

5. when Jesus came, sinful men were mis-using it, even daring to justify their sins by foolish interpretation of God's laws
6. Jesus referred to the original institution to set us right about it