

Sabbath Rest Class 2 - “Wait, isn’t the Sabbath gone with the Old Covenant?” – 2/4/2026

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Class Introductions For New People

- Name
- How have you thought about Sabbath rest up to this point in your life?
- What made you sign up for this class?

Resource Recommendations

- Video/Podcast: CBTS Conference Message on the Christian Sabbath - <https://tinyurl.com/SabbathCBTS>
- Book: *There Remains a Sabbath Rest for the People of God* by Jon English Lee

Sabbath Rest Defined: 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith (22.7-8):

- “As it is the law of nature, that in general a proportion of time, by God's appointment, be set apart for the worship of God, so by his Word, in a positive moral, and perpetual commandment, binding all men, in all ages, he has particularly appointed one day in seven for a sabbath to be kept holy unto him, which from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ was the last day of the week, and from the resurrection of Christ was changed into the first day of the week, which is called the Lord's Day: and is to be continued to the end of the world as the Christian Sabbath, the observation of the last day of the week being abolished.”
- “The sabbath is then kept holy unto the Lord, when men, after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering their common affairs aforehand, do not only observe a holy rest all day, from their own works, words and thoughts, about their worldly employment and recreations, but are also taken up the whole time in the public and private exercises of his worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy.”

Four Views on the 4th Commandment

a. Those who say the Sabbath commandment is completely **irrelevant for Christians in form or even in principle**. The 4th commandment was abolished on an equal level as food laws.

-This position may be called the **Anti-Sabbatarian position**

b. Those who say the Sabbath commandment is **abrogated (done away with) in form due to being fulfilled in Christ, but the principle of rest remains for Christians** as a principle. How one applies that principle in form is a matter of Christian liberty.

-This position may be called the **Christian liberty position**

c. Those who say the Sabbath commandment is indeed fulfilled in Christ but **transformed into the Lord's Day Sabbath rest. The form of one day in seven remains as a commandment, along with the principles of rest**. These are not a matter of justification, but they are a matter of sanctification.

-This position may be called the **Christian Sabbatarian position**

-This is the position I personally see in the scriptures and am presenting in this class

d. Those who say the Sabbath commandment **remains in form and principle, and is required to be kept as a matter of justification**. This may include those who hold to either a Saturday Sabbath or a Lord's Day Sabbath.

-This position may be called the **Legalist position**

Scriptures & Notes

Matthew 5:17–19 NASB95

¹⁷ “Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. ¹⁸ “For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. ¹⁹ “Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others *to do* the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches *them*, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Galatians 4:8–11 NASB95

⁸ However at that time, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those which by nature are no gods. ⁹ But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again? ¹⁰ You observe days and months and seasons and years. ¹¹ I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.

Galatians 5:4 NASB95

⁴ You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.

In terms of the 4 positions, tonight’s class will be mostly addressing the differences between the Christian liberty position and the Christian Sabbatarian position.

1st: The Christian Liberty position as expressed by GotQuestions.org - www.gotquestions.org/Sabbath-keeping.html

“In [Colossians 2:16-17](#), the apostle Paul declares, “Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.” Similarly, [Romans 14:5](#) states, “One man considers one day more sacred than another; another man considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind.” These Scriptures make it clear that, for the Christian, Sabbath-keeping is a matter of spiritual freedom, not a command from God. Sabbath-keeping is an issue on which God’s Word instructs us not to judge each other. Sabbath-keeping is a matter about which each Christian needs to be fully convinced in his/her own mind.”

They go on to say, “A common error in the Sabbath-keeping debate is the concept that the Sabbath was the day of worship... That is not what the Sabbath command was. The Sabbath command was to do no work on the Sabbath day ([Exodus 20:8-11](#)). Yes, Jews in Old Testament, New Testament, and modern times use Saturday as the day of worship, but that is not the essence of the Sabbath command.”

Compare Leviticus 23:3 NASB95

³ ‘For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a sabbath of complete rest, a holy **convocation** (an **assembly of persons called together to a meeting**). You shall not do any work; it is a sabbath to the LORD in all your dwellings.

GotQuestions.org concludes: “We should worship God every day, not just on Saturday or Sunday! Many churches today have both Saturday and Sunday services. There is freedom in Christ ([Romans 8:21](#); [2 Corinthians 3:17](#); [Galatians 5:1](#)).”

2nd respected voice: The late Pastor John MacArthur – www.gty.org/sermons/90-379/understanding-the-sabbath

Speaking about [Genesis 2](#), he says, “There’s no Sabbath law given here for Adam, none at all. Nothing is said about this day being a day of worship. It doesn’t say anything about that. It doesn’t prescribe anything for anyone. It is isolated completely to God. He completed His creation; satisfied with it, He ceased, which is constituting rest; and the third verb, in verse 3 “He blessed the seventh day.” He designed that that seventh day would be a special memorial to His creation and its original perfection.”

He goes on to say, “This is very important so that we understand that the Sabbath was not instituted for man in Genesis. It was instituted officially in Exodus, in the law of Moses.”

“It was only a sign.” That “was unique for the people of Israel.” And when Jesus came, “He obliterated the Sabbath system.”

MacArthur says this because “The Sabbath laws were mere shadows of hope, a weekly reminder that there was a paradise to be regained and it was through the means of righteousness. There could be rest from the endless struggle and the horrible burden of trying to earn your salvation. When Jesus came, He brought the rest, the true rest. The child of God is now a new person. Under the new covenant, we are healed, and washed, and found, and accepted. We have entered into rest with none other than the Creator Himself. We have been given righteousness, and we rejoice in that gift. We cease all effort to earn our salvation. Jesus literally did away with the Sabbath.”

He continues, “He is Lord of the Sabbath. He is greater than the Sabbath. The Sabbath will be whatever He desires it to be, whatever He designs it to be; nothing more and nothing less. It is not moral. It wasn’t even given until the time of Moses and abrogated in the time of Christ.”

Responding to arguments against the 4th commandment applying to Christians

Argument #1. “The Sabbath was the sign of the Mosaic covenant ([Ex 31:16-17](#); [Neh 9:14](#); [Ezek 20:12](#)), whereas Christians are under the new covenant ([2 Cor 3](#); [Heb 8](#)).”

Exodus 31:16–17 NASB95

Notes

¹⁶ ‘So the sons of Israel shall observe the sabbath, to celebrate the sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant.’ ¹⁷ “It is a sign between Me and the sons of Israel forever; for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day He ceased *from labor*, and was refreshed.”

Nehemiah 9:14 NASB95

¹⁴ “So You made known to them Your holy sabbath, And laid down for them commandments, statutes and law, Through Your servant Moses.

Ezekiel 20:12 NASB95

¹² “Also I gave them My sabbaths to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD who sanctifies them.

Argument #2. “There is no New Testament command to keep the Sabbath.”

“There is no question about the other nine commandments being permanent and binding... Those are all moral mandates, moral commands, with the exception of verses 8 through 11, the fourth command, regarding the Sabbath.”

Deuteronomy 4:13–14 NASB95

Notes

¹³ “So He declared to you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, *that is*, the Ten Commandments; and He wrote them on two tablets of stone. ¹⁴ “The LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that you might perform them in the land where you are going over to possess it.

Deuteronomy 10:5 NASB95

⁵ “Then I turned and came down from the mountain and put the tablets in the ark which I had made; and there they are, as the LORD commanded me.”

Deuteronomy 31:24–26 NASB95

²⁴ It came about, when Moses finished writing the words of this law in a book until they were complete, ²⁵ that Moses commanded the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying, ²⁶ “Take this book of the law and place it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may remain there as a witness against you.

Argument #2 Continued. “There is no New Testament command to keep the Sabbath.”

Hebrews 4:9 NASB95

⁹ So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God.

- The word translated “Sabbath rest” at [Hebrews 4:9](#) is σαββατισμός. (Sabbatismos) |

Exodus 16:30 NASB95

³⁰ So the people rested on the seventh day. (Root = σαββατίζω (Sabbatizo))

The verb σαββατίζω (Sabbatizo) is universally understood to mean “keep the Sabbath.”

The noun σαββατισμός (Sabbatismos) in [Hebrews 4:9](#) is regularly understood to mean “Sabbath observance.” The lexicon known as BDAG even elaborates by saying that σαββατισμός means “A special period of rest for God’s people modeled after the traditional sabbath.”

- I compared this definition with the next four lexicons in my system, and they each defined it as “a keeping of days of rest” - IGEL; “Keeping the Sabbath” - LXLXXLEX;

“Sabbath observance” or “Christian observance of a day of rest” - PGL; and “keep the Sabbath” - LALS

Hebrews 4:9 My Translation

⁹ So there remains a **Sabbath keeping/observance** for the people of God.

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Argument #3. “The first command to keep the Sabbath was not until the time of Moses ([Ex 20:8](#)).”

- We won't spend time on this one because we've already established that this is not the case. The Sabbath has existed since the 7th day of the world.

Argument #4. “The Jerusalem Council ([Acts 15](#)) did not order Gentile believers to keep the Sabbath.”

- GotQuestions.org says, “Sabbath-keeping was not one of the commands the apostles felt was necessary to force on Gentile believers. It is inconceivable that the apostles would neglect to include Sabbath-keeping if it was God's command for Christians to observe the Sabbath day.”

Acts 15:23–29 NASB95

²³ and they sent this letter by them, “The apostles and the brethren who are elders, to the brethren in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia who are from the Gentiles, greetings. ²⁴ “Since we have heard that some of our number to whom we gave no instruction have disturbed you with *their* words, unsettling your souls, ²⁵ it seemed good to us, having become of one mind, to select men to send to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, ²⁶ men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁷ “Therefore we have sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will also report the same things by word *of mouth*. ²⁸ “For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these essentials: ²⁹ that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication; if you keep

yourselves free from such things, you will do well. Farewell.”

Acts 15:34–35 NASB95

³⁴ But it seemed good to Silas to remain there. ³⁵ But Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch, teaching and preaching with many others also, the word of the Lord.

Notes

Argument #5. “Paul never cautioned Christians about breaking the Sabbath.”

- a. As we saw above, the writer of Hebrews did caution Christians to keep the Sabbath. Remember that an inspired author of Scripture wrote [Hebrews 4:9](#).

Argument #6. “The New Testament explicitly teaches that Sabbath keeping was not a requirement ([Rom 14:5](#), [Gal 4:10-11](#), [Col 2:16-17](#)).”

Romans 14:5-6 NASB95

⁵ One person regards one day above another, another regards every day *alike*. Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶ He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God.

Romans 14:2-3 NASB95

² One person has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables *only*. ³ The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who eats, for God has accepted him.

Romans 14:23 NASB95

²³ But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because *his eating* is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin.

Compare Didache paragraph 8: “And let not your fastings be with the hypocrites, for they fast on the second and the fifth day of the week; but do ye keep your fast on the fourth and on the sixth day.”

Notes

Argument #6 Continued. “The New Testament explicitly teaches that Sabbath keeping was not a requirement ([Rom 14:5](#), [Gal 4:10-11](#), [Col 2:16-17](#)).”

Galatians 4:8–11 NASB95

Notes

⁸ However at that time, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those which by nature are no gods. ⁹ But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again? ¹⁰ You observe days and months and seasons and years. ¹¹ I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.

Galatians 4:21 NASB95

²¹ Tell me, you who want to be under law, do you not listen to the law?

Galatians 5:4 NASB95

⁴ You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.

Argument #6 Continued. “The New Testament explicitly teaches that Sabbath keeping was not a requirement ([Rom 14:5](#), [Gal 4:10-11](#), [Col 2:16-17](#)).”

Colossians 2:16–17 NASB95

¹⁶ Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day— ¹⁷ things which are a *mere* shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.

- Compare ([1 Chron. 23:31](#); [2 Chron. 2:4](#); [31:3](#); [Neh. 10:33](#); and [Isa. 1:13-14](#)), but let’s consider [Hosea 2:11](#)

Hosea 2:11 NASB95

¹¹ “I will also put an end to all her gaiety, Her feasts, her new moons, her sabbaths And all her festal assemblies.

- This passage in Hosea clearly prophesies that this triple-subject: feasts, new moons, and sabbaths will be put to an end.

Homework:

Next week’s class is titled: “Old Testament prophets on the New Covenant Sabbath.” To prepare, please read:

Passages to Consider

- Jeremiah 31:31-33
- Isaiah 56:1-8
- Hosea 2:1-23 (Especially 2:11, 18-23)
- Isaiah 58:1-14 (Especially 58:13-14)

Study Questions

- Is this speaking about Old Covenant times or New Covenant times?
- What does it say will happen to the Sabbath(s)?
- Does this passage give any indication of what the Sabbath should look like?

- The Old Covenant had weekly and non-weekly Sabbaths - that were each called sabbath(s). We will explore this more next class.

Notes

