

## Sabbath Rest Class 5 - Putting it all together – How do we keep the Sabbath today? – 2/25/2026

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### Resource Recommendations

- Sermon Manuscript: *The Perpetuity and Change of the Sabbath - Part 3 - Application* by Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758)
  - [ccel.org/ccel/edwards/works2.iv.xvi.html](http://ccel.org/ccel/edwards/works2.iv.xvi.html)
- Book or Video Teaching Series: *The Whole Christ* by Sinclair Ferguson
  - Book: \$23 on Amazon
  - Video Series: \$20 at [store.ligonier.org/the-whole-christ-download](http://store.ligonier.org/the-whole-christ-download)
  - There are also a few copies in the Harvest Resource Library

### 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.

## Defining Legalism

Dictionary of Bible Themes 8774

### legalism

Legalism

“The belief that salvation demands or depends upon total obedience to the letter of the law.”

**(Justification by law-keeping)**

**Matthew, Volumes 1 & 2 Exceeding the Righteousness of Scribes and Pharisees**

“Legalism fabricates new laws, based on tradition or misinterpretation of Scripture, and then grants these laws the force of Scripture itself. This kind of legalist may forbid what is permissible, such as playing cards, or he may require what is advisable, such as morning devotions.” (by Daniel Doriani)

**(Adding man-made rules)**

**The Whole Christ The Nature of Legalism**

“legalism ... is a heart distortion of the graciousness of God and of the God of grace. For that reason, as now becomes clear, legalism is, necessarily, not only a distortion of the gospel, but ... also a distortion of the law.

...The gospel never overthrows God’s law for the simple reason that both the law and the gospel are expressions of God’s grace. ...The legalism that distorts grace is also the legalism that distorts law from its God-given character and function and beneath that has distorted the character of the God who gave it.”

**(Viewing God’s law as oppressive)**

## Notes

## What is Sabbath Observance?

- The Sabbath is fundamentally centered on pleasing God, not just keeping a list of rules
- The Sabbath is a day for gathered worship and teaching
- The Sabbath is a day for mercy
- The Sabbath is a day for acts of necessity
- The Sabbath is for holy rest, but not *merely* avoiding labor and recreations
- Applying any of this Sabbath-keeping requires preparation ahead of time

- a. The Sabbath is fundamentally centered on pleasing God, not just keeping a list of rules

### Notes

#### **Isaiah 56:4 NASB95**

<sup>4</sup> For thus says the LORD, “**To the eunuchs who keep My sabbaths, And choose what pleases Me**, And hold fast My covenant,

#### **Matthew 12:7 NASB95**

<sup>7</sup> “But if you had known what this means, ‘**I DESIRE** COMPASSION, AND NOT A SACRIFICE,’ you would not have condemned the innocent.

#### **Isaiah 58:13 NASB95**

<sup>13</sup> “If because of the sabbath, you **turn your foot From doing your own pleasure on My holy day**, And call the sabbath a delight, the holy *day* of the LORD honorable, And honor it, **desisting from your own ways, From seeking your own pleasure** And speaking *your own* word,

b. The Sabbath is a day for gathered worship and teaching

Notes

**Leviticus 23:3 NASB95**

<sup>3</sup> 'For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a sabbath of complete rest, **a holy convocation**. You shall not do any work; it is a sabbath to the LORD in all your dwellings.

**Luke 4:16 NASB95**

<sup>16</sup> And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and **as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read.**

**Acts 20:7 NASB95**

<sup>7</sup> On the first day of the week, **when we were gathered together** to break bread, Paul *began* talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he **prolonged his message** until midnight.

c. The Sabbath is a day for mercy

Notes

**Mark 3:4-5 NASB95**

<sup>4</sup> And He said to them, “Is it lawful to **do good** or to do harm on the Sabbath, to **save a life** or to kill?” But they kept silent. <sup>5</sup> After looking around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, He said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And he stretched it out, and **his hand was restored.**

**Matthew 12:7 NASB95**

<sup>7</sup> “But if you had known what this means, ‘**I DESIRE COMPASSION [MERCY], AND NOT A SACRIFICE,**’ you would not have condemned the innocent.

**1 Corinthians 16:2 NASB95**

<sup>2</sup> **On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save,** as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come.

d. The Sabbath is a day for acts of necessity

Notes

**Mark 2:23 NASB95**

<sup>23</sup> And it happened that He was passing through the grainfields on the Sabbath, and His disciples began to make their way along while **picking the heads of grain.**

**John 5:8-9 NASB95**

<sup>8</sup> Jesus said to him, **“Get up, pick up your pallet and walk.”** <sup>9</sup> Immediately the man became well, and **picked up his pallet and began to walk.** Now it was the Sabbath on that day.

**Luke 4:39 NASB95**

<sup>39</sup> And standing over her, He rebuked the fever, and it left her; and **she immediately got up and waited on them.**

**Luke 13:15-16 NASB95**

<sup>15</sup> But the Lord answered him and said, “You hypocrites, does not each of you **on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the stall and lead him away to water him?** <sup>16</sup> “And this woman, a daughter of Abraham as she is, whom Satan has bound for eighteen long years, should she not have been released from this bond on the Sabbath day?”

**Luke 12:30-31 NASB95**

<sup>30</sup> “For all these things the nations of the world eagerly seek; but **your Father knows that you need these things.** <sup>31</sup> **“But seek His kingdom,** and these things will be added to you.

- e. The Sabbath is for holy rest, but not *merely* avoiding labor and recreations

**Notes**

**Matthew 12:5 NASB95**

<sup>5</sup> “Or have you not read in the Law, that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple break the Sabbath and are innocent?”

**Isaiah 58:13–14 NASB95**

<sup>13</sup> “If because of the sabbath, you **turn your foot From doing your own pleasure** on My holy day, And call the sabbath a delight, the holy *day* of the LORD honorable, And honor it, **desisting from your own ways, From seeking your own pleasure And speaking your own word,** <sup>14</sup> **Then you will take delight in the LORD,** And I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; And **I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father,** For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

- f. Applying any of this Sabbath-keeping requires preparation ahead of time

**Exodus 20:8–10 NASB95**

<sup>8</sup> “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. <sup>9</sup> **“Six days you shall labor and do all your work,** <sup>10</sup> but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God...

**1 Corinthians 11:27–28 NASB95**

<sup>27</sup> Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. <sup>28</sup> But **a man must examine himself,** and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

**John 4:24 NASB95**

<sup>24</sup> “God is spirit, and those who worship Him **must worship in spirit and truth.**”

**Jeremiah 17:10 NASB95**

<sup>10</sup> “I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give to each man according to his ways, According to the results of his deeds.

## A Final Summary for you:

### What We Do

- Prepare our hearts and our lives ahead of time ([Ex 20:8-11](#); [1 Cor 11:27-28](#))
- Rejoice in Christ's finished work, rest in Him, and make it our aim to please Him ([Matt 11:28-30](#); [Heb 4:3-11](#); [Col 3:1-4](#); [2 Cor 5:9](#))
- Worship corporately ([Lev 23:3](#); [Acts 20:7](#); [Heb 10:24-25](#); [Rev 1:10](#))
- Enjoy fellowship with the Church ([Luke 4:38](#), [Luke 14:1](#), [Acts 20:7](#))
- Read, study, and teach the Word ([Luke 4: 14-16](#), [31-32](#); [Col 3:16](#); [1 Tim 4:13](#))
- Pray and commune with God ([Ps 92](#); [Acts 16:13](#); [Eph 6:18](#))
- Show mercy ([Matt 12:7,12](#); [Luke 13:10-17](#); [Luke 14:1-6](#); [Gal 6:10](#))
- Serve others ([Mark 3:4](#); [Luke 4:39](#))
- Life's necessities ([Matt 12:1-4](#); [Luke 14:5](#); [John 5:8-9](#))

### What We Avoid

- Doing evil ([Isa 56:2](#); [Amos 8:4-6](#); [Matt 12:12](#))
- Receptions ([Isa 58:13-14](#))
- Needless labor ([Isa 58:13-14](#); [Ex 20:8-10](#); [Exod 34:21](#))
- Idle talk ([Isa 58:13](#))
- Self-centered pursuits ([Isa 58:13](#))
- Judgmental legalism ([Matt 12:1-8](#); [Mark 2:27-28](#); [Luke 13:14-17](#))

### What We Remember

- Christ is Lord of the Sabbath ([Matt 12:8](#); [Mark 2:27-28](#); [Luke 6:5](#))
- The Lord's Day is a gracious gift ([Mark 2:27](#); [Exod 16:29](#); [Rom 7:12](#); [Jas 1:17](#))
- Heaven - final rest - is coming ([Heb 4:9-11](#); [Rev 14:13](#); [Rev 21:1-4](#))

## Practical questions for evaluating activities for the Lord's Day:

- Does this honor the Lord of the day?
- Does this help me delight in God?
- Does this serve others?
- Does this fall under necessity, mercy, or worship?
- Is this just my/our own pleasure and distraction?