

God's Wonderful Promise

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Study Given by W.D. Frazee—June 10,

“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which My covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: 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. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more” Jeremiah 31:31-34.

Notice God's promise to write His law in our hearts. God's law is in the ark written on the tables of stone. Who wrote it? God did. And that means through God's Son. It is through His Son that He operates. It is through His Son that the world was created. It was through His Son that the law was made known to Israel. So it is the law of Christ.

“There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy” James 4:12.

The same hand that wrote that law on the stones, the same hand that was nailed to the cross, is writing this law in our hearts. I am sure that it will take eternity to fully comprehend all that is included in God's law, but we can get enough of it here in this life so that we understand His character, and love what He loves and hate what He hates.

Transgression of His law is sin (1 John 3:4). It is the positive side of this that I want to notice tonight. God is writing it in our hearts. To write the law in our hearts must include knowing what He wants us to do, and wanting to do it. We will never do eternally what we hate to do. I am glad it is that way. I would hate to have to do something all through eternity that I didn't like to do.

You say, Brother Frazee, don't we all have to?

There is only one reason why any of us need to do anything we don't like to do. It is because the law is not fully written in our hearts. And when this law is fully written in our hearts we will love everything God wants us to do and hate everything the Devil wants us to do. Then we are ready for heaven, because we can go there without having a policeman to watch us. We will be happy all day long.

In Exodus 20:3-17, we have the words that God spoke and wrote on the tables of stone. I would like to notice the Fourth Commandment:

“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: 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: 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” Exodus 20:8-11.

What is the first word in this commandment? Remember. Did you ever see someone with a string tied around their finger? If a person is pretty good he will try to remember what he put the string there for, won't he? That is supposed to help him remember what he is supposed to remember. God tells us exactly what it is He wants us to remember. It is a strange thing that the one commandment God said to remember is the commandment the world forgot.

Remember the Sabbath day in order to keep it holy. If we don't remember it we won't be able to keep it holy. When are we to remember the Sabbath? We are to remember it all week long so we can keep it holy. It takes all week to get ready for the Sabbath. I am so glad for the Sabbath.

Here is a boy with a red shirt. Here is a boy with a white shirt. Can this boy keep his shirt red? Can this boy keep his shirt white? The only way you can keep something in a certain condition is for it to be that way. A thing has to be in a certain condition before we can keep it in that condition. We are to keep the Sabbath holy. Can we make it holy? No. But we can, by God's grace, keep it holy. It is a wonderful privilege to keep it the way He made it. God gives us the holy Sabbath day and says, I want you to keep it holy.

“Six days shalt thou labor.” What does labor mean? Toil. Get something done. Is that a part of the Fourth Commandment. We usually think of the Sabbath commandment as having to do with rest. It does have to do with rest, but the only way you can rest is to first work.

We are told by the inspired comment that to labor six days is as much a part of this Fourth Commandment as to rest on the seventh. God has no place in His great universe for the lazy and indolent mind or body. He wants us to have a part of the joy in labor.

Isn't it a joy to get something done? Like eating, you can do too much of it. But I am not going to quit eating because some people eat too much. I am not going to quite eating because sometimes in the past I have eaten too much. I am trying to learn the balance of temperance. So it is with labor and work. And the Sabbath is one of the great helps in that because we will be ready to stop working when the Sabbath comes. It calls for a break.

When the sun goes down Saturday night we start thinking about getting busy doing what? Our work. How much of it is to be done? All of it before the next Sabbath comes. Is that time enough? That depends on whether we have faith or not.

There are some stomachs that are not big enough to hold all the food that the boys and girls would like to put in them. I have had that problem in my younger life. But I thank the Lord for the joy that comes in learning that we don't have to be intemperate in order to be satisfied.

So it is with work. God has deliberately put a stop to the work program in order that we may learn the joy of labor instead of being overtired and out of touch with Him. He wants us to know the joy of fellowship with Him both in labor and in rest.

“And he said unto them, This is that which the LORD hath said, To morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the LORD: bake that which ye will bake to day, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning” Exodus 16:23.

What does seethe mean? Boil. Most cooking is done either by baking or boiling. So this verse tells us to do our cooking before the Sabbath. That is a part of remembering the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

God gave manna. He gave them enough for only one day. Every day, they got only enough to last them for that day. But on Friday they gathered twice as much. It didn't spoil. God worked a miracle to preserve from Friday over to the Sabbath that which ordinarily would have spoiled.

Some people went out on the Sabbath and hunted for manna. God said, How long is it before you are going to recognize My authority and keep My laws? God is still patiently working with us to try to get us to be faithful in Sabbath keeping.

If you had gone through the camp of Israel, would you have seen anybody boiling manna on the Sabbath? No. They did that on Friday and all the other days. Did they bake it on the Sabbath? No. My point is that there are things that are proper to do on six days that are not proper to be done on the Sabbath.

Now it is never proper to do some things. It is never proper to steal or lie on any day of the week. But there are some things that makes it wrong is when it is done. It is right to bake and boil on Friday or any of the other six days, but it is not right to do it on the Sabbath.

I am not studying about cooking, but I am using it as an illustration that there are some things that are right to do at certain times, but wrong to do at other times.

There is, in *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, a wonderful chapter on the observance of the Sabbath. It has scores of details about proper Sabbath keeping.

What kind of work is not to be done on the Sabbath? Any work. Work that belongs to humanity. Making a living. Hoeing corn. Building. Buying and selling. All those things is proper to be done six days, but not on the seventh. Then when I quit doing what is right to do on the six days, and quit doing it when the sun goes down on Friday night, I show that the law is written in my heart. I show that I honor the One who gave it.

A man may try to be honest whether he is a Christian or not. A man may be enough of a good citizen to try to obey the laws of his country. But when a man stops his daily work in making a living before the sun goes down on Friday evening, and in the next twenty-four hours he does nothing of his own daily labor, he shows that he honors God. And God says that those who honor Him He will honor.

Is it important? Is it worth living for? Is it worth dying for? Are there going to be some people who would rather die than give up the Sabbath? Have there been literally millions of people back through the ages that have been martyrs rather than to disobey God? Oh, I thank God that in these more than fifty years of ministry I have seen person after person meet this test and be true.

Before I was born my father was employed by the government water service in the state of Arizona along the Salt River. His job required certain duties every day of the week. That meant that if he was going to keep that job he would have to break God's Sabbath. He couldn't do that. When he gave his heart to God he gave it up. As a result he lost his job. As a result we were always poor while growing up. But I am glad of it. It was a providence. We didn't starve to death. I am of average size, so we didn't get stunted. The point is that God tests people. And every one of us will be tested one way or the other on the Sabbath question.

There are countries today where people have problems over the Sabbath. The government tries to make them work on Saturday as well as on other days. The government tries to make our people send their children to school on the Sabbath. If it is important enough to obey God to face prison or even death rather than to disobey God concerning the Sabbath, shouldn't we be very careful that little things don't interfere when it doesn't mean prison or death? Them that honor Me I will honor.

Suppose someone comes around to our house on the Sabbath and wants to sell us something. We should not enter into a sales talk with them. It is a precious opportunity to say kindly, Today I am keeping the Sabbath, and I don't do business today. If you will come back another day I will be glad to talk to you.

We don't do as that man did who said, "If it weren't the Sabbath I would ask how much it cost."

The other man said, "If it weren't the Sabbath I would tell you what it does cost."

"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: 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" Isaiah 58:13-14.

Pleasure and delight. You find pleasure twice and delight twice. They are not talking about the same thing. They are contrasting two kinds of pleasure and delight. One has to do with our own human desires, and the other is the desire of the Lord. It is like work in the Fourth Commandment. God says do your work in six days, but on the Sabbath, No.

So, as there are kinds of work that are perfectly proper on six days but not on the Sabbath, so there are kinds of pleasure that are all right on weekday, but not on the Sabbath. This is clear from this text.

Just as there are some kinds of activity that are never right, there are some kinds of fun that are never right. It is never right to go to movie theaters that fill the mind with crime and vicious things. It is never right to look at TV programs that are glorifying vice and crime. But there are kinds of amusement that belong to the weekdays that do not belong to the Sabbath. I mention this as a warning because I feel that we are in danger of letting the relaxed habits of Sunday keepers crowd in and influence us in keeping the Sabbath.

Are there kinds of nature hikes that belong on Sunday or Monday rather than on the Sabbath? Are there scenic trips that belong to other days rather than on the Sabbath? Are there excursions that are perfectly proper and beautiful and lovely on other days that don't belong to the Sabbath? I am not trying to give answers on those, but I would like to stimulate your mind to question your own conduct and concept. Study the chapter in *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6 on the observance of the Sabbath, and most of all claim the wonderful promise that if we will delight ourselves in the Lord He will give us the heritage of Jacob and cause us to do right where? The high places of the earth.

To be a Sabbath keeper then is not to be in bondage. God wants us to lay aside ordinary work and ordinary pleasure because He has something special for us on the Sabbath. He has special communion with Him through nature, His Word, and through communion with one another in the church. I feel sorry when we let anything rob us of these higher things.

The German language has a proverb that says, "The good is the enemy of the best." So in keeping the Sabbath God is seeking to keep us not merely from bad things but from good things that rob us of the better things and the best things. So it isn't sufficient to say, I don't see anything wrong with this.

What about swimming? Do you think that Sabbath would be a good day to go swimming? Not ordinarily. If we had to save our lives or another person's life it would be a good thing to do. Do you see what I am getting at? I am trying to stimulate our minds to think it through and say, Lord what do you want me to do? Is it a part of your way, your program? And if some of you go out with more questions than you came in with, that is fine provided you do two things: Go to God in prayer and ask Him what He wants you to do, and study the Bible and the *Testimonies* on it.

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" James 1:5.

If we lack wisdom and need knowledge and guidance that we don't have we are to ask of God. And if we need wisdom in how to keep the Sabbath better, if we will ask wisdom from God He will give it to us. But we probably will never come to the place where everything we get from God tallies with things that other people seem to get. Some people may seem to be more strict than you are, and think you are a liberal. Other people may be more liberal than you are and think that you are too strict. Don't let that worry you. Check it out with the Lord and see what He tells you. Do not feel burdened to think that every detail of your Sabbath keeping is exactly what other people think.

The Jews in Christ's day insisted in being very strict in Sabbath keeping. They were perfectly willing to see a man suffering on the Sabbath and do nothing to help him. Jesus was not in harmony with all that strictness. You are to know the joy of fellowship with Jesus that He can write His law in your heart and you will be happy in it.

Life is so sweet and precious and valuable that God gives it to us a day at a time, and hour at a time, a minute at a time. He blocks it off. Life is made up of days, weeks, months, and years. And every seventh day is which day? The Sabbath. And God intends that every Sabbath shall be a time of spiritual renewal.

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