

I Love the Sabbath

#0113

Study Given by W. D. Frazee

At this season of the year, many are thinking about presents; what presents they've received or presents they've given. I want to study with you a little tonight about one of the greatest presents that was ever given to anybody. We read about it in Mark 2:27—a wonderful gift, a precious present.

“And He said unto them, the Sabbath was made for man...”
Mark 2:27.

Yes, here is the present, the gift of God's love. Everything that God does for man is because of His love. When man fell into sin, God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son (John 3:16). And the Sabbath, a gift of God's love, was given to man, made for man, at the very beginning of time.

I want to tell you some of the reasons tonight why I love the Sabbath. May I say I hope that everybody here tonight either already is enjoying the Sabbath or will. This is the last Sabbath we'll have this year, isn't it? I hope it'll be the greatest Sabbath of your life. It can be—what a blessing.

Why do I love the Sabbath so much, this wonderful present that God has made for me? For it was for me personally, not just for the human race in a wholesale way, He made it for me. First of all, I love the Sabbath because it points me to creation.

“...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
20:11.

Yes, the Sabbath is the birthday of the world. Most of us are glad for our birthdays. Some people at least say they'd rather forget them. I'm glad when my birthday comes around. I'm glad I was born. I'm thankful for another waymark along the road that reminds me of God's wonderful providence, His love in giving me the gift of life.

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So, I love to look back to creation. This is how I know I'm God's child—He made me. This is why I know I'm to worship Him—He's my Creator. And thank God, He cares for everything that He has made. So the Sabbath is God's reminder that He's looking after His property—that's me. I love the Sabbath as the memorial of God's creation.

Second, I love the Sabbath because it reminds me of redemption. It leads me in my thought to Calvary. Luke and the other Gospel writers remind us that it was on the sixth day of the week, or the preparation day as the Bible speaks of it, that our Lord was crucified. At 9 o'clock in the morning, He was nailed to the tree and hung up between the heavens and the earth to die. At 3 o'clock in the afternoon, He gave up His life. They took down His bruised and broken body from the cross and laid Him in the tomb. Among His last words as He hung there just before the moment of death, was that mighty cry, "It is finished." In this, I hear an echo of Genesis 2:1. At the close of the 6 days of creation week:

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

As the Father and the Son had rested together in the joy of the new creation at the beginning of this world, so our Lord Jesus rested in the tomb from the work of redemption. In each case, the Sabbath stands as the sign of a *finished* work. Oh, there's something strong, something stable, something wonderful about having it finished. We're not evolutionists. We don't believe that creation started in the long prehistoric ages, goes on and on and on. We know that God spoke and it was. He commanded and it stood fast. And He did it all in six days and finished it. Thank God, the work of redemption that Jesus came to do on earth was finished on Calvary, and He addressed the Father, recognizing that He had carried out the terms of the commitment that had been made before the earth was created.

Third, I love the Sabbath because it is a sign of God's sanctifying power to bless and help and use me. Turn to Ezekiel 20:12.

To sanctify means to set apart for a holy use. At creation, God took the seventh day, the last day of the week, and *set* it apart from all the other days of the week. He put His presence into it, blessed it, and made it holy. And so, as we shall read here, God desires us to read in this fact His pledge to do likewise with you and me. He desires to take us and separate us, and to make us holy, that we may do the work that He has planned for us to do.

"Moreover also I gave them My sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them" Ezekiel 20:12

Notice it is not the *Sabbath* that sanctifies us. The Sabbath is a sign that *God* sanctifies us. The same Lord that set apart the seventh day and put His presence into it, separates you and me and puts His presence in us. And it is the blessing of

the Lord that makes rich; it is His *presence* that makes holy people. That's why God's people are called the saints. Now God's people don't call themselves saints, but God calls them saints. There's a difference. But oh, remember the Sabbath is a pledge, a sign of God's sanctifying power.

Another reason I love the Sabbath is that it is a sign, a pledge, that we have time enough to do everything we need.

Somebody says, "Brother Frazee, where did you find that in the Sabbath?" Well, turn over to the Fourth Commandment, Exodus 20. Or maybe you know it by heart; I hope you do. If God thought this law was so important that He wrote it with His own finger on the tables to stone. Certainly, we should cooperate with Him in getting these words written on the tablets of our minds and hearts, what do you say? Perhaps we can repeat this Fourth Commandment, or at least the beginning of it, to get at this point of the Sabbath commandment being the pledge, the sign that we have enough time.

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work" Exodus 20:8-9.

Stop. We just said it. We just repeated it, or read it—six days shalt thou labor and do what? What's that little word with three letters beginning with "a"? All. "Six days shalt thou labor and do *all* thy work." Would God mock us? Would God require us to do something that is impossible? If God in the Fourth Commandment tells us to get all our work done in six days, can it be done in six days?

Somebody says, "Well, Brother Frazee, I don't see how that can be." Well, I don't either. But I believe a lot of things I can't see. What is it that enables us to believe things we can't see? Faith. In fact, that's what faith is, isn't it? Faith is not demonstration.

"...faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things *not* seen" Hebrews 11:1.

So by faith, believing that God is speaking in this Fourth Commandment, I know that six days is enough to do what? All my work. In the book *Ministry of Healing*, page 208, we read the promise put in these words:

"If every moment were rightly valued and rightly employed, we should have time for everything that we need to do for ourselves or for the world" *Ministry of Healing*, page 208.

Isn't that a sweet assurance? Some people when they read that they get discouraged. It ought to be just the other way; we ought to be greatly *encouraged*. But as I said, we may need to believe it by faith. If we will day by day do the best we know to use our time in the most efficient way, then by faith we can believe as the shadows gather on Friday afternoon that God has helped us get done what *He* intended we get done. That doesn't mean that we have gotten done all the things we *think* we would like to do.

You've heard of people whose eyes were bigger than their stomachs, haven't you? This can be true of *work* as well as food. It's possible to see more that we would like to do. In fact, the ambitious person, and that may be in a good sense, the person who is anxious to get things done for God, the more he does, the more he sees to get done. Do you know why? It's there to do.

But God didn't intend that we should eat all the food on the table and then go out and finish up what's in the refrigerator? He has abundantly supplied not that we may overeat, but that we may learn the lesson of temperance.

The Sabbath is God's sign of temperance in labor. The Sabbath says to us, "Stop, that's enough." If you've really put your time in properly, you haven't been lazy, you've used your mind and body in a wise way for six days—that's enough. It's time now to *stop* and rest and worship, and faith says, "Thank God." What do you say? So, I love the Sabbath, for that reason.

Another reason I love the Sabbath is because preeminently, it is the family day, or is it? It was meant to be. The Sabbath and the home were instituted in Eden together. They are the two gifts that man brought with him as he left the garden. These gifts from God: The Sabbath and the home. They are closely connected.

In the Garden of Eden it was God's plan that the husband and the wife, parents and children should be closely united every day of the week. In the Garden of Eden man had his place of labor, his place of study, his place of worship, his residence—all were there in the garden. But sin came in and spoiled the plan to a great extent, now, particularly in this modern civilization which some people think is so wonderful, the husband and father often through the week sees little of his children. He's away from home much of the time. But when the Sabbath comes, God draws again the family in that sacred bond of union that tells us of the Eden that was and the paradise that is to be.

Let me read it as it is so beautifully presented in this book *Education*, page 250–251:

"The value of the Sabbath as a means of education is beyond estimate... The Sabbath and the family were alike instituted in Eden, and in God's purpose they are indissolubly linked together. On this day more than on any other it is possible for us to live the life of Eden" *Education*, pages 250–251.

What can we live on the Sabbath more than on any other day? The life of Eden. Think of it; we can have the Eden life. Isn't that beautiful?

"It was God's plan for the members of the family to be associated in work and study, in worship and recreation, the father as priest of his household, and both father and mother as teachers and companions of their children. But the results of sin, having changed the conditions of life to a great degree prevent this association. Often the father hardly

sees the faces of his children throughout the week. He is almost wholly deprived of opportunity for companionship or instruction. But God's love has set a limit to the demands of toil. Over the Sabbath He places His merciful hand. In His own day He preserves for the family opportunity for communion with Him, with nature, and with one another"
Ibid.

So the Sabbath is to be specifically, and particularly, the family day of the week. Let me say something very simple, very plain. We are living in a time where even in religious circles, this purpose is being defeated. There are many trends, many influences leading to *separating* the family on the Sabbath. There are multitudes of people who have no more association as families on Sabbath than they do on Monday and Wednesday.

Check the trend in your home, my friend. Even religious segregation may defeat God's ideal purpose in the Sabbath. We're living in the hour when God has sent Elijah to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to their fathers. Dear parents and dear children, press together. It was the enemy of all good that instituted the idea of the generation gap. Let us not be deceived with the idea that there is one Gospel for old folks and another Gospel for children and youth.

There is only one Gospel—the *everlasting* Gospel. The Sabbath is God's call to gather the children and the people of all ages and come to the sanctuary to worship God together. And then in the hours that remain, the family has precious opportunities for being together as families.

That leads me to the next reason that I'm thankful for the Sabbath: the special opportunity for communion with God in nature. The Sabbath speaks to us of creation. All around us are the things that God has made. The message of the judgment hour angel is:

“...Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters”
Revelation 14:7.

We cannot worship One that we know not. And to worship Him intelligently as Creator means to know and understand something of His created works. The more we know of what He has made, the more intelligently our hearts can respond to give glory to Him.

And so the Sabbath calls us out to mingle with what He has made: to walk in the fields and forest; on the trails and along the roads; by the lake and up the mountainside at various seasons of the year to behold the varying beauty of nature—the little flowers that come out even in the wintertime; the glorious green of early spring; the grateful shade of summer; the splendor of the autumn colors, and the silent beauty of the winter snow. In all these varying moods, we see nature as the lesson book of our Creator. And the Sabbath, pointing to Him who made all

these things, bids us learn His wisdom, His power, His love. Oh, I'm thankful for the Sabbath and its opportunity to get better acquainted with nature, what do you say? Yes, praise God for this wonderful, wonderful gift!

Turn will you please to Isaiah, the 66th chapter. The Sabbath not only points backward, back to creation, and reminds us of the sacrifice of Calvary. It not only tells us of God's present work in sanctifying us and giving us these opportunities for worship, and to be with the family and to get acquainted with nature. The Sabbath points us forward to the glory of the new creation.

“For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the LORD”
Isaiah 66:22–23.

Remember, this is the new earth we just read about. Yes. When Eden is restored, when God dwells with men on this planet recreated, restored to its original beauty, then each recurring Sabbath will bring us all these blessings that we have learned to love and cherish here in our present life.

Oh friends, I repeat: what a wonderful gift the Sabbath is. I don't know what you got as a present the other day, but whatever you got, it can't compare with this beautiful, wonderful gift that we've studied about tonight. Do you agree with me? And it is so precious that God shares it with us every seven days. Again and again, He reminds us of His love. The Sabbath was made for man.

[Testimony service]

Our Father in Heaven, this last vesper service of the old year, we look back with gratitude for all Thy mercies. We look up with thanksgiving for all Thy present blessings, and we look forward with joy to the bright prospects of the future. May everyone here tonight have a truly happy New Year, looking unto Jesus, the Author, and Finisher of our faith. We ask it in His name, amen.

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