

# The Sabbath

#0479

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—February, 15, 1969

This day happens to be my birthday. Many times, if people think about birthdays at all, they think about honoring the person whose birthday it is. But there's nothing in my life that I've had less to do with than my being born. Really, dear friends, when we have birthdays, our thoughts should turn to the One who gave us life.

Our text this morning is Revelation the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter and the 11<sup>th</sup> verse. And I'm very thankful that I have the gift of life. I'm glad I was born. I used to tell my mother, "I wouldn't have missed it for anything." I hear people sometimes say, or hear of them say, "I wish I'd never been born." I have to be honest with you, I don't know anything about this feeling. I can feel sorry for people who feel that way. But I can't *sympathize* with them in the sense of ever having *felt* that way. I'm sorry that I haven't made better use of the life that God has given me. But He's done so many wonderful things for me, in spite of my failures and weakness and unworthiness, that I just praise Him with all my heart that He gave me a chance to live.

Now our text:

"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created" Revelation 4:11.

Who is worthy? God is worthy. He's worthy to receive glory and honor and power. Why? He has created all things. What does "create" mean? To make something out of nothing. Before this world was made, there was nothing here.

Only the Creator can impart life. Men are working in labs and research work today, thinking they're on the trail of making life. Don't worry, they'll never do it. Men can travel to the moon, but they do it by learning and working with laws that God has set up in this universe. One of the great laws of this universe is that life comes only from life. That's the only way it comes. You can take something that looks just like a grain of corn, and put it in the ground, but you'll never get anything; it takes a grain of corn. That grain of corn came from another grain of corn, and that one from another one, and so on back to Eden. And so with human life.

Life is so precious that our heavenly Father gives it to us just a minute at a time. We mark off time by days and weeks and months and years. And when a birthday comes around, we say, "Well, another year has gone by." But that year that God gave us, He gave it to us just a minute at a time. It's that precious. Now ahead of us, the time comes. And how will God give us that? A minute at a time. But there is one division of time that God gave, and He marked it with a birthday. Since it's

such an important day, He made it come every week instead of once a year. The birthday of this world is the Sabbath.

Let's go back to Genesis, the second chapter, and read about the birthday of the world in which you and I share. The first chapter tells about the creation of the world: first day, second day, third day, fourth day, fifth day, sixth day. The 31<sup>st</sup> verse of the first chapter says, "God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day."

Chapter 2, verse 1:

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

Everything was finished Friday afternoon when the sun set.

"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. 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" Genesis 2:2–3.

The word "Sabbath" means rest. And the reason that the word "Sabbath" was given by God for the seventh day of the week is simply this: God rested on the seventh day; this was His Sabbath. Then He gave it to man, for Jesus tells us in Mark 2:27–28, "The Sabbath was made for man." Jesus, who made the Sabbath, made it for you and me.

Now notice the three things He did on this day. First thing is, He rested on the seventh day. And in the third verse, it says He did what? He blessed it. And the third thing He did is what? He sanctified it. So when God rested on the seventh day, it became God's rest day. When He blessed that rest day, it became His blessed rest day, and He blessed it for whom? For man. And when He sanctified it, or made it holy, it became His sanctified, holy, hallowed, blessed, rest, day, and all of it for who? For man.

Isn't it wonderful, friends, to have a gift? Yes. One thing about a gift, though, you don't have to take it if you don't want to. Anybody ever offer you a gift, and you turned it down? That's been done. No. A gift is something that comes freely from the giver and must be accepted by the receiver. Have you received this wonderful gift? Has the Sabbath become to you God's rest day, your rest day; God's blessed day, the day you receive blessings; God's sanctified day, the day you receive in a special sense the hallowed influence of His presence?

People talk about the change of the Sabbath. But that's just an impossibility; that's already settled. Suppose for any reason I should decide that I wanted to have my birthday changed. Of course, I could tell people that my birthday was some other day, but would that make it so? No, that's all settled; that was settled 63 years ago. Nothing I can do about that. But suppose I get really anxious about it, and I go to the county judge or the district judge and say, "I'd like to have you take this up in court."

You know a man *can* get *his* name changed by court order. But how do you get your birthday changed? Does the judge issue a decree? Well, if he was foolish enough to do it, it wouldn't mean a thing because this is about something that already happened. He can't change it. Suppose I'd go to the legislature and say, "Next time you have an assembly, I'd wish you'd take this up, to have my birthday on another day."

Can I move it even one day? No, it's all settled; it's all done. And my dear friends, that's the way it is with the Sabbath. And in the seventh chapter of Daniel, we have a prophecy about somebody who was going to *try* to change this, but the way the Bible words it is very interesting. This is talking about the papal power. You're familiar with the Bible prophecy and the history, the little horn that came up out of the Roman power.

"He shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws" Daniel 7:25.

The only time the law of God deals with is the seventh-day Sabbath. And here's a prophecy way back 2,500 years ago that there would come a power in church history that would rise up and think to change times in the law. That's exactly what the Papal power did. And the Roman Catholic Catechism plainly states that it was the Catholic Church that changed it. I have a little catechism in my library, and on page 50 of that little book, here is the question and answer:

"Question: Which is the Sabbath day?

"Answer: Saturday is the Sabbath day.

"Question: Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?

"Answer: Because the Catholic Church, in the Council of Laodicea, A. D. 336, transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday."

They didn't move it very far, just one day. But when you look at the calendar, you can see that they moved it as far as it's possible to move it. There are only seven days in a week, and the farthest you can get from the Sabbath of God is clear back to the first day. You know, that's the way the enemy does about a *lot* of things. He makes changes that look like they're so close, and really they're a mile away. So be careful of that.

There was a power that thought to change: "He shall think to change times and laws." How does it say he'll think to do it? He can't do it, the law is in the Temple in Heaven.

Let's go back to Exodus 20, and look at it right here in the law of God. In verses 1–17, we have the words that God spoke from Mt. Sinai in the hearing of two million people. And then Jesus wrote these words on the stone, gave the tables of stone to Moses, and told him to put them in the Ark which was a copy of the Ark in Heaven. The law is a copy of the law in Heaven. Let's look at verses 8–11:

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, 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, nor thy man servant, nor thy maid servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gate: 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.

It is right in the heart of the law. Jesus put it there.

And the Psalmist says:

“For ever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven” Psalm 119:89.

So the law reads today just like it did back then.

Turn now to Matthew, the fifth chapter. And I want you to notice what Jesus said when He came and gave this wonderful Sermon on the Mount. He wanted to be sure that nobody misunderstood His mission.

“Think not that I have am come to destroy the law, or the prophets” Matthew 5:17.

Who was it that thought to change the law? The little horn—the Papal power. Jesus says, Don’t think I have anything to do with it. Don’t think I’m responsible for it.

“I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill” Matthew 5:17.

To fully keep, to fully carry out...

“For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled” Matthew 5:17.

My birthday is settled. The birthday of the world is settled. Jesus has made this weekly birthday, the seventh-day Sabbath. Why? Because it memorializes the most wonderful fact that God made this world and gave us life. And as I said, life is so precious, He gives it to us a minute at a time. But He marks it off in days and weeks. The days are marked off as the earth spins on its axis toward the sun. But the weeks are marked off simply and only by this birthday, this ever-recurring seventh day. Have you ever thought of that? The week is the only period of time that has no astronomical basis.

Take the year. What is the year? It’s the length of time that the earth takes in its journey around the sun. Take the month. What’s it measure by? The journey of the moon around the earth. And the day, that’s the timing of the earth on its axis, giving us night and day. And the four great divisions of time—the day, the week, the month, the year—the day and month and year are measured astronomically. But the

week has no such thing. How come? Where did the week originate? It originated when God made the world and gave Adam and Eve the seventh-day Sabbath. And there never has been one week lost since then.

And the proof of that lies in the fact that you can go all over the world, and no matter whether people keep Friday like the Mohammedan's do, or the true Sabbath like the Jews do, and a few Sabbath-keeping churches, or Sunday like masses of people keep, all of those people agree in that unbroken succession of weeks. And look at any calendar in any nation in any language, and you'll see Sunday the first day, Monday the second day, and so on down to Saturday the seventh day. Do you see what I mean, friends? Perfect agreement on that. People may argue as to which day they're going to keep. But they know, if they understand the facts of history and chronology, that if they keep Friday, they're keeping the sixth day of the week, if they keep Saturday they're keeping the seventh day of the week. If they keep Sunday they're keeping the first day of the week.

Now, here's a question I want to ask you, friends: are you getting what God put into this day for you? If all there is to the Sabbath is a day to rest, I could rest on Wednesday, couldn't *you*? What difference would it make if it's a matter just of physically resting? If it's a day just to assemble and have a meeting, most any day would be good for that. In fact, this coming week, I'm going to have a meeting every night of the week. But listen, resting or having a meeting doesn't put the blessing and sanctification of God into a day. Jesus told the servants to pour the water into the waterpots, and then He said to pour it out, and it would turn to what? Wine, fresh grape juice. That was creation, wasn't it? And the Creator is the One who has taken a day that without His blessing would be like any other day, and He has put into it His creative power, His redeeming love, His blessing, His sanctification. And so, what to most people would look like an ordinary day, becomes to the child of God a most wonderful gift, filled with the blessing of God. I need that blessing.

I'm so thankful for the Sabbath. Honestly, friends, it means more and more to me. I can see why people would love Jesus and love the Sabbath so much that they'd rather die than give it up. Millions of martyrs have given up their lives rather than give up Jesus and His holy Sabbath day. There are going to be some more martyrs before we get through. I wonder if the Sabbath is that precious to you.

Brother, I see you have a watch. Of course, this is the Sabbath, and we're not doing business today. But I want to use an illustration here. I presume that there is a certain amount of money that you'd sell that watch for. If I'd offer you \$100 for it, would you be willing to part with it for \$100? I probably could get it a little cheaper than that. I imagine that any article you have here this morning—a fountain pen, a car, a coat, a pencil—if somebody would offer you enough money, you'd say, "Give me the money. Here's the thing you're after." Right? How much would you sell the Sabbath for? How much would you take to give up the Sabbath?

I ask that question, friends, because that's exactly what people are going to be facing in just a little while. The book of Revelation in the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter, verses 15–17 tells about a time of persecution that's coming very soon when people won't be able to buy or sell unless they have the mark of the beast—that's the *false* sabbath, *man's* sabbath, the *counterfeit* sabbath, on the man of sin set up. In other words,

this world, inspired by Satan, is going to say, “If you would eat, you’re going to have to break God’s Sabbath and take man’s sabbath.”

Now, we’re told that not only will there be threats, but there will also be rewards offered too. Some of you are going to not only be threatened with *losing* your job if you *keep* the Sabbath, but you’re also going to be offered a *better* job if you would *break* it. And so, you might as well settle that this morning: How much would you sell out for?

There are some things that aren’t for sale. If I ask one of you parents how much you’d take for your child, that would be a different matter from a watch, wouldn’t it? Brother, if somebody would offer you, instead of \$100, a million dollars for one of those boys, how about it? Just think about it, fathers and mothers. Isn’t it wonderful to have something that’s more precious than all the money in the world? Did you boys and girls know you were that valuable?

Ah friends, how precious is the Sabbath to you?

I want to tell you something: It comes not only marked with the mark of creation but with the mark of redemption. For that same Jesus who finished His work the sixth day of creation week and rested with the Father on the Sabbath right there in the beginning, 4,000 years later, He came down to this world and gave us an example of loving, ministering. And then He went to the cross and gave His life for us. And as He hung there on the cross, among His last words were that trumpet call: “It is finished.” That was Friday afternoon, just a little before sundown. That’s why some people celebrate what they call Good Friday. God didn’t tell us to celebrate Good Friday; He told us to celebrate good Sabbath. And the Sabbath reminds us not only of creation back there in the beginning, but it also reminds us of redemption. Because the same Jesus who rested in the big work of creation rested in the tomb all through the Sabbath in the finished work of redemption. He rested. And early Sunday morning, He rose from the tomb and went right to work again. He’s been working for us ever since. Oh friends, the Sabbath is linked with creation and with redemption. The Sabbath is most precious.

Another reason I love the Sabbath is particularly the family day. During the week, the father is out wrestling with the problems of making a living, gone from home much of the time. But when Friday afternoon comes, it’s time to call it quits for this week. No working to make a living on the Sabbath. God in His providence has arranged that this day shall be a special day for parents and children to be close together—close together in worship, close together in contact with nature. It’s a wonderful day for husband and wife to have special fellowship with God and with each other as well as with the children.

A wonderful blessing God gave my wife and me just last Sabbath morning out in Colorado—we went out along the river for a little while. And there was a little bird called the Water Ouzel. Just to look at him, you’d pay no attention to him. He’s a little smaller than a meadowlark, about that shape, but just a plain gray-black-charcoal color. He dives in those icy springs. The river’s out there this time of year, coming down out of the Rocky Mountains. Then they’re covered over with ice, the water runs underneath. But here and there, there are breaks in it. And this little bird

dives right into those icy streams; that's where he finds his food. Then he gets out on the banks. Last Sabbath morning, we heard him sing. Imagine a bird singing in February on an icy bank covered with snow. And he stood there on that bank for over 20 minutes singing to us. I think the dear Lord arranged that. My wife thought so too. It was just the blessing she needed last Sabbath morning. I think the Lord arranges things like that for us. When the Sabbath comes, watch for the providences of God, watch for the special blessings that He'll give us on the Sabbath—it may be the song of a bird; it may be some opening flower bud as the spring comes around; it may be the beauty of the ice, the frost, the crystals, every snowflake after a different pattern—whatever the season.

All beautiful the march of days,  
as seasons come and go;  
the hand that shaped the rose  
hath wrought the crystal of the snow.  
Hymn: All Beautiful the March of Days,  
Frances Wile, 1910.

It's the hand that set the world in space that's making all these beauties for us, friends. And that hand was nailed to the cross that you and I might have life. Oh, I'm thankful for Jesus. I'm thankful for life; I'm thankful for the Sabbath—God's weekly reminder of His creative power and His redeeming love, and I'm thankful for the One who made it all possible and who lives for us this morning.

What is your testimony, praise and thanksgiving this Sabbath morning?

[Testimony service follows]

Loving Lord, grant Thy benediction and the blessing of the Sabbath to every heart. In Jesus' wonderful name, amen.

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