

God's Wonderful Promise

#0787

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—June 10, 1983

[The recording includes preliminaries to the sermon, one which is Elder Frazee and his wife thanking people for their 50th-anniversary celebration that they put one for them. It also includes a consecration prayer for Elder Barrett as he takes a position as pastor there.]

I invite you to turn to Jeremiah the 31st chapter and the 31st verse to begin. Wonderful promises. The Bible is full of promises, somebody's counted them, and they run in the 100s, both in the Old and New Testament, page after page. Studied with promises is like the stars in a clear night. God's promises are bright and cheery and encourage us forward.

Brother Cook will read for me Jeremiah 31:31–34:

“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.

Now you notice God's promise here to write His law where?

[Audience] In our hearts.

[Elder Frazee] Where is it written in the Ark? On the tables of stone. Who wrote this law in the stone? God did. And that means God the Son. It is through His Son that Father operates. It is through His Son that God created the world. It was through His Son that He made know the law to Israel. So it is the law of Christ.

“There is one lawgiver...” James 4:12.

My point is that the same hand that wrote that law on stone, the same hand that was nailed to the cross, is writing this law where? 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.

The transgression of His law, the Bible says, is what? "Sin is the transgression of the law." Where is that found in the Bible? 1 John 3:4, alright.

But it is the positive side of this that I want to notice, especially tonight. God is doing what with His law? Writing it in our hearts. To write the law in our hearts must include knowing what He wants us to do and liking to do it, and doing 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 all my life, all through eternity, be doing something that I didn't like to do. Wouldn't you?

Well, 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. That's all. And when this law is written fully in our hearts, we will love everything God wants us to do and hate everything that 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.

I thought this evening it would be interesting if we would go to some of the commandments and what they bear on in getting us ready to be like Jesus. Let's turn back to Exodus, the 20th chapter. What do we have in verses 3 to 17? The words that God spoke and wrote on the tables of the law. Now I would like to notice that Fourth Commandment.

Brother Barret, if you'll come and lead us all in reading verses 8, 9, 10 and 11.

[Brother Barret]

"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.

[Elder Frazee] Now, what is the first word in this commandment? Remember. Did you ever see someone with a string tied around their finger? What's that for? Well, if a person is pretty good, he will try to remember what he put the string there for, won't he? Is that supposed to help him to remember that he needs to remember something? Well, God tells us, here, exactly what it is He wants us to remember. Isn't it a strange thing, and what a comment on that the perversity of the human heart that the one commandment that God said to remember is the commandment the world forgot?

Remember what? The Sabbath day in order to do what? Keep it holy. If we don't remember, we won't be able to keep it holy. Is that what it is telling us? That's right. When are we to remember the Sabbath, just on the Sabbath? We are to remember it all week long so we can keep it holy. It takes all week to get ready. I said the other night; it takes 50 years to get ready for the golden wedding. It takes a week to get ready for the golden Sabbath. And we need it often, and we need to go to the wedding. And we need it every week. Oh, I am so glad for the Sabbath. Aren't you? Wonderful day. And He says to remember to do what? Keep it holy.

Son, can you help me a minute? [Speaking to a young man in the audience]
Son, would you come please? [Speaking to another young man in the audience]
Now what color is this boy's shirt? Red. What about this one? White. Can this boy keep his shirt white (he is wearing the red one)? Can this boy keep his shirt red (he is wearing the white one)? Why not? The only way you can keep something in a certain condition is for it to be that way. All right, boys, thank you for helping out.

The thing has to *be* in a certain condition before we can *keep* it in that condition. And we're to keep the Sabbath now? Holy. Can we make it holy? No. But we can, by God's grace, if we work with Him, do what? Keep it holy. Isn't that a wonderful privilege to keep it the way He made it, to keep it the way He made it?

[Looking at a young person] Does your mom ever tell you to be careful and keep that shirt clean? And God gives us the holy Sabbath day, and He says, "Now I want you to remember" to do what? "Keep it holy."

I want you to look at the next thing in this verse:

"...Six days shalt thou..." Exodus 22:8.

What? Labor. What does labor mean? Work, toil, and get something done.

"Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work" Exodus 22:8.

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 first to do what? Work.

And we are told by the inspired comment that to labor the 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, indolent, idle mind or body. He wants us to have a part in the joy of labor. And isn't it a great joy, friends, to get something done?

Of course, like eating, you can do too much of it. But I am not going to quit eating just because some people eat too much. Are you? [Laughter] I am not going to quit eating because sometimes in the past I've eaten too much. I am trying to learn the balance of temperance, aren't you? And 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 the Sabbath is one of the great helps in that. Because you'll be ready to stop working

when the Sabbath comes, it calls for breaks. By the way, any of you young fellows would like to drive a car, would like to get a car without any breaks at all? Would you? No, no body in his right mind would get behind the wheel and start down the road unless there were what? Brakes. Of course, it takes a motor as well. Well, I like that balance between motor and brakes, don't you?

Alright. So when the sun goes down Saturday night, we start thinking about getting busy and doing what? Our work. How much of it should be done? All of it before the next Sabbath comes. Is that time enough? Well, that depends upon whether we have faith or not.

Do you think that 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? You ever see somebody put too much in? I have had that problem in my younger life. But oh, 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, dear ones. God deliberately has 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.

Now let's see if we can see some of the things that belong to the Sabbath and some of the things that belong to the week. Let's turn to Exodus 16:23. Brother Cook is going to read that for me. This is part of remembering the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Remember God is writing this law that we are studying tonight, where? In our hearts, so that we know it and love it and therefore do it?

[Brother Cook]

"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.

[Elder Frazee] What does seethe mean? Boil. Most cooking is done either by baking or boiling. So if we want to put it in one word, this verse tells us to do our cooking when? Before the Sabbath. That is a part of remembering the Sabbath day to do what? Keep it holy.

Now, this was a particularly kind of food they were eating back then. What was it? God gave manna. Did He give them enough on Tuesday to last over till Wednesday? Did He give them enough on Wednesday to last over till Thursday? No, He didn't. Read it there. Every day, they got only enough to last them when? They had quite literally give us this day our daily bread. But on Friday, the sixth day, they got twice as much, and it didn't spoil. Worms didn't get in it. God worked a miracle to preserve from Friday over to the Sabbath that which ordinarily would have spoiled. Isn't that wonderful?

And there is another miracle He worked. I'd say God worked a miracle on Sabbath to keep the manna from spoiling each week. And He worked a miracle Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, for the manna to fall and stopped the manna on Sabbath so that none fell.

But some of the people, as you read there, went out on the Sabbath, and hunted for it. And God said, "How long is it before you are going to recognize My authority and keep My laws?" Oh friends, God is patiently still working with us to try to get us to be faithful in Sabbath-keeping. Some of you might like to be reminded that there is in *Volume 6* of the Testimonies, the wonderful chapter, on the observance of the Sabbath. It has literally scores of details about proper Sabbath-keeping—what to do and not to do on the Sabbath. This evening, we are going to notice especially from the Bible itself, the divine directions on how to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

If you had gone back there through the camp of Israel, would you have seen anybody boiling manna on the Sabbath? No. When did that do that? They did that on Friday and all the other days. What about the baking of it. Did they bake it on the Sabbath? No. They got it ready when? Friday. My point is then, there are things—don't miss it—that are perfectly proper and required to do on the six days that are not proper to be done on the Sabbath. Is that right?

Now it is never proper to do some things. It's never proper to steal or to kill or to lie. That's wrong any day of the week. But there are some things—don't miss it—that makes them wrong is *when* they are done. It is right to bake and boil on Friday or any of the other six days, but not on the Sabbath. Is that what it's telling you? Is it really there in the Bible?

Brother Cook, why do you read that again for me, this time I want them all to read with us. I want your faith to be built on the word of God, dear ones. I am not just studying about cooking, but I am using this cooking as an illustration of the fact that there are some things that are right to do sometimes but wrong to do other times. All together:

[Brother Cook and audience]

"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.

Now let's go back to the Fourth Commandment in Exodus 20: 8–11. Tell me, what kind of work is not to be done on the Sabbath? What does it say? "Thou shalt not do any work." Any work. Any what kind of work is the context? "Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work." There is some work that belongs to humanity—making a living, hoeing corn (doing a world of things in agriculture), or in building, or in mercantile work, buying and selling. All those things may be proper to be done when? In six days, but not when? On the seventh, the Sabbath. 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 what? I show that that law is written where? In my heart. I show that I honor the One who gave it.

You see 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 Friday evening, and in the next twenty-four hours he does nothing of his own daily labor, he shows that he honors who? God. And God says, "Them that honor Me, I 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? The pictures in Revelation 13 and 14. Have there been literally millions of people back through the ages that have been martyrs rather than to disobey God? Yes. Oh, I thank God, dear friends, that in these more than fifty years of ministry I have seen person after person meet this test and be true.

My own dear father, before I was born, he was employed by the government water service in the state of Arizona along the Salt River. But his job required certain duties any and every day of the week because waters flow all the time, of course. But that meant that if he was going to keep that job, he would have to do what? Break God's Sabbath. He couldn't do that. When he gave his heart to God, he settled that, and he gave it up. As a result, he lost his job. As a result, we were always poor growing up. As I mentioned earlier in another meeting, I'm glad of it. That was a providence. We didn't starve to death as my brother and I can both testify. I am of average size, my brother is six feet five, so we didn't get stunted in the deal. My point is, God tests people. He tests people. And every one of us will be tested one way or the other on the Sabbath question.

Are there countries today where people have problems over the Sabbath? Where the government tries to make them work on Saturday as well as on other days? Where the governments try to make our people send their children to public school on the Sabbath? Yes. Now I want to ask you something, friends, and don't miss this. If it is important enough to obey God to be willing 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 door on the Sabbath and wants to sell us something. Should we enter into a sales talk with them, discuss it? Isn't that a precious opportunity to say very kindly, "Well, you know, today I am keeping the Sabbath, and I don't do business on that day." If it's something you are interested in you can say, "If you come back another day, I'll be glad to talk with you."

We don't want to be like that man that said, "If it weren't Sabbath, I'd ask you how much it cost."

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

Now let's turn to Isaiah, the 58th chapter, and let's see something that's the difference between the Sabbath and other days. Brother Barret is going to read this one for me. There are two words in these verses that he is going to read that I want you to notice that mean having a good time. See if you can find them.

[Brother Barret]

"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.

[Elder Frazee] Thank you. Now, did you find those words? Pleasure and delight. How many times did you find the word "pleasure" there? Twice. How many times did you find the word "delight"? Twice. Two times the word pleasure and two times the word delight. Are the words pleasure and delight talking about the same thing all the way through these verses? No. They are contrasting two kinds of pleasure and delight. One has to do with our own human tastes and 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, (don't miss this) 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 aren't on the Sabbath. Is this clear from these texts? I think we need to be careful about that, dear friends.

Just as there are some kinds of activity that are never right, there are some kinds of fun that are never right. It's never right to go to movie theaters that fill the mind with crime and vicious things. It's never right to look at TV programs that are glorifying vice and sin and crime. But my point is there are kinds of amusement that belong to the weekdays that do not belong to the Sabbath. I want to 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 our keeping of the Sabbath.

Are there any kinds of nature hikes that belong on Sunday or Monday rather than on the Sabbath? Or are any kinds of a nature hike ok for Sabbath because it's a part of God's creation? I'll leave that to you to study.

Are there scenic trips that belong to other days rather than on the Sabbath? Are there excursions, picnics, 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 tonight, but I would like to stimulate your mind to question your own conduct and concept. Study the chapter in *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 6* on the observance of the Sabbath, and most of all claim the wonderful promise here that if

we delight ourselves in the Lord, He will give us the heritage of Jacob and cause us to do ride, where? The high places of the earth.

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

The German language has a proverb. I like what it 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, you see. So it isn’t sufficient to say, “Well, I don’t see anything wrong with this.”

What about swimming? Do you think that Sabbath would be a good day to go for a swim? Not ordinarily, would it. If we had to save our lives or save other lives, that would be a good day to do, wouldn’t it? Do you see what I am getting at? I’m trying to stimulate our minds to think it through and say, “Dear Lord, what do you want me to do? Is this a part of your way, your program?” And if some of you go out of this meeting with more questions than you came in with, that’s 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.

Turn to James the first chapter and the fifth verse. Brother Barret will you read that one for me, please?

[Brother Barret]

“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.

[Elder Frazee] If we lack wisdom, that is, if we need knowledge and guidance we don’t have, we are to do what? Ask God. And if we need wisdom in how to better keep the Sabbath (with or to do this or that), if we’ll ask wisdom from God He’ll do what? He’ll give it to us.

Now let me give you this bit of council. You’ll probably never come to the place where *everything* you get from God tallies with everything other people seem to get. Some people may seem to be more strict than you and think you’re a liberal. Other people may be more liberal than you and think that you are too strict. Don’t let that worry you, you might check it out with the Lord and see what He tells you. But my point is this, do not feel burdened to think that every detail of your Sabbath-keeping is exactly what everybody else thinks because you’ll never come to that place.

If the Jews back in Christ’s day insisted on being very strict about Sabbath-keeping, was Jesus in harmony with all their strictness? No. Were they perfectly willing to see a sick person suffering all day Sabbath rather than to do something to

help him? Isn't that cruel? My point is this, dear ones, know the joy of fellowship with Jesus that He can write His law in your heart, and you will be happy in it.

You see, life is so sweet and so precious and so 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, isn't it? And every seventh day is which day? The Sabbath. God intends that the reoccurring Sabbath shall be a time of spiritual renewal. Now I wish that we might kneel and spend a few moments in silent prayer and then, brother Cook will lead us in prayer that God will lead us into a clearer view of His holy Sabbath day.

[Brother Cook] Our Father, which art in Heaven, we thank Thee this evening for this precious commandment and more than that commandment, a privilege and a blessing of entering in to special time with Thee. And Father our hearts have been solemnized this evening as we have been confronted once again with the claim of this holy commandment. Lord, it's our desire and our purpose, this evening, to enter in more fully into the joy of true Sabbath observance and into the joy of fellowship with Thee on this holy day. Lord, we thank Thee that we can put aside our pleasure, our delight for the delights of the Lord. We thank Thee that we can put aside our work for holy work and join with Thee in a special day of fellowship. We thank Thee for the life that Thou has given to us. Father, we delight in those things that make you happy. And we pray that we might discern more fully that which will please Thee with regard to the Sabbath. Tonight, we pray that the Holy Sprit will put His influence upon our heart just now if there is any area in our life that is not in harmony with Thy will. We pray that Thou will impress us and deepen those impressions that Thou has already made. And bless us Father with a deeper experience than we've ever had. We thank Thee, in Jesus' name, amen.

[Testimony service follows]

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