

RULES TO LIVE BY!

5. Honour God's Day



Introduction

When Jesus was asked what the greatest commandment was He quoted Deuteronomy 6:5 which says: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength." Jesus said this was the first and greatest commandment. When we truly love God we won't worship any other god, or misuse His name or make an idol to represent Him. However there is another commandment that is equally important as these, and we will discuss that now.

Scripture Reading: **Deuteronomy 5:12-15**

❶ What was the Sabbath Day for, and how were the people to observe it according to these verses?

- (1. *The Sabbath was a day to be set aside to the Lord.*
- (2. *It was to be a holy day.*
- (3. *The people were not to work, nor make others work on that day.*
The word Sabbath actually means 'to cease activity'.)

❷ The Ten Commandments are recorded in two places, first in the Book of Exodus and then repeated again in Deuteronomy. What reasons does God give for remembering the Sabbath Day? See Deuteronomy 5:15 and Exodus 20:11. How do you think this relates to us?

- (1. *In Deuteronomy it says that the Israelites had been set free from slavery in Egypt therefore they should remember the Sabbath. It was a sign that they were God's people.*
- (2. *We have also been set free from slavery to the devil, and have become God's people. By setting apart one day to the Lord we demonstrate our love and commitment to Him.*
- (3. *In Exodus it says that just as God worked for 6 days then rested, so the Children of Israel were to work for 6 days and then rest from their work.*
- (4. *If God rested after 6 days of work, then surely we need to!*)

The Sabbath was the 7th day of the week, which is a Saturday and the Jewish people still observe this as their holy day. Some Christian groups also say that we should keep the Sabbath Day, however after Jesus rose from the dead the early Christians observed another day, and that was Sunday. Whether we observe this day on Saturday or Sunday, we are to honor this day.

❸ What is the purpose of this day according to Jesus in Mark 2:27?

(It was a day to benefit man, so that man could rest from his activity and be restored spiritually, physically and mentally.)

❹ How do you think keeping the Sabbath (whether it is Saturday or Sunday) benefits us? Share from your own experience.

- 5 Why do you think the Pharisees were so concerned that Jesus might heal on the Sabbath? Read Luke 6:6-11. What was Jesus' response?

(At the time of Jesus the Pharisees had so many rules and regulations about what could not be done on the Sabbath. These were not God's laws, but man's. To them healing a person was considered work, and so they were watching to see if Jesus would heal this man. Jesus reply was that the Sabbath was a day to do good and save life.)

- 6 What attitude does God want us to have towards the Sabbath Day? Isaiah 58:13, 14

(He wants us to make this a day that is holy to Him. On this day we do not do as we please or go our own way, but we are to honor this day and do what the Lord wants us to do.)

- 7 What did the early Christians do on the first day of the week, or a Sunday? Look at the following verses: Acts 20:7, 1 Corinthians 16:2, Revelation 1:10

(They worshipped on the first day of the week, broke bread together, heard God's Word and gave their offerings. It was called 'The Lord's Day'.)

- 8 What has God been saying to you as we have discussed the Sabbath Day? Share.

Conclusion

God set apart one day a week as a day of 'rest'. It was to be a 'holy' day, a day set apart to Him. When Jesus summarized the Ten Commandments, saying we are to love the Lord our God, the fourth command is included too. If we love the Lord we will keep His Day.

However God did not give this day primarily for His benefit, but for ours! God has our well-being in mind, and this includes our spiritual life, as well as our mental, emotional and physical health. If a person always works and never rests, it will eventually affect his quality of life. We also need time to worship God, as our spiritual life is the well spring from which everything else flows.

We live in a society where the majority do not honor the Lord's Day. Many think of it as a day to 'do as they please', but God set it aside as a day to do what pleases Him. It is not just the two hours when we go to church – it is the whole day! God promised that when we obey His Word we would prosper, so let's believe that when we honor Him, He will help us to accomplish all we need to do in the other 6 days.