

Bible Stories for Adults

Jesus Heals on the Sabbath

Luke 6:1-11

Opening

- Gathering: Why is it important for Christians to go to church regularly?
- Today's Focus: Jesus explained that God commands us to remember the Sabbath for our sakes.
- Key Verses: *Jesus said to them, "I ask you, which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it?"* Luke 6:9
- The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.* Mark 2:27

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Remember The Sabbath Day (*Exodus 20:8-11*)

- What is the third of God's moral commands dealing with keeping our relationship with Him?
Exodus 20:8 = *Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy*
- What is the Sabbath day?
Exodus 20:9-10a = The seventh day, after six days of work
- Sabbath* (From Hebrew "shabath") means "to cease, desist, rest". Why did God call it the Sabbath day?
Exodus 20:10b = We are to cease / desist / stop working - every person & animal
- What if we can't get all of our work done in six days? Is it really possible to rest on the 7th day?
Exodus 20:11 = God created everything within 6 days and gave Himself a rest on the 7th

Purposes of the Sabbath (*Leviticus 23:3*)

- What is an obvious purpose of observing the Sabbath?
Leviticus 23:3a = "Sabbath of rest" - A day of physical rest and refreshing
- What is a more important purpose of observing the Sabbath? = Devotion
Leviticus 23:3b = "Sabbath to the Lord" - A day of spiritual rest and refreshing
- What does God promise if we remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy?
Isaiah 58:13-14 = He will bless us and we will find our joy in the Lord
- How else does God promise to bless us through observing the Sabbath?
Ezekiel 20:12 = He makes us holy - sanctifies us - His holy people
- How does the Sabbath help us grow in our relationship with God?
Ezekiel 20:20 = It is a constant sign, a reminder, that the Lord is our God
- How do we see this in the Deuteronomy record of the third commandment?
Deuteronomy 5:15 = The Sabbath reminds God's people how He saved them

Sabbath Days (*Exodus 16*)

- Was the idea of resting on the seventh day one that God developed for the Israelites on Sinai?
Genesis 2:1-3 = No, it began at the creation of the world - God rested (shabath) on the 7th day
God rested because He was finished, not tired = All was complete and perfect, no more to do
- How did the Jews define the beginning and the end of the Sabbath day? = Sundown to sundown
Genesis 1:31 (Leviticus 23:32) = Days: evening until morning, Sabbath started Friday at sundown

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Sabbath Weeks, Months and Years (*Leviticus 23, 25*)

When is the first time we see the Sabbath rest formally observed? = Rest from gathering

Exodus 16:14-15, 19-20, 23-26 = God provided manna daily except on the Sabbath

How was a Sabbath of seven associated with the great celebration of the Passover?

Leviticus 23:5-8 = Followed by 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread, end with Sabbath rest

How were the Israelites to celebrate God's providence through crops in a Sabbath of 7 weeks?

Leviticus 23:10-11, 15-16, 21 (9-22) = Seven weeks between First Fruits and Harvest Sabbath

How were the Israelites to celebrate God in a Sabbath in the 7th month? = Remember God's creation

Leviticus 23:23-25 = Feast of Trumpets - Now Rosh Hashanah, the (New Year) – 7th month

What other special remembrances did God command during this 7th month Sabbath?

Leviticus 23:26-28, 32 (26-32) = Day of Atonement - A day of purification - make people holy

Leviticus 23:33-35 (33-44) = Feast of Tabernacles - Remember how God saved through exodus

How were the Israelites to celebrate God in a Sabbath of 7 years?

Leviticus 25:1-4 (1-7) = The land was to rest (sabbath) every 7th year

What other 7th year observances were the Israelites to keep?

Exodus 21:2 = Hebrew slaves were to be released on the 7th year (sabbath from slavery)

Deuteronomy 15:1-2, 9 (1-11) = Debts from fellow Hebrews were to be canceled

How were the Israelites to especially celebrate a Sabbath every 7 Sabbath years?

Leviticus 25:8-10 (8-17) = All Sabbath year rests plus land returned to original owners

What happened to the land of Israel during the Jews' exile to Babylon?

2 Chronicles 36:20-21 (Jeremiah 25:11-12) = It enjoyed its sabbath rests for 70 years

How would the Jews receive a Sabbath of rest after waiting years for the Messiah?

Daniel 9:24-25 = 70 sevens from exile return to Christ (490 yrs); 7-7s to rebuild Jerusalem

Importance of the Sabbath (*Exodus 31:13-18*)

How important was it for the Jews to keep the Sabbath day?

Exodus 31:15 (13-15) = Anyone who did work on the Sabbath was to be killed

How long would the Jews have to keep the Sabbath?

Exodus 31:16-17 = Forever - *for the generations to come as a lasting covenant*

How did God punctuate the importance of this command?

Exodus 31:18 = It was the last thing He told Moses on Mt. Sinai (the first trip up)

Was it ever acceptable to do any work on the Sabbath?

Exodus 34:21 = No, not even during the busiest times of the year

The Wages of Ignoring the Sabbath (*Nehemiah 13:15-22*)

Were the curses of ignoring the Sabbath directed only at the individuals who didn't keep it?

Ezekiel 20:23-24 = No, the whole nation would be punished

How was this further reinforced in the last days before the Jews were exiled?

Jeremiah 17:21-25a, 27 (19-27) = Keep my Sabbath & I'll bless you, Disobey & be destroyed

What did Nehemiah see after the Jews returned from exile that upset him?

Nehemiah 13:15-17 = People went about their daily business on the Sabbath

How did Nehemiah convince the Jews to stop working on the Sabbath?

Nehemiah 13:18 = He warned that the destruction & exile had resulted from this

How did he make sure a few unrighteous didn't spoil it for everyone else?

Nehemiah 13:19-22 = He kept the city gates locked & guarded to stop merchants

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Black and White Laws (*Ezekiel 20:25*)

What did the Jews do to make sure God wouldn't punish them as severely again?

Nehemiah 9:38; 10:29-31 = They made an oath and an honest effort to perfectly obey God

What else did they do to make sure the law wasn't accidentally disobeyed?

Nehemiah 8:7a, 7c-8 = They taught and explained the Law to the people

"Oral Law" - Religious leaders attempted to make black & white limits for every situation

What did Jesus have to say about these Oral Laws?

Matthew 23:1-4, 13 = They add needless heavy loads and keep people from heaven

Why did God allow this to happen?

Ezekiel 20:25-26 = He let them get outrageous so the people would return to His love & truth

Working on the Sabbath

Jews identified 39 works which were prohibited on the Sabbath by the Scripture

Each of these *father-works* had many *descendant-works* defined by rabbis

Examples from last week:

Father-work

Plowing

Carrying a burden

Reaping

Descendant works

Digging, Dragging a chair (might make a rut)

Tailor carrying needle, Scribe carrying pen

Plucking a head of wheat, Pulling out a gray hair

Jesus "Works" On the Sabbath (*Luke 6:1-11; Matthew 12:1-14; Mark 2:23-3:6*)

When is the first time we see Jesus "working" on the Sabbath? = Fever was likely malaria

Mark 1:21-26, 30-31 = Capernaum, Cast out demon, Healed Peter's mother-in-law

What response resulted from this Sabbath work?

Mark 1:28, 32 = Word spread, People flocked after sunset (after Sabbath was over)

What is the next Sabbath work we see from Jesus? = Last week's story

John 5:1, 5, 8-9 (1-9) = Lame man at pool of Bethesda (in Jerusalem) cured

What response resulted from this Sabbath work?

John 5:10-11, 16 (10-18) = Jews upset man carried mat, Mad at Jesus for work of healing

How did Jesus respond to their concern for the sanctity of the Sabbath?

John 7:21-24 = Tried to make them think through the craziness of their criticism

What upset the Jewish leaders in today's story?

Luke 6:1-2 = "Harvesting" grain on Sabbath

How did Jesus attempt to guide them to a better understanding of the truth of the Sabbath?

Luke 6:3-5 = Referred to David eating consecrated bread

What other example did He give in Matthew's version of this story?

Matthew 12:5-8 = Priests worked every Sabbath

Did this satisfy them? = Rabbis prohibited healing on Sabbath unless victim might not make to next day

Matthew 12:9-10 (Luke 6:6-7) = No, they held their position and tried to use it to trap Jesus

How did Jesus respond to their rejection of the truth? = *It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath*

Matthew 12:11-13 (Luke 6:8-10) = He tried to explain again and followed through in action

Did this satisfy them?

Matthew 12:14 (Luke 6:11) = No, it strengthened their resolve to stop this evil one

What did Jesus say in Mark's version of the story that helps explain the purpose of the Sabbath?

Mark 2:27 = *The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath*

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Did Jesus Observe the Sabbath? (*Matthew 5:17-18*)

Did Jesus observe the Sabbath?

Luke 4:16 = Yes, He went to worship in the synagogue every Sabbath

Why don't we continue to observe the Sabbaths as the Jews did? Did Jesus abolish them?

Matthew 5:17-18 = No, He fulfilled them

How did this affect the requirements of God's old covenant with His people?

Hebrews 9:15 = Jesus brought a new covenant that took effect after He died and rose

What happened to God's laws under this new covenant?

Hebrews 8:6-10 = They are written on our hearts and minds, we are His people

Does this mean that we don't have to keep God's laws?

Romans 8:3-4 = No, they have already been kept for us by Jesus, We live in His obedience

The Sabbath Rest for Christians (*Hebrews 4:1-11*)

If Jesus fulfilled the Sabbath, does that mean that everyone automatically receives His Sabbath rest?

Hebrews 4:1-2, 6 (1-6) = Those who reject the gospel and faith in Christ do not enter his rest

So is there still a Sabbath day of rest for those who have faith in Christ?

Hebrews 4:7-9 = Yes, God set another Sabbath day of rest for us

So when is that Sabbath day of rest?

Hebrews 4:3a, 10-11 = We are living in it, we are to enter His rest through faith

Christians and the Sabbath Day (*Colossians 2:16-3:2*)

How are we to respond to those who insist that we keep the Sabbath as commanded at Sinai?

Colossians 2:16-17 = Don't let them distract you, commands were a shadow of Christ

Should we try to follow these commands anyway?

Colossians 2:20-23 = No, although they appear to be right, they are human commands

Should we work to correct our misguided brothers who believe certain days are more holy?

Romans 14:5-6 (*Galatians 4:10-11*) = God did not command us to keep any day

How are we then to treat such rules and regulations on how to relate to God?

Colossians 3:1-2 = Don't focus on earthly commands, but on things above

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. How often do I devote a day of Sabbath to the Lord?
(*Exodus 20:8-11; Leviticus 23:3; Isaiah 56:1-8; 58:13-14; Ezekiel 20:12-20*)
2. In what ways have I realized the rest that God offers to me?
(*Exodus 33:12-14; Deuteronomy 5:12-15; 1 Chronicles 22:9; Psalm 16:9-11; 62:1-2; 90:17; Isaiah 11:10; 30:15; 32:15-18; Matthew 11:28-30; Revelation 14:13*)
3. When have I used a law or tradition as an excuse for not doing good when I could?
(*Matthew 12:5-13; 1 Samuel 15; Isaiah 1:11-17; Mark 7:6-13; 12:33; Luke 6:9; John 7:21-24*)
4. What do I do to ensure that I will not fall short of entering God's rest?
(*Hebrews 4:1-11; Numbers 14:21-35; John 14:1-6; Galatians 3:1-14; Ephesians 2:8-10; Philippians 2:12-13*)
5. What traditions do I carefully follow because I feel I have to?
(*Colossians 2:8, 16-3:2; Matthew 23; Mark 7:1-23; Romans 14:5-6*)