

dance is a necessity, for the growing Christian. God is telling us for our own good to attend the place of worship on the Sabbath day. He has promised us a wonderful blessing if we obey Him.

Acts 16:13 On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there.



If you are in a place where there is no church, then to worship God amongst nature is ideal. If you are on holidays, still remember the Sabbath, even if there is no church nearby. The Sabbath, ideally, is a time with God and fellow Christians. It is a time for worship, Bible study, prayer, walking amongst nature, or to think of others and visit the sick and needy. It is also a good time to share your faith.

Isaiah 66:22-23 As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me," declares the LORD, "so will your name and descendants endure. . . From one Sabbath to another, all Mankind will come and bow down before Me, says the Lord.

The Sabbath will be kept by God's people in the New Earth. God wants us to start keeping it now, in preparation for the time when we keep it with Him in His everlasting kingdom. Do you plan to honour God and keep His Sabbath day holy? If you honour God, He will greatly honour you. He will pour out His blessing upon you now, and also give you a place in the wonderful land beyond tomorrow.

Is it your plan to honour God and keep His Sabbath day holy? _____

Life's VITAL ANSWERS

Blessings and Privileges of God's Special Day.

Blessed
Sanctified
Rested

Isa 58:13,14 If you _____ and from doing as you please on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight and the LORD's holy day honorable, and if you honor it by not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words, then you will find your joy in the LORD, and I will cause you to ride on the heights of the land and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob." The mouth of the LORD has spoken.

When God's call: "Take your foot off My Sabbath" first comes to us, we naturally ask: How does God want us to keep the Sabbath? In what way should our conduct on this day differ from our conduct on the other days of the week?



Sabbath offers us the opportunity for more time in prayer talking to our Father in heaven

God has not left us in doubt on this question. He delights in positive, intelligent, spontaneous Sabbath keeping. He has, therefore, given us a complete set of guidelines to follow in our preparation for, and observance of, the Sabbath day. In this lesson we shall study the Bible's code of Sabbath-keeping etiquette.

Genesis 2:1-3 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so _____. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

Here are three basic principles of proper Sabbath observance:

It is blessed – or happy. It is not meant to be a burden or a day of drudgery; rather we will delight in the privilege to keep the Sabbath day.

It is made holy – or set apart. God set the Sabbath apart for a holy use. Six days are given for ordinary work, but the Sabbath is a holy day.

ward spiritual things. The Sabbath has been set apart for a holy purpose.

Why All The Restrictions?

God is not trying to spoil one's pleasure by His strict requirement of Sabbath keeping. He is asking us to decide whom to serve, and to devote more time to spiritual things so that He can give us a blessing. He wants to give us something good, not take anything away. He wants us to keep it holy, and this we cannot do while engaged in our own personal pleasure.

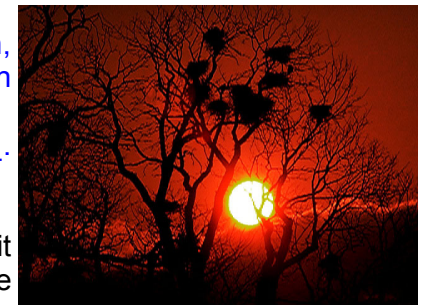
Leviticus 23:32 It is a sabbath of rest for you, and you must deny yourselves. _____ of the ninth day of the month _____ you are to observe your sabbath.

Sabbath is to be kept from evening to evening, or sunset to sunset. The beginning of the Sabbath was when evening shadows began in Nehemiah 13:19. This means that when the sun sets on Friday, we are in holy time, and when the sun sets on Saturday, the Sabbath is over. At sunset on Friday it's good to welcome the Sabbath with prayer and worship. Friday evening can be a good time to catch up on devotional reading.

Luke 4:16 He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day _____.

And he stood up to read.

For Christian fellowship and worship it is vital to attend the services of the church each Sabbath (Saturday). Here Jesus left us an example – each Sabbath found Him in the place of worship.



Hebrews 10:25 _____, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Here is wise admonition – we need to meet together – church atten-

Permissible Work On The Sabbath

Matthew 12:10-13 . . . and a man with a shriveled hand was there. Looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, they asked him, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" He said to them, "

How much more valuable is a man than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." So he stretched it out and it was completely restored, just as sound as the other.



There may be occasions when a Christian needs to work on the Sabbath day for the benefit of others in need. The sick are to be cared for, or an act of mercy may need to be performed. If someone is bleeding to death because of an accident, it is a Christian's duty to work hard on the Sabbath to save the victim's life, if it is within his/her power to do so. This is different from normal employment. It is a necessary work. It is wrong for a Christian to work unnecessarily on the Sabbath. This is a vital key to understanding Sabbath keeping: if it can be done on another day, leave it. God is against unnecessary work on the Sabbath. It is often necessary to warm food to make it palatable. It is necessary to wash dishes for hygienic reasons, but it is not necessary to sweat over a stove or dig the garden.

Isaiah 58:13 If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight and the LORD's holy day honorable, and if you honor it by not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words. . .

The Christian will call the Sabbath a delight and will look forward to it each week with keen anticipation. The day is devoted to God – not our own ways, nor seeking our own pleasure, nor even speaking our own words. It is a holy day. We cannot keep this day holy while playing sport, (golf, cricket, tennis etc.). Neither do the watching of television, listening to radio, or reading the newspaper direct our minds to-

It is a rest day – a rest from normal employment so that we can devote our worship specifically to God on His day.

Mark 2:27 Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath."

God wants us to keep the Sabbath for our own benefit. The word "Sabbath" means rest, and we all need physical and mental rest from the pressures of our normal employment. The 'batteries' need re-charging. If they aren't, poor health is inevitable. Not only will the physical and mental faculties suffer, but also the spiritual. The Sabbath rightly kept, will deeply enrich one's spiritual experience.

Exodus 20:8-11 Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.

. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

God's command forbids ordinary work on the Sabbath because it is a holy day. The commandment also forbids others working for you on the Sabbath, even strangers.

Exodus 34:21 Six days you shall labor, but on the seventh day you shall rest;



The ploughing and harvesting time can be very busy for farmers, yet God said, even in busy times you must rest on the Sabbath. Many, many farmers can testify how they have lost nothing by keeping God's particular command, but they have gained the blessings of the Sabbath. Whatever our business or occupation, we are instructed by God not to engage in it on Sabbath.

Sabbath offers us the opportunity for more time studying God's Word to learn more about Him

Exodus 16:23,25-28 He said to them, "This is what the LORD commanded: 'Tomorrow is to be a day of rest, a holy Sabbath to the LORD. _____.

Save whatever is left and keep it until morning.'" "Eat it today," Moses said, "because today is a Sabbath to the LORD. You will not find any of it on the ground today. Six days you are to gather it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will not be any." Nevertheless, some of the people went out on the seventh day to gather it, but they found none. Then the LORD said to Moses, "How long will you refuse to keep my commands and my instructions?"



The Sabbath offers us a day with less responsibilities in the kitchen

On the day before the Sabbath; called the preparation, God commanded all baking, and boiling to be done. In other words, the housewife is to rest on the Sabbath, and prepare all food on the preparation day (Friday). She needs the blessing of the Sabbath too, so no extensive cooking is to be done on the Sabbath to distract her from the atmosphere of worship. This doesn't mean food should be served cold. It is perfectly in order to eat warmed palatable food, but text discourages unnecessary cooking. When one considers how the Sabbath is to be kept, we need to guard against fanatical man-made restrictions, such as those practiced in Christ's time.

Notice in verses 27 and 28 how particular God is concerning Sabbath observance. Some of the people were disregarding the Sabbath, and God was intensely displeased. Interestingly, this event occurred prior to the giving of the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. Before the Sabbath command was given on the Mount God expected them to observe it properly. This is a clear indication that the command was known even though we have no specific record of it, prior to Sinai. God showed how particular He was about the Sabbath, by sending manna for the Israelites every day for forty years. On Fridays a double portion fell, but none ever fell on the Sabbath.

Mark 15:42 It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath). So as evening approached...

There is no doubt concerning the location of the 'preparation day'. It is the day before the Sabbath, and its purpose is to prepare for the Sabbath. This is the time to do all the weekend shopping, cooking, cleaning etc. so that the Sabbath is free for rest.

Nehemiah 13:16-18 Men from Tyre who lived in Jerusalem were bringing in fish and all kinds of merchandise and _____. I rebuked the nobles of Judah and said to them, "What is this wicked thing you are doing—desecrating the Sabbath day? Didn't your forefathers do the same things, so that our God brought all this calamity upon us and upon this city? Now you are stirring up more wrath against Israel by desecrating the Sabbath."

Here is another principle of Sabbath observance. It is not a day for business – for buying or selling. These activities, while not wrong within themselves, distract from the holiness of the Sabbath. To engage in buying and selling is to profane the Sabbath. Food, fuel and other needs are to be purchased on Friday so there will be no need to go near a shop on the Sabbath.

Jeremiah 17:24,25 But if you are careful to obey me, declares the LORD, and bring no load through the gates of this city on the Sabbath, but keep the Sabbath day holy by not doing any work on it, then kings who sit on David's throne will come through the gates of this city with their officials. They and their officials will come riding in chariots and on horses, accompanied by the men of Judah and those living in Jerusalem, and this city will be inhabited forever.



A day set aside to strengthen family relationships

If God's people had kept the Sabbath, Jerusalem would have stood forever. God desires the Sabbath to be different; He is very particular about His holy day.