

John # 68 “It Is Lawful To Do Good On The Sabbath”

Psalm 92; Matthew 12:1-14; John 5:16-23

The Sabbath was designed by God to be a day of R & R; rest and reflection

Although the original Sabbath was commemorated on the last day of the week, it was designed to signify first things first, that is; before fulfilling any special observances in their Law, the Jews must always first honor God for graciously providing everything for them including life itself.

The Sabbath was intended to illustrate that the Law is not to be considered a burden of drudgery but a gift from God to rejoice over.

The Sabbath like everything in life was all about Creator God and not about His creation, man; Ezekiel 20:12 “Also I gave them My Sabbaths as a sign between us, so they would know that I the Lord made them holy.”

Everything that could be provided for man in his state of innocence was provided and there wasn't another thing that needed to be added to it.

And so, God will rest until man sins and once man sins, God goes to work again to provide man's salvation.

The Sabbath simply means God rests because He has provided everything necessary for man and it didn't mean originally that man does any resting; that isn't intended here at all.

The Sabbath was to be a memorial to the fact that God provided everything for man and that man can add nothing to it, commemorating the very principle of man's salvation.

It's completely about God's grace because He does all of the providing and man simply rests in what God provides.

The no work part of the Sabbath was to remind the Jews to keep on remembering that they could do nothing for their salvation but receive it freely from God Who graciously provides it; so they could only rest in what God had already done without ever legitimately attempting to add anything to it.

The Sabbath was God's way of preaching the Gospel of His Son and Israel's Messiah to His people.

The Jews often failed in proper Sabbath observance because many of them were not born again.

So, as a result, they turned a fantastic memorial to the grace of God into a pretentious billboard for legalism.

At the close of the work week, Saturday was to be a holy, sanctified or set apart rest day in the Lord, not from the Lord and just as at the end of the horrendous torturous slavery in Egypt, the Lord provided redemption which brings rest and both of these Sabbaths are actually precursors to the best rest of all, the eternal Sabbath rest of the finished work of Jesus Christ, His completed redemption on the cross for us!

At the time of our Lord, the Jewish leaders had completely perverted the Sabbath by making it infinitely stricter than had been intended by God, so it was their misapplication of the Mosaic Law with their new stringent rituals and regulations added to it that they accused Jesus of violating.

And so, fasting and mourning the deceased, along with any food and clothing that in any way represented work and of course, any form of fun were strictly forbidden.

The Sabbath not only taught that the earth and all that is on it belonged to the Lord God but also that the land of Israel was His special possession, the importance of understanding His point that man shall not live by bread alone but by every Word that proceeds from the Mouth of God and that Jesus Christ is their daily bread Who came down from Heaven for them just like the manna did in the wilderness.

All creation has been expecting that blessed Sabbath when it shall be fully delivered from the bondage of corruption.

The incredible irony is that in attempting to uphold the sacred intent of the Sabbath day, the encyclopedia-sized rulebook of the Pharisees which contained their guidelines for proper Sabbath observance outlining how to completely avoid work, was the most laborious task of all!

So, the Sabbath is a good thing, a wonderful opportunity to have the greatest R & R (rest and reflection) and yet these most high reverent Pharisees of Israel have distorted God's grace as is always the case because religious legalism hates grace with an undying passion.

The Lord Jesus is saying:

“Hey Pharisees, religious leaders of Israel, shepherds of God's sheep, experts in the Law, caretakers of God's precious Word, examples to all who look up to you;

I did something God would do on the Sabbath, something wholesome, something profitable, something necessary and good, don't you above all people get it?”