Dear Reader,

I am new to producing reading sermons. So, if you have any suggestions as to how I might improve my format or what I include – please email me at cdanielwilson@gmail.com. **I will warn you, that I do not use short sentences**. I will endeavor to work on this over time, but I don’t naturally write that way. However, you can easily break most of my longer sentences into 2 or 3 smaller ones where I have “…” or “–“ or commas. If you do the work on making it into smaller sentences – feel free to email it to me, and I am happy to share your work with others. I do have some of these available which people have sent me. I will eventually make them available as part of the normal manuscripts.

I have left my sermon manuscript formatted the way I normally write and read my sermons. They are colourful and written in conversational English. If you are a grammar nazi – then you will be frustrated with my punctuation and phrasing. However, once you read it out loud, you will normally be able to tell what I meant to say. SERIOUSLY, READ IT OUTLOUD. You will also see that I use a good bit of bold, italics, underlining and different colours to signal what are the most important things to say, and also to make it easier for my eye to pick up my place in the middle of paragraphs. I would recommend that you keep as many of those things as possible to help you keep your place. However, you will probably want to increase the spacing between lines. I highly encourage you to commit as much of the introduction or children’s illustrations to memory as you can, so that these can be delivered to the congregation with maximum eye contact.

**Where possible, I highly recommend that you listen to the sermon as I preached it at either the Nelson website or the website of North Shore.** I recommend that because that will also help hear the places where I added or skipped over material in the manuscript, and the places where I clarified my meaning. I have edited bits and pieces which I thought most important, but I have not sought to include all the additional material that comes to me while in the pulpit. I would practically have to use a transcription service for that. However, I hope and pray that this sermon will be a blessing to you and to your congregation. To God be the Glory!

Blessings in our Lord, Pastor Daniel Wilson

**My Suggestions for the Order of Service**

Song before the service: #89B

 **Heidelberg #45 *LAW#6***

Dear People of God, and Visitors amongst us… Why are we here?! **We are here because our help is in the name …** And we seek Him in Worship this AM… And God greets you: Grace, Mercy & Peace from God the Father, Son & HS ***A.***

*Let us sing a song of Praise* **AM:#103B“Now w/ Joyful Exultation”**

***Call to Repentance:*** Please turn with me in your Bibles to Matthew 10:28-39:

 This passage calls you and me to seek and follow the Lord above all else! Your love for God must be greater than your love for your family/friends! *It must be greater than even your own self-love, & the love for your* *reputation* and the opinion of others! You must be willing to stand up and deny ANYTHING in this world, before you deny Christ! In a way, That sounds so hard and harsh… but I really don’t think it is as hard as it sounds. **The thing that makes it hard or easy is your perspective regarding Christ!** If He really did obey God’s Law for 33 years as your substitute, and if He really did suffer an eternity of Hell on your behalf while hanging on the cross, and if He really did rise from the dead as a guarantee that you and I who believe in Him will LIVE forever… ***then of course we will love Him more than everything else put together!***

 **That is the foundation of our salvation – Jesus Christ!** When we profess faith in Christ alone, we are indeed saved from our sin, and made righteous in God’s Sight!

**#191 How Great Thou Art vs.1,3,4**

 Congregational prayer

**Confessional Reading: LAW series: Lord’s Day 38, as well as WCF 21:7+8**

**As *an act of worship, let us now, joyfully and obediently return to the Lord a portion of that which He has given to us!*** Let us worship with God’s tithes/freewill offerings ***(as Deacons come)***

**\* Song of Preparation: Psalm #360“Safely thru another week…”**

**Sermon Text: Exodus 20:8-11 Sermon Title: Sabbath… *WHAT Sabbath?!***

***Let us respond to the sermon,* \* Song of Response: PSALM #357 “This Day at thy creating Word” same tune as 89B**

***May the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ , & the Love of God the Father, & the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*** **\* Doxology: Song #491“Glory Be to the Father”**

# **Morning Sermon: “Sabbath… What Sabbath?!”**

Text: Exodus 20:8-11 Reading: LD 38 + Westminster Conf. Selection

**Introduction:** Children, when I was a little boy, I often got confused when we read the 10 commandments in church. There we were… sitting on a Sunday (the first day of the week), and we would get to the 4th Commandment, and it tells us that we need to keep the Sabbath day holy… 6 days you shall work and the 7th is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. *Now… the word “Sabbath” means “day of rest” –* When I was little, I heard 7th day, and I started wondering, WHY DIDN’T WE COME TO CHURCH YESTERDAY?! It often made me uneasy, because the 4th commandment is so clear and very rarely did anyone ever explain why we were worshipping on the first day instead of the 7th!

And if you only look at the Old Testament, then it does look like we should all be 7th day Adventists… But that is simply because we are less familiar with the New Testament! We worship on Sunday Because Christians have always followed the example/teaching of Christ and the Apostles in the New Testament, and so we celebrate the Sunday as our “Sabbath” (The First day of the week is our day of Rest and Worship). ***It can be very confusing at first, but this morning, we will begin to look at How Christians should obey the 4th commandment.***

(**Review**) The 4th Commandment is the last of the FIRST table of the Law. As we have discussed previously, the first four commandments explain your duty to God – We have already seen that we are only to worship the one true God of the Bible, and that we are only to worship/view Him as He has revealed Himself in His Word. Furthermore, we must respect God by the way we think, speak and act, so that in all things we might promote the honor of His Holy Name, for God will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses His name. In the fourth commandment, we learn God’s will for ***When and How*** we are to worship Him in all of life.

***Here God commands you to:***

***THEME: Arrange your life so that you might take one day of holy rest and worship each week.***

*This commandment is the largest commandment both here in Exodus and in Deuteronomy – and with the New Testament changes to this day, it was simply silly to try to cover the whole commandment in a single sermon.* So, today, we will deal with the **WHEN and the WHY** of this commandment, **and then over the next 2 weeks,** Lord willing, we will deal with the ***practical* WHAT and HOW** elements of this command.

We will divide our time by asking and answering two simple questions:

1. **When do Christians celebrate the Sabbath?**
2. **Why do we celebrate the Sabbath at all?**

*Our first question is this:*

# **WHEN do Christians celebrate the Sabbath? (REPEAT)**

*AS I pointed out in the introduction – at first glance, it appears that we are here on the wrong day… But as we learn in the New Testament & Church History:* ***Christians Should NOT celebrate the 7th day Sabbath anymore!***

* 1. **There are 5 reasons WHY we celebrate the 1st day instead of the 7th**
1. ***The Most Profound Reason is that Christ rose from the Dead on the first day of the week.*** Now to many, that doesn’t sound like a profound reason. ***They say, SO WHAT?! How does that change a commandment?!*** Quite simply: All things were initially created through Christ *(John1)*, **AND** ***in His death, burial and resurrection, Christ*** accomplished salvation and new-creation for all those who believe in Him. And Then Christ sat down at the right hand of God the Father … and is now resting/reigning until His Father makes His enemies His footstool (Psalm 110:1, Hebrews 10). ***Even as God’s OT people were commanded to rest on the day God rested from Creation, SO NOW, Christians must rest on the day Christ rested from the new creation!***
2. ***Secondly,* Jesus re-set the pattern of when God meets with His people.** He began when He met with His gathered disciples on Easter Sunday, and there He accepted their worship. He didn’t meet with them again for ANOTHER week – when He again came on Sunday! *Remember that when Jesus Died, the curtain in the temple had been torn, a symbol/sign that God wouldn’t meet with His people at the temple in the same way as before Christ’s death!!* ***So, these appearances of Jesus to His disciples were significant – Jesus was showing that God had changed the day of worship – He now met with His people on the 1st day, not the 7th!***
3. ***Thirdly, This new pattern is confirmed because the Holy Spirit came on the first day of the week on Pentecost*** God was limiting the demonstration of His power to Sundays to make this new pattern clear... Sunday became the day of great activity for the Holy Spirit: Most notably thru the application of the preaching of the Word! **And Again** with the Apostle John, Revelation 1, it was on the 1st day of the week when He was “in the Spirit” and God gave Him the vision of Revelation. What is striking, is that by this time, the first day of the week had become known as on “the Lord’s Day.” God so frequently sent His power and blessing on the day of Christ’s resurrection, that it became the Day dedicated to the Lord!  ***HIS Day!***
4. ***Fourthly, the Disciples recognized this pattern and began to practice this as the day of rest/worship*** : A few key examples: (1) Acts 20:7, First day of the week, the Christians gathered to break bread (perhaps reference to communion/love feast) and we are told that Paul preached until midnight. (2) I Corinthians 16:2, Paul instructs the believers ON the FIRST day of the WEEK, to set aside money in keeping with their income (the tithe/offering) so that their gift will be ready when he comes – this is a part of worship to gather money for the Lord’s work/ministry to the poor. (3) John calls the first day of the week the Lord’s Day – Lord being the Greek used to translate God’s proper name from the Hebrew – **This is Jehovah’s Day – God’s Day of Worship/Rest!**
5. ***Fifthly, The Early Church recognized the pattern*,** and for well over 1,000 years *from my research*, no orthodox Christians celebrated Saturday Sabbath – There were some splinter Heretical groups which denied Jesus’ virgin birth, Paul’s writings and Sunday Sabbath, but they were small/rare. **Numerous historical writings bear out that the Early Church celebrated Sunday as the day of rest and worship and considered Saturday observance as heretical *(because that was a part of the Judaizer movement which was condemned in the NT).***

These 5 reasons prove that we are to worship/rest on the first day, not the 7th! ***No single command, but a clear pattern!***

* 1. **Practical warning against those who teach Saturday observance - DANGER**

**It is very important here to take a moment to warn you against the seemingly persuasive teachings of those who claim it is best to Worship on Saturday**. The Seventh Day Adventists are not a true Christian church, they are a sect/cult following of Ellen G White, and their official teachings place worshipping on Saturday as an integral part of salvation – thereby destroying the Gospel! ***Having said that, there are some 7th Day Adventist groups which I have heard about who are distancing themselves from Ellen White and growing in godliness – but you need discernment with such groups.***

 The Nazarenes, Hebraic “Christians” call Jesus by Hebrew pronunciation of Jeshua, and make the Sabbath an integral element of salvation to their damnation – **Christ + anything is NOTHING!** There are NO legitimate Biblical Christian churches that make a theological argument for Saturday Worship which DO NOT also Have numerous heretical teachings. ***Please be forewarned, while there are probably Christians involved with these groups, the groups themselves are NOT fellow Christian churches.*** BECAUSE keeping the Sabbath (or any law) isn’t INTEGRAL to your salvation! You are saved by faith in Christ alone, or not at all!

*So, if this isn’t integral to our salvation, WHY do we do it? …*

# **Why do We celebrate the Sabbath at All?! (***Which is our second point:***REPEAT)**

*The examples and reasons given just before should be enough, but there are 3 big ideas which we need to keep in mind:*

* 1. **This commandment is in the First Table of the Law: It is a part of HOW you LOVE God!** *(Love/will obey)*

*God has instructed us to take one day in 7 as a day of rest/worship,* **and do we dare ignore it?!** *Some teach that all Sabbath observance has been done away with… but that doesn’t make sense because Jesus repeats the summary of the first table of the Law: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with ALL YOUR STRENGTH!* ***Taking one day for rest and worship is a part of loving God with all your strength!***Think about that summary for a moment: Loving God with all your Heart is the first commandment (no other gods in your heart); Loving God with all your soul is the Second commandment (view and worship God in Spirit and in Truth from your soul); Loving God with all your mind is the 3rd commandment (we consciously honor God’s name in our thoughts, words and actions); ***and finally We love God with all our strength by the way we arrange our lives to set aside one day in 7 for rest and worship! If you truly love Christ, then you will want to rest/worship on this day!***

* 1. **Secondly, this was a Creation Ordinance – The command regarding our pattern of work still stands!**

*God set the pattern for man’s work and rest during creation week,* and while the day we celebrate has been changed by Christ Himself, **the pattern of 6 days of work and 1 day of rest/worship remains in full effect.** We cannot decide arbitrarily to only work 3 days a week and worship/rest the rest of the time. That is not obedient/honouring to God!

 **Creation ordinances do not get easily set aside!** What is more, God blessed the Sabbath day – He blessed the pattern of having a day of rest each week! Perhaps the biggest objection to this reason is that there are two passages which appear to erase the need for the Sabbath:

1. ***First:*** **Romans 14:5-6**  *One man regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Let each man be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, Observe it for the Lord…* Here Paul is pointing out the importance of the conscience in determining debatable matters (and he speaks of food and other aspects of life as well at this point). The main principle is: EACH ONE SHOULD BE FULLY CONVINCED IN HIS MIND. But, two things prevent this from clearly abolishing the Sabbath commandment: (1) Many commentators debate whether Paul was talking about the weekly Sabbath or the Levitical religious holidays of the OT, like Passover, Pentecost etc. (2) this never says that the Sabbath is irrelevant, but that each person needs to follow the dictate of their conscience when there is any debate about a matter of Christian liberty. It is NOT a clear abrogation, if anything this is an example of the mercy of Christ being extended to those with weak consciences! ***Sabbath breaking doesn’t condemn to Hell!***
2. **HOWEVER: Colossians 2:16-17** *Therefore let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink, or in respect to a festival, or a New Moon or a Sabbath day. 17 things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ***. This passage clearly refers to the special feast days of the OT which were all fulfilled in Christ.** They are no longer in effect, as we saw when we looked at how the Levitical laws have been abolished in Ephesians 2 a couple of months ago. You don’t have to celebrate Passover, but you are free to celebrate it if you wanted (so long as you don’t make sacrifices!). **So, you see, This passage isn’t getting rid of the 4th com. but rather addressing the change from the Levitical Law to the freedom of the NT Christian. So, The Creation Pattern for our Week has never been abolished!**

**Which brings us to the 3rd reason why we should celebrate a Christian Sabbath:**

* 1. *Thirdly***: The Christian Sabbath is our Remembrance of Redemption**

*God’s saving the people of Israel from Egypt is crucial to understanding the Law.* **NO ONE EVER KEPT THE LAW AS A WAY OF SALVATION – some Jews wrongly thought that, but they couldn’t do it…** God saved His people, then gave them His instructions for life. He never said, “keep this and then I will save you from Egypt…”

Furthermore, Israel’s salvation from Egypt was always intended to be a picture of God’s ultimate salvation of sinners… *Sinners saved from Sin/Death and Hell through the Cross of Christ*! *When Christ arose from the grave on the FIRST DAY of the Week He conquered death!* When we set aside this day as a day of rest and worship, we are remembering our redemption from the slavery of Sin! *We have annual holidays* celebrating the end of various wars/great victories… but we celebrate this day ***every week*** because Christ’s victory over Sin is infinitely more important than any other in History! ***Why*** would you ever want to forget that today Christ rose from the dead? ***That today, the victory was won! That*** TODAY Christ met with His people and accepted their worship, *apart from observance to the law?* ***This*** is the day that the Holy Spirit moved most powerfully in all of History – and it is the day ***on which He continues to move powerfully through the Preaching of God’s Word!***

***Surely this is a day which we should never neglect…*** **FOR** This is the Day of the Lord our God!

**CONCLUSION:** We must arrange our lives so that we might take this one day of Holy rest/worship each week. Because God has made it clear by HIS OWN example (*in Christ and the Holy Spirit*) that this is the day on which God meets with His people. **BUT**… Observing this day is NOT a part of your salvation – for you cannot add to or subtract from Christ’s perfect work, and all those who claim otherwise are Dangerous Heretics who preach a false gospel.

 **Nevertheless, You SHOULD** be zealous to celebrate this day: **as a way** to love the Lord with all your strength, **as a way** to obey God’s Creation pattern of 1 day of Holy rest/worship for every 6 days of work, ***AND*** **as a way** to remember your redemption from slavery to sin!

***Allow me to close with One final thought:*** From Creation to Christ, the OT saints looked forward to salvation… Therefore, they worked 6 days and then rested.

From Christ’s ascension to Christ’s Return: we rest in Christ on the First Day of the week, and then we proceed to work/serve Him for His glory! ***In this way, the Christian Sabbath becomes a picture (if you will) of the improvement of the New Covenant over against the old, for what they looked and waited for, We Already Have complete in Christ!***

 ***WE CELEBRATE THAT COMPLETED WORK by Resting/worshipping on the Christian Sabbath: AMEN.***