

# Is the Sabbath Important?

or

## Time With Your Friend!

I was in love with a beautiful girl, and I thought she liked me too. But I had a problem. The only opportunity for us to spend any special time together was once a week. The first time we made arrangements for this special occasion, I told her I would arrive at her house just as the sun was setting, and the sky was beautiful, purple and romantic. When the prearranged time arrived, I came up the front steps, anxious to see her, and I knocked on the door.

Her little brother came to the door. "Where's your sister?" I asked.

"Oh," he said, "I think she's in the shower. But you can come in and wait if you want to."

So I waited. After a while she came through the house headed toward the kitchen. Her hair was all wet and up in curlers. As she went past me she said a quick hello, then disappeared into the kitchen.

This was rather disappointing. She seemed to be doing something out there in the kitchen with an iron and ironing board, preparing something for the next day I guess. I also heard some pots and pans rattling as the oven door opened and shut.

I began to wonder just how anxious she really was to see me, but I continued waiting. After a while some of the other members of her family came in. She came out of the kitchen, introduced us, and said, "Maybe we can sit down and get acquainted."

But her little brother said, "When are we going to eat?" After a bit of discussion they decided we would eat first, so we went to the table and sat down.

After supper someone said, "Why don't we go into the family room and get acquainted with our guest?"

Her brother said, "Do we have to?"

I didn't feel too good about that, but we went into the family room anyway and began to talk. I noticed that several of them were terribly sleepy, including the young woman I had come to see. She kept nodding and yawning. Finally, her little brother went to sleep while we were talking.

My weekend with this young woman's family was off to a poor start. She apologized however, and said, "Listen, I had an awful lot to do this week, and I'm sorry I wasn't ready for your coming, but things will be better tomorrow. We've made some special plans." My heart began to pick up, and I felt better.

I went to bed and dreamed of going to some quiet place where we could really communicate and get to know each other better.

The next day I discovered she had invited a group of friends to get together to go out in nature. At first I looked forward to it, but then I found out that all of her friends were bringing their motorcycles. We went out in nature all right-but I couldn't even talk above the roar of the engines. Finally noontime came, and we sat down for a picnic lunch. She seemed to be very tired, and after we'd eaten, she and her friends spread their blankets out under the trees for a siesta. We couldn't talk then. I ended up spending most of the afternoon walking alone in the woods.

When I returned to the group, they were awake. As I approached I could hear them talking. I overheard my friend saying she could hardly wait until I left, because she had exciting plans for that evening-after I was gone. I left that weekend, sad and disappointed!

It would be terrible to love someone who really doesn't want to spend time with you. Did you know that Jesus likes you so much that He has set aside some special time each week for you and He to spend together? You could think of it as a date with God ...

*“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy-laden and overburdened, and I will cause you to rest. [I will ease and relieve and refresh your souls.]” Matthew 11:28 (The Amplified Bible)*

A young boy put a lot of time into carving and painting a model boat. While he was testing it in a river, the current caught it and swept it away. Several weeks later he saw it displayed in a shop window. When he told the shopkeeper that it was his boat, the man said he had purchased it and would not let it go without getting his money back. Weeks passed and the boy returned with hard-earned money to redeem his boat. As he left the store with it, the shopkeeper heard him say, “Now you’re twice mine. Once, because I made you, and twice because I bought you back.”

Sabbath gives us a beautiful picture of a God who loves us so much that He has set aside special time each week to spend with us! This time reminds us of who He is, of the special relationship we have together, and of where He wants to take us!!

1. Who is the Creator of all things?

Genesis 1:1

John 1:3 & 10

Hebrews 1:1-2

2. What is the Creator’s relationship to the Sabbath?

Genesis 2:1-3

Exodus 20:8-11

Matthew 12:8

Spending special Sabbath time with our Friend, Jesus, each week reminds us that He made this world and everything in it (including us—and the Sabbath). It is sort of like a weekly birthday celebration. Sabbath helps us acknowledge and appreciate the power and majesty of our Friend!

3. What additional reason does Deuteronomy 5:12-15 give us to remember this special Sabbath time (notice especially vs.15—this passage is a repeat of the command given in Exodus 20 with this important addition).
4. Are the Israelites the only ones who need freedom from slavery?

John 8:34-36

Romans 3:23-24

Romans 5:6-8

Romans 8:2

Some have said that the Sabbath was for the Israelites (Jews), but God made it at creation, 2,500 years before Abraham (the first Jew) was even born. Man has needed freedom from the slavery of sin since Adam and Eve believed Satan’s lies and chose not to trust their Friend, Jesus. From the beginning until now, Sabbath has been a reminder that Jesus is both our Creator and Savior!! As illustrated by the story of the boy and his sailboat, the Sabbath is a message from Jesus saying to us, “ Now you’re twice mine...”

5. If Jesus had nothing more to say to us through a special Sabbath time than what we have already discovered, it would be great news—but it gets even better! What problem is common to all of us as people?

Job 14:4

Isaiah 64:6

Jeremiah 13:23

*Suppose I were to offer you a brand new Mercedes or Ferrari for no money down. Would you be interested? Probably! If I told you that your payments would be \$1,000 a month for the rest of your life, would you still be interested? Probably not! Being offered salvation as a free gift is great. But if after that, you have to work for the rest of your life trying hard to “behave the way a Christian is supposed to,” chances are, you’d lose interest in the free gift.*

6. How does this problem relate to the Sabbath?

Exodus 31:13

Ezekiel 20:12

7. Webster defines the word sanctify as “to make holy, to purify.” Is a Christ-like life your responsibility or His?

Philippians 1:6

Philippians 2:13

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

Hebrews 12:2

Part of the good news of the Sabbath is that not only will Jesus free you from the guilt of sin—He will free you from its power as well! Jesus not only offers you a “car for no money down,” He promises to “make the payments” for you!! Sabbath is a reminder that our Friend, Jesus, is our Sanctifier.

8. What does Jesus promise you in Matthew 11:28

Many passages in Scripture which refer to the Sabbath mention rest. Jesus is the Rest-giver. Sabbath is a symbol of depending on Him. When we “remember the Sabbath day” we remember the power and majesty of our Friend, the Creator; we remember the love of our Friend, the Savior; we remember the strength of our Friend, the Sanctifier. Sabbath reminds us that we can truly rest because our hope is not in ourselves, but in the Lord of the Sabbath!!

A college girl found the study of a particular book on literature to be quite boring. Then she met and fell in love with the one who had written it. Once she knew the author, she became fascinated by his book. The more you come to know Jesus, the more you will look forward to spending daily time with Him and special time with Him each Sabbath! Continue to look for Jesus as you study these passages this week!

*Begin each session with prayer* - maybe something like this: “Lord, help me to come to know you better as we spend time together...”

*Read the passage* - several times noticing as many details as you can.

*Imagine the setting* - put yourself in the picture. Try to imagine the sounds, smells, sensations.

*Summarize the passage* - in your own words.

*Apply the passage* - what message is God giving you?

*Meditate and pray* - meditate on how this passage makes Jesus more real. Talk to Him about the passage and about using the information you have learned to deepen your friendship with Him. Listen for impressions He is giving you.

### **Passages for This Week**

**1 John 2:3-6**

**1 John 2:7-11**

**1 John 2:12-14**

**1 John 2:15-17**

## 1 John 2:18-27

## 1 John 2:28-3:10

## 1 John 3:11-24

**Y**ou ask what Sabbath means to me? In a word, restoration, but there is a story behind that word. Though you'd never know from looking at me now, I spent two-thirds of my life paralyzed.

My age? Well, I'll be sixty-three next month. That's right, I was crippled nearly forty years! An accident? Not exactly. I wish the cause of my paralysis had been something so honorable. The truth is, I was diagnosed with syphilis when I was twenty and could no longer walk by twenty-two. It shames me to speak of it now. It was entirely my own fault that I spent all those years as a burden to others and an embarrassment to myself.

I'm sure glad Jesus didn't hold my past against me! *He* is why I'm walking now, you know! I was lying on a mat beside the Pool of Bethesda—the mineral springs, down near the Sheep Gate. Many folks believe that occasionally an angel stirs the water there and that the first person to enter the pool afterward will be healed of whatever ails him. That's where Jesus found me, near death, at the water's edge, --hoping to see the ripples and be the first.

It was a Sabbath (three years ago this week, in fact). Crowds of people were moving along the street which passes directly by the Pool of Bethesda. It's the street that leads through the Sheep Gate entrance to the temple Court of the Gentiles. Anyway, the noise of the street spoke to me of multitudes who could move *without* being carried, --while I lay completely dependent upon the kindness or pity of others for all my needs. Thirty-eight years. Thirty-eight years of absolute helplessness and despair!

Suddenly *He* was there, leaning over, looking down at me. Though He didn't say anything at first, the compassion on His face spoke volumes and I felt as though He understood my sorrow. His eyes misted over, then He turned His face toward the sky and I saw tears spill down His cheeks.

After a moment, He looked back into my eyes and I'll never forget His words! "Would you like to be well?" He asked, and suddenly, unexplainably, hope surged in my heart.

Then reality tumbled back into my mind and, discouraged once more, I said, "I have no one, Sir, to help me into the pool when the water is stirred."

He appeared not to notice my reply. With a look that seemed to penetrate my soul, He said slowly, deliberately, and with authority, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk out of here!" At that same moment, my whole body tingled (like your foot or leg sometimes does after it has fallen asleep). With the tingling I felt new life and strength surging through every limb. Almost reflexively, and without stopping to consider the impossible, I found myself doing what He had commanded. I was WELL!! After thirty-eight years, I could move on my own! Ecstatic, I stooped and rolled up my mat, as He had said to. When I stood again and turned to thank Him, He was gone. I didn't even know His name!

If you've ever seen a colt let out to pasture after being confined in a stable, then you may have some idea how I responded to this gift of healing. Leaping high into the air, arms outstretched, I landed with a spring in my step and broke into a run. I was laughing and shouting and crying, one after the other. People stepped out of my way and stared as I raced up Sheep Street toward the temple, praising God.

Some Jewish leaders met me in the temple courtyard, and with lowered brows asked me why I was carrying my bed-roll on the Sabbath. When I laughingly told them, "Because the One who just healed me said to," they angrily demanded to know His name. I told them I hadn't a clue, though I would very much like to know! Later that day, I met Him again and this time learned His name, -- Jesus! It's a *good name*! Did you know it means Savior? He *sure* saved me!! Ever since then, Sabbaths have been special for me--you know what I mean?

As I mentioned earlier, that all happened just three years ago. Here it is Passover Week again. Did you see Jesus today, as he rode into Jerusalem while the whole city cheered? I heard that some of our leaders asked Him to quiet the crowd, but He refused. Even though they are jealous of His popularity, I think at last they will have to accept Him. After all, nearly everyone in Jerusalem wants to make Him a king!!! I have a feeling this is going to be a Sabbath that will be remembered for years to come!

A Study Regarding the Biblical Sabbath Day

## **Creation**

1. Who is the Creator of all things? Ephesians 3:9
2. When and by whom was the Sabbath made? Genesis 2:1-3
3. For whom did Christ say the Sabbath was made? Mark 2:27
4. What did God do in the beginning on the seventh day? Genesis 2:2-3
5. When did God bless and sanctify the seventh day? Genesis 2:2-3
6. Who made the Sabbath day holy? Exodus 20:11

## **Existence Prior to Sinai**

7. How did God prove Israel in the wilderness? Exodus 16:14
8. On which day was a double portion of manna gathered? Exodus 16:22
9. What did Moses say to the rulers? Exodus 16:23
10. What did some people do on the seventh day? Exodus 16:27
11. How did God reprove their disobedience? Exodus 16:28
12. Why was twice as much manna given on the sixth day? Exodus 16:29
13. How did God begin the 4th commandment as spoken to Israel? Exodus 16:29

## **What Day Is The Sabbath?**

14. What day immediately precedes the first day of the week? Matthew 28:1
15. What day of the week is the Sabbath, "according to the commandment"? Exodus 16:22

## **Continued Relevance to Believers**

16. Did Christ, while on the earth, keep the Sabbath? Luke 4:16
17. In what instruction to His disciples did Christ recognize the existence of the Sabbath long after His ascension? Matthew 24:20 (October, A.D. 66)
18. Did Christ's followers keep the Sabbath after His death? Luke 23:56
19. On what day did Paul and Barnabas preach at Antioch? Acts 13:14
20. When did the Gentiles ask Paul to repeat his sermon? Acts 13:42
21. On what day did Paul preach to the women at Philippi? Acts 16:13
22. On what day did Paul preach to the Jews at Thessalonica? Acts 17:1-2
23. How often will the redeemed congregate to worship the Lord? Isaiah 66:22-23

## **What Day Is The Lord's Day?**

24. On what day was John in the Spirit? Revelation 1:10
25. Who is Lord of the Sabbath? Matthew 12:8; Mark 2:28
26. What through Isaiah, does the Lord call the Sabbath? Isaiah 58:13
27. What day does the commandment say is the Lord's? Exodus 20:10
28. What does Isaiah, speaking for God, call the seventh-day Sabbath? Isaiah 58:13

## **Law**

29. Of what is the Sabbath commandment a part? Exodus 20:8-11
30. In His most famous sermon, what did Christ say of the law? Matthew 5:17
31. How enduring did He say the law is? Matthew 5:18
32. What did Christ say of worship based on tradition? Matthew 15:9
33. In all matters of religion, whose commands should we obey? Acts 5:29

**Genesis 1:1** “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

**John 1:3 & 10** “All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.”

**Hebrews 1:1-2\*** “In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.”

**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 on the seventh day he rested from all his work. 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.”

**Exodus 20:8-11** “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.”

**Matthew 12:8** “For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.”

**Deuteronomy 5:12-15** “Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you. And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.”

**John 8:34-36** “Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.”

**Romans 3:23-24** “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,”

**Romans 5:6-8** “For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

**Romans 8:2** “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.”

**Job 14:4** “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? No one!”

**Isaiah 64:6\*** “All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.”

**Jeremiah 13:23\*** “Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Neither can you do good who are accustomed to doing evil.”

**Exodus 31:13** “Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: ‘Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you.’”

**Ezekiel 20:12** “Moreover I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between them and Me, that they might know that I am the LORD who sanctifies them.”

**Philippians 1:6\*** “being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”

**Philippians 2:13\*** “for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.”

**1 Thessalonians 5:23-24\*** “May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.”

**Hebrews 12:2** “Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

**Matthew 11:28\*** “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”

*(Unless otherwise mentioned, all quoted scripture is from the New King James Version)*

*\* New International Version*

**1 Ephesians 3:9** and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ;

2. **Genesis 2:1-3** Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. (2) And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. (3) Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.
3. **Mark 2:27** And He said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.
- 4 & 5. Please see #2 above
6. **Exodus 20:11** For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.
7. **Exodus 16:4** Then the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you. And the people shall go out and gather a certain quota every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in My law or not.
- 8 & 9. **Exodus 16:22-23** And so it was, on the sixth day, that they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for each one. And all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. (23) Then he said to them, "This is what the LORD has said: 'Tomorrow is a Sabbath rest, a holy Sabbath to the LORD. Bake what you will bake today, and boil what you will boil; and lay up for yourselves all that remains, to be kept until morning.'"
- 10-12. **Exodus 16:27-29** Now it happened that some of the people went out on the seventh day to gather, but they found none. (28) And the LORD said to Moses, "How long do you refuse to keep My commandments and My laws? (29) "See! For the LORD has given you the Sabbath; therefore He gives you on the sixth day bread for two days. Let every man remain in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day."
13. **Exodus 20:8** "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
14. **Matthew 28:1** After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb
15. **Exodus 20:10** The seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates.
16. **Luke 4:16** So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read.
17. **Matthew 24:20** "And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.
18. **Luke 23:56** Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.
19. **Acts 13:14** When they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, & went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day & sat down
20. **Acts 13:42** When the Jews went out of the synagogue, the Gentiles begged that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath
21. **Acts 16:13** And on the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met there.
22. **Acts 17:1-2** Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. (2) Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures,
23. **Isaiah 66:22-23** "For as the new heavens and the new earth Which I will make shall remain before Me," says the LORD, "So shall your descendants and your name remain. (23) And it shall come to pass That from one New Moon to another, And from one Sabbath to another, All flesh shall come to worship before Me," says the LORD.
24. **Revelation 1:10** I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet,
25. **Matthew 12:8** For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath. **Mark 2:28** Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.
26. **Isaiah 58:13** "If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, From doing your pleasure on My holy day, & call the Sabbath a delight, The holy day of the LORD honorable, & shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, Nor finding your own pleasure, Nor speaking your own words
27. Please see # 15 above
28. Please see # 26 above
29. **Exodus 20:8-11** "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. (9) Six days you shall labor and do all your work, (10) but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. (11) For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

30. **Matthew 5:17** "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. (18) For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.
31. Please see # 30 above
32. **Matthew 15:9** And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."
33. **Acts 5:29** But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men.