

Parenting Tools:

**Keeping the
Sabbath Holy**



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**What does it mean to keep the Sabbath day and keep it holy?
A couple of key OT Scripture passages to draw attention to.**

- A command given by God rooted in the creation account: Genesis 2:1-3 says, “Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.”
- As the Biblical story unfolds, God commands Moses to observe the Sabbath day. Exodus 20:8-10 reads, “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work...”
- The seriousness in which God expected the people to obey the Sabbath law is stated in Exodus 31:12-14. It reads, “And the LORD said to Moses, ‘You are to speak to the people of Israel and say, ‘Above all you shall keep my Sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, the LORD, sanctify you. You shall keep the Sabbath, because it is holy for you. Everyone who profanes it shall be put to death...’”

Conclusions:

1. God’s command to the Israelites to keep the Sabbath was rooted in the fact that God created/worked for six days and then rested on the seventh.
2. For the Israelites, the command to rest on the Sabbath, was to be a way to help them remember that God had worked for them as he freed them from the Egyptians – the LORD sanctified them.

3. To not rest was a display of lack of faith in God to work for you and to provide.

A couple of key NT Scripture passages regarding the Sabbath day.

Mark 2:27 - "And Jesus said to them, 'The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath.'"

John 5:16-17 - "And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath. But Jesus answered them, "My Father is working until now and I am working. This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God."

Hebrews 4:9 - "So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his."

Romans 14:5-6 - "One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord."

Conclusions:

1. In the Gospels we learn that by working on the Sabbath, Jesus equated himself as God. He is Lord of the Sabbath and thus in light of the new covenant, the Sabbath law will still function to some degree but not as the same as in the old covenant.
2. In Hebrews we learn that the Sabbath rule was pointing to a greater picture of God's ultimate salvation. Just as God finished his work on the cross for the forgiveness of sins, so too, we enter into the rest that God provides for us. We do not work for our salvation, we rest in the work that Christ has already done for us on the cross.

3. In Romans we learn that there is some freedom in how one observes the Sabbath.

- To observe the Sabbath may not necessary be limited to one day or on a certain day of the week.
- A person should be fully convinced in his own mind about how he observes the Sabbath. Being convinced in one's own mind, means that we are not judgmental towards others and likely to engage in debate, but rather we able to choose a form of resting that best suits out honoring of the Lord. For example: For someone who sits in a chair all week at work may find better rest if he were to go for a walk. Likewise, a person who performs physical labor all week may find that sitting down and napping is a good form of rest.
- The Sabbath is to be observed in honor of the Lord.

Observing the Sabbath involves honoring God through worship, reflecting on God, and resting... It would mean engaging in activities that pertain to God and withholding from activities that have little to do with God.