

Exodus 20:8-11: “<sup>8</sup> Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.<sup>9</sup> Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:<sup>10</sup> But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.<sup>11</sup> For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.”

Keeping the Sabbath holy, one of the Ten Commandments, dictates our duty as Christians to God. How is Jesus Christ the Lord of the Sabbath? Christ is the Lord of the Sabbath in that He is the One who dictates what the Sabbath Day is meant for.

### 1. The Permissions of the Sabbath (Matt 12:1-5)

In Mathhew 12:1, on a Sabbath Day, Jesus and His disciples were passing through a cornfield and the disciples were hungry. So, they plucked corn from the field and ate. However, the Pharisees, seeing it as the disciples doing the work of harvesting, claimed that they were breaking God’s Fourth Commandment. This view by the Pharisees was erroneous as their reasoning was one of logical fallacies. The reason the disciples plucked from the field was to satisfy their hunger, not to make a profit. Christ then corrected the Pharisees by giving them two examples, and by explaining to them that the Law of Necessity trumps the Law of Ceremony.

The Law of Necessity is not just about saving lives, helping others or providing for our bodily needs. It also applies to service for God. We have a duty to fulfil on the Sabbath Day which is to serve the Lord, just as the priests were ordained by God to serve Him on the Sabbath. The Sabbath Day is a day of rest, but it is a day of rest from our earthly works so that we can do the work of God.

### 2. The Principles of keeping the Sabbath (Matt 12:6-8)

- a) The keeping of the Sabbath is not a mere external keeping.
- b) It is the keeping with a heart that has experienced God’s mercy and forgiveness of our sins, and we now love God with all our heart and soul.
- c) Christ is the Lord of the Sabbath, He dictates how the Sabbath is to be kept, and He must be the focus of the Sabbath.
- d) The purpose of the Sabbath Day is for us to glorify and magnify God’s name with our fervent prayer, worship and service. “...*The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath*” (Mark 2:27).

### 3. The Law of Mercy on the Sabbath (Matt 12:9-14)

Jesus healed the man with a withered hand on the Sabbath (Matt 12:13). It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath Day as it brings glory to God’s name. The Law of Mercy applies. Examples: to save a life, to help a person in need, etc.

### WCF chapter 21 paragraph 8:

“This Sabbath is to be kept holy unto the Lord when men, after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering of their common affairs beforehand, do not only observe an holy rest all the day from their own works, words, and thoughts about their worldly employments and recreations; but also are taken up the whole time in the public and private exercises of His worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy.”