

Sabbath

Sanctification

**Topic by Rev. P. L. Bazen for the C. L. D. A.
annual meeting on
Friday, March 8, 2002**

**The Canadian Lord's
Day Association**

**FOR THE PURPOSE OF PRESERVING THE
SANCTITY OF THE LORD'S DAY**

Sabbath Sanctification

This evening I would like to start with two texts from Scripture as the basis for our discussion, Deuteronomy 5:12, "Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee", and Isaiah 58:13, "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words".

First, I wish to give you an example. I read once about two men, the one a pious poor man, the other a Sabbath breaker. The poor man tried to reason with the Sabbath breaker because of his conduct on the Lord's Day. He said, "I worked hard all week and made seven shillings. I decided to give six of the seven shillings to a man that I met. What would you think of that?" he asked. "Well, I would say that you are very kind". But what happened! The man I gave the six shillings to gave me a heavy blow to my head and took the other shilling from me. The poor man asked, "What do you think of this?" The other man said, he deserves to be hung. The poor man said to the Sabbath breaker, "Thou art the man. God has given you six days in which to work and earn your living and the seventh He has kept for Himself and commands us to keep it holy. You are not satisfied with the six days that God has given you and you also rob God of the seventh. What do you think you deserve?" The Sabbath breaker was silent and could give no answer.

As we are gathered here tonight I would like every one of us think of this story. I am not speaking to you tonight to defend the Sabbath Day because we all know this must be done. The question tonight is "Why must I keep the Sabbath which is today known as the Lord's Day"? We all know that the Christian Sabbath began with the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. To sanctify the Sabbath today is becoming more and more difficult for any one with Christian principles.

As one of the men was giving out literature on the keeping the Lord's Day before the meeting, my thoughts went back to the time we were in Bolivia. There every national election is held on Sunday and no one may drive his car, you may not go to another village or place, you must stay in the area where you vote. So they desecrate the Lord's Day by forcing the people to vote. It also wasn't so long ago that someone called me and said, "What must I do? I need to take a certain exam and they only offer it on the Lord's Day. I need that exam to go into my work. What must I do"? Another example. In our school in Bolivia the first class had graduated and some were planning to enter the public university. The only day the university would offer an entrance exam was on Sunday, the Lord's Day. Two young people who had graduated would not do this because of what they had been taught and had to go to the Christian University which gave an entrance exam on a weekday, but cost more tuition. These are the times we are living in, no respect for the Lord's Day.

When we want to sanctify the Lord's Day, we are not talking about anything new. This already began in

Paradise. So we see that from the creation of the world till today God never allowed His church to be without a Sabbath Day. God created heaven and earth in six days and on the seventh day He rested that He might glorify His own work. Every day for Adam and Eve in Paradise was a Sabbath Day to honor and glorify their Maker. So already in the beginning of time the Lord took care that there was a day of rest.

God titled the day "Sabbath" meaning rest. The Christian Church of the New Testament speaks of the Sabbath as the "Lord's Day". God, as a triune God, rested on the seventh day from His work of creation. God commanded and commended this day as a day of rest. A day of rest to be in God's house, to read good material, which does not include periodicals of our day which must be put aside, to spend our time in prayer, singing with the whole family and seeking the blessing of the Lord for our soul. We are not here tonight to judge anyone, but let everyone take a look at his own heart and ask, "Do I bow my knees on the Sabbath before I go up to God's house, asking that the Lord would bless His Word to my soul"? Don't say I am unconverted and cannot pray. Ask the Lord with your mind that he will teach you and give grace to your soul.

We also read in Isaiah 58:13 of "My holy day". We all know what the word holy means. So when it says, "My holy day", that is the Sabbath Day given by divine institution. It is not of human making. What is of human making is surrounded with sin but that of divine institution is perfect, right and holy. So the Lord's Day is holy because God instituted it and commanded us to keep it holy.

The Lord says, "my holy day" so we must give the entire day to the Lord. Maybe someone is saying, "How can I go to church twice on a Sunday"? In my youth we all went to church three times every Sunday and now some people complain about going twice. It's a shame to think this way. It is even a shame that some of these chairs are empty! In one way it shows how much interest there is for the Lord's Day. In North America the people are not becoming more Christian but more heathen, especially in the desecration of the Lord's Day. Maybe the day will come that missionaries will be sent to North America, as is taking place in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. The Sabbath Day and marriage are flowers from Paradise that we may in some degree still have today.

May we all give the whole day to the Lord by being in His house, reading good material and in prayer. We have seven days in every week, one hundred forty and four hours to do our daily work, and God is saying that He gave one day to worship Him. Are you going to steal the other shilling? Maybe someone is saying, "Must I spend all twenty-four hours in religious duties"? Of course not, because time is allotted for eating and sleeping but we must not waste this day on foolish things. Never, never leave your place empty in God's house on His day because who can tell when the Lord may work with His grace and spirit in a heart. Also, do on Saturday what is necessary so that the Lord's Day is kept holy. Once I was visiting a man who owned a feedlot and he told me that on Saturday night they load up the troughs with feed to the maximum so that there is less work on the Lord's Day.

This is not good works but doing what we are supposed to do to keep the Sabbath Day holy.

Next we must consider that in sanctifying the Sabbath we must be equal with respect to what is forbidden as much as to what we must do. Isaiah 1:16, 17, "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow". It is impossible to do what is commanded if we do not avoid what is forbidden. All sports and pleasures are profaning the Lord's Day as much as doing unnecessary work on His day. Carnal pleasure, of whatever nature it is, defiles the spirit and if one follows this way there is no communion with God. Even the games that our children play in the home for pleasure are not to be used on the Lord's Day.

The text continues with "Nor finding thine own pleasure". How must we understand this? God's Word is very plain and what is written must be observed. It is not of private interpretation. Your children begin to grow, you buy them bicycles, they ride them six days but on the Lord's Day this must be forbidden based on this text. Also it is how we teach our children what is to be done on the Lord's Day. Maybe someone is thinking, "you mean I cannot even go for a Sunday afternoon ride in my car for pleasure?" That is correct because we are to keep the Lord's Day as it is spelled out in the Bible. So carnal pleasure of whatever nature, defiles the Lord's Day and then there will be no communion with God. Someone else says,

"Wait a minute, you are asking too much of us". No! I am not talking to a group of heathens, but to people who believe that God's Word is the truth. Let us then abide by what it says and keep the Lord's Day holy.

Also in this verse we read, "nor speaking thine own words". This tells us plainly how the Sabbath is polluted with words as well as deeds. What is your conversation after a church service when outside of the church door? Are you conversing about the sermon or what happened yesterday? What price did you get for your cows, pigs? Where did you go this past week? And the list goes on and on. How guilty is every one before the Lord. Parents, take time with your children from the smallest to the biggest. They need your attention and guidance. Get good reading material in your homes and get rid of the material that does not belong there. We are not saying you must read the Bible all day, no, but there is sufficient material to place before your families. Who can tell how the Lord may bless a certain book or religious periodical. Christ will judge men for their words as well as their deeds. He will either justify one for keeping the Sabbath or condemn one for profaning it.

Take notice of what great esteem the Scripture places on the Lord's Day speaking of, "not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words". We see in our time how deeply man has fallen into carnal things, and where is found the fear of the Lord in the heart? The prophet Hosea wrote in chapter 8:12, "I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing". Are not these words taking place today? I do

not know in Canada but in the United States it is almost forbidden for a judge to have the "Ten Commandments" posted on the wall. It seems today that the name of God must be removed from all places. When God is removed and no more considered, He will remove His Word and leave a nation over to itself.

In sanctifying the Lord's Day we must be careful to distinguish what is the Lord's, what is Satan's and what is our own. There are wicked and sinful pleasures, sinful ways, words and thoughts, which are never lawful any day of the week and are from the devil. There are our own pleasures, words, ways and thoughts that are lawful six days a week but not on the Lord's Day. Then above all there are God's way and will which direct us to worship Him in His house, to have public and private prayer which is needed daily, but especially on the Sabbath Day. So there are many things that are permitted six days a week but what we may do on the Lord's Day may also be done any day of the week. May we be given to call the Sabbath a delight, long to go into the house of the Lord, and be given a desire to walk according to the Law of God.

When we consider these thoughts regarding the Lord's Day, how we must ask the Lord to help, guide and direct us, and to give us what we need to train our children and to be an example for them and to all who are around us. When we think of the Sabbath Day we must only say by grace, guilty, guilty. 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness". For a guilty sinner there is forgiveness. May there be a confession of sin, a revival in our time. May we, by grace, find a part in Him who commanded to

keep the Sabbath Day holy, who fulfilled the Law perfectly and satisfied the justice of God. The command was given in the law to keep the Sabbath Day, but the day is coming for the whole church of God that the eternal Sabbath will begin. May each of us strive to keep the Lord's Day holy and that on His day it may be a delight to be in the house of the Lord and to study His Word.

Isaiah the prophet continues by saying that if you will keep God's day "Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it".

C.L.D.A.
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