

The Ten Commandments.



Word 4: Keep the Sabbath Holy. Exodus 20: 8

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy” (Ex. 20:8). Sabbath means “rest,” but God intended for this day to stand for more than an absence of work. It is to be a day of worship as well—a day for setting aside all thoughts of materialistic gain and thinking about Him. God Himself set the pattern by ceasing from His labours after creating the world (Gen.:2,3). Yet today’s modern-day Christians feel that being busy is equated with being spiritual?

This, the longest of the commandments, is all about time. We each have 24 hours in a day, 168 in a week, 8760 in a year, yet some of us have plenty to spare, and others apparently ‘no time’ to do anything.

Discuss some of the reasons behind this, and also consider the number of hours you spend each week on; *work, travel, leisure, sport, shopping, housework, church activities, relaxing, sleep, family*. Are you happy with this ratio?

Read Hebrews 4:1-11

- 1 When and what, is the Sabbath and its purpose to you? What shapes the way you use it?
- 2 Is the Sabbath only for Christians? For those who also have Saturday (or other days) off, where does this fit in? Does it matter which day we call Sabbath?
- 3 For those who can remember, what differences are there since Sunday trading began (1994)? If Jesus were here today, would we find him in the Café at St. Tesco’s, meeting people where they are at? Why / why not?

The Sabbath was created to aid physical and mental rest, as well as time for worshipping God.

- 4 How should those who are required to work on a Sunday respond? Does this commandment distinguish between work and employment? Is an alternate Sabbath (day of rest) acceptable on a day other than a Sunday?

The Sabbath commandment was transformed into a Sabbath rest, in Christ. This is why the New Testament does not restate the need to observe the Sabbath Day, or command keeping the Sabbath Day; nor does it change the Sabbath Day to a different day.

“So do not let anyone make rules for you about eating and drinking or about a religious feast, a New Moon Festival, or a Sabbath day. These things were like a shadow of what was to come. But what is true and real has come and is found in Christ” (Colossians 2:16-17, NCV).

- 5 What is the difference between the Sabbath and the ‘Lord’s Day’? How should we regard each of them?

Read Luke 6:1-11

Jesus said (after He was accused of breaking the Sabbath, John 5:16-17), *“You search the Scriptures [Old Testament] because you believe they give you eternal life. But the Scriptures point to me! Yet you refuse to come to me so that I can give you this eternal life” (John 5:39-40).*

- 6 In light of the meaning of these two readings, does this change the shape of your answer to question 1, if so, how?

Jesus pointed to Himself as our Sabbath rest when He said, *“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls” (Mt.11:28-29).*