

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

"Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy." Exodus 20:8

A. The Sabbath in the Old Testament:

1. When did God first set aside the sabbath day? Exodus 20:11; Genesis 2:13

2. The word "sabbath" comes from the Hebrew word meaning "to rest from labor". What was the original purpose for this day? Genesis 2:1, 2

3. What kind of day was it to be? Genesis 2:3a; Exodus 20:11b

4. When the nation Israel was being formed, the sabbath took on a new significance. Between what people was it now to be a sign? Exodus 31:13-17

5. For whose benefit was the sabbath ordained? (See Mark 2:27)

B. Old Testament Stories About the Sabbath:

1. What did one man do to break the Sabbath? Numbers 15:32-34

2. What punishment did God say should be given him? Numbers 15:35, 36

3. When God gave the manna in the wilderness, what happened when some of the people tried to keep it overnight? Exodus 16:20

4. What happened when they kept it over to eat on the sabbath day? Exodus 16:23, 24

5. What happened when some went out to gather it on the sabbath day? Exodus 16:26, 27

C. The "Sabbath" in the New Testament:

1. On what day of the week did the disciples come together for their meetings? (See Acts 20:7)

2. Did it seem to be habitual for them to observe this day? (See 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2)

3. What had happened on this day to cause them to observe it instead of the seventh day? Mark 16:1-6

4. When did they begin observing this day? John 20:19, 26

D. The Relation of This Command to Present-Day Life:

1. Although most Christians do not observe the seventh day of the week in our day, for what two purposes might it appear to be God's will that we should set aside one day out of every seven?
 - a. Exodus 20:11 _____
 - b. Hebrews 10:25 _____
2. Read Matthew 12:1-13. Notice that Jesus approved and did four types of work on the Sabbath day:
 - a. Works of Necessity: Matthew 12:1-4
 - b. Works of Emergency: Matthew 12:11
 - c. Works of Mercy: Matthew 12:10-13
 - d. Services to God: Matthew 12:5, Mark 1:21

This might be a guide as to how Christians today should spend their Sunday.

QUESTIONS FOR ME TO THINK ABOUT:

1. Is my Sunday observed in a way that would be pleasing to God?

2. Is Sunday a day of rest and worship for me?

3. About whom do my Sunday activities and thoughts revolve?

4. Is all the work which I do on Sunday really necessary? Or could I arrange to do it some other day if I really wanted to?

5. Do I plan my week so that only works of necessity, emergency, mercy, and service to God must be done on Sunday? (See Isaiah 58:13, 14)
