



# **Introduction to the Doctrine of Vocation**

**CPC Adult Sunday School  
Week 6 - Sabbath and Vocation**

March 16, 2025

# The Meaning and Purpose of Sabbath

*<sup>8</sup> “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. <sup>9</sup> Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, <sup>10</sup> but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. <sup>11</sup> For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.*

Exodus 20:8-11

Rooted in Creation: Genesis 2:1-3 →

Anticipates eschatological Sabbath:  
Hebrews 3:7-4:13 (Psalm 95); Revelation 21-22

Rooted in Redemption: Deuteronomy 5:12-15

A sign of God’s sanctification of his people: Exodus 31:12-17



Centered on Christ as the Lord’s Day: Christ’s resurrection; Pentecost; Apostolic practice; Rev. 1:10

The Already/Not-Yet of Christian Sabbath (Analogy of the Lord’s Supper)

# The Meaning and Purpose of Sabbath

**WCF 21.7 - As it is of the law of nature, that, in general, a due proportion of time be set apart for the worship of God; so, in His Word, by a positive, moral, and perpetual commandment, binding all men in all ages, he hath particularly appointed one day in seven for a Sabbath, to be kept holy unto Him: which, from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, was the last day of the week; and, from the resurrection of Christ, was changed into the first day of the week, which in Scripture is called the Lord's Day, and is to be continued to the end of the world as the Christian Sabbath.**

**WCF 21.8 - 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.**

**Cultivating and Protecting Sabbath (giving and receiving rest):**

**Preparation  
(Remembering)**

**Public and private worship**

**Holy rest**

**Duties of necessity**




**Duties of mercy**

# God's Use of the Moral Law in the Christian Life

**WLC 93. *What is the moral law?***

The moral law is the declaration of the will of God to mankind, directing and bonding every one to personal, perfect, and perpetual conformity and obedience thereunto, in the frame and disposition of the whole man, soul and body, and in performance of all those duties of holiness and righteousness which He oweth to God and man: promising life upon the fulfilling, and threatening death upon the breach of it.

**WCF 19.6; WLC 95, 97 - Uses of the moral law for believers:**

- |   |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| <b>1. A Rule of Life —</b>  | <b>Not as a covenant of works to be justified or condemned.</b>                              | <b>Reveals God's holy nature and will.</b> | <b>A rule of obedience in response to the gospel.</b> |
| <b>2. A Sign-post to Christ —</b>   | <b>Convinces us of our corruption and disability to keep it.</b>                             |  | <b>Humbles us in our sense of our sin and misery.</b> |
|  | <b>Shows our need for Christ and how much we are bound to his fulfilling the Law for us.</b> |  | <b>Provokes us to thankfulness.</b>                   |
| <b>3. Restraint for Sin —</b>   | <b>Forbids sin.</b>  | <b>Use of threatenings and promises.</b>   | <b>Guilt, grace and gratitude</b>                     |

# Stewardship and Christian Liberty

**Stewardship and Vocation: God provides time, talent and treasure to cultivate and protect our callings.**

**WCF 20**

***4 Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand...<sup>10</sup> Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; <sup>11</sup> for it is written, “As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.” <sup>12</sup> So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.***

**Romans 14:4,10-12**

**What are the implications of Christian Liberty for our vocations?**

- We should take great care in our criticism of others.**
- We should take great care in the use of our liberty.**



# Sabbath as Vocation

*<sup>13</sup> “If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the LORD honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly; <sup>14</sup> then you shall take delight in the LORD, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”*

Matthew 12:1-13

Cultivating and Protecting Sabbath:

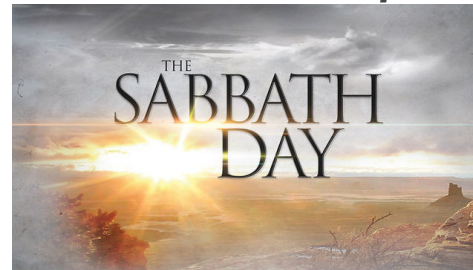
Preparation  
(Remembering)

Holy rest

Public and  
private worship

Duties of mercy

Duties of necessity



Isaiah 58:13-14

*The main point is that between worship, hospitality—and, since it is a Sabbath, could we add fellowship and rest?—Christians can easily devote their whole day to the Lord. A day with morning and evening worship, and fellowship and hospitality in between, tends to answer most Sabbath practice questions.*

Chad Van Dixhoorn

# Hardship and Hope in Sabbath Observance

**The World** → Opposes the Sabbath by denying the need - leads to exhaustion, exploitation and loss of joy in work.

**The Flesh** → Refuses to submit to Sabbath unless it leads to self-centered benefit - leads to self-deception and rationalization to avoid Sabbathing.

**The Devil** → Lies about the Sabbath - questions God's goodness and stokes the fear of missing out. Encourages legalism and antinomianism as opposed to gospel. Accuses you when you fail.

**Exile, Thorns & Thistles** → The groanings of the curse of the fall and cross bearing frustrate our attempts to Sabbath. Inertia of change.

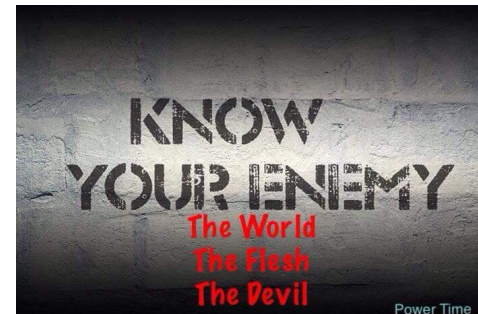
## Sabbath Hope:

The Sabbath is inherently Christ-centered.

The Sabbath is filled with the use of the means of grace.

The Sabbath reminds us of God's providential care and love for us as we await eternal rest with Him and His people.

The Sabbath is counter-cultural, evangelistic, and sanctifying.



# A Modern Example of God's Use of Vocation

Eric Liddell - Olympian, scholar, missionary



*When Eric became aware of this [olympic event scheduled for Sunday] he made it perfectly clear that he would take no part in any events scheduled for the Lord's day, the Christian Sabbath. As far as he was concerned, that was a day of rest and worship in terms of the Fourth Commandment. It was, for him, not a day for recreation or work, apart from such works as were of necessity or mercy... There is an irony in this matter of Eric Liddell's refusal to run the events scheduled for Sundays. His widow, Florence, later recalled that 'Eric always said that the great thing for him was that when he stood by his principles and refused to run in the 100 meters, he found that the 400 meters was really his race. He said he would never have known the otherwise. He would never have dreamed of trying the 400 at the Olympics.*

*John W. Keddie*

*In the camp Eric steadfastly refused to organize sports on Sundays, though he did relent to the extent of refereeing impromptu games on Sunday after the children fought during a game they had organized by themselves. This was the sort of tension that developed in the camp, when there were some parents who allowed their children to participate in such activities on a Sunday. No doubt it was a dilemma for Eric. True enough, it was hard for all these young people unnaturally cooped up in the camp.*

*John W. Eddie*



# Digging Deeper

1. What dilemmas exist in your life related to Sabbath observance?
2. As you reflect on God's word, what is your heart's desire for Sabbath observance in these areas?
3. Who has God provided in your life to disciple you concerning the Sabbath?

