

Notes: Sermon 5
The Fourth Commandment

Exodus 20:8

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy

Introduction

Today...

- We're going to see what, if any, part of this commandment still applies to us.
- Then we'll consider the two parts to this commandment, which are work and rest.

Next Time ...

- Mostly practical. We'll be looking at how we can make the most of the Lord's Day.

Heading 1: The principle of a day of rest

None of us have a problem with the Ten Commandments until we come to this one.

- The Law of God has an abiding place in the Christian life, so if we want to be consistent, we must accept that this commandment has something to say to us, just as the others do.
- Let's go back to the very beginning. Exodus 20:11 tells us that long before the Ten Commandments were ever given, God had already designed man's routine, which is modelled on God's routine in creation: Six days of work, one day of rest. We need to work hard and rest well.
- So whatever you think about how the law applies to the Christian's life, you can't do away with the principle that was established at creation.

- When we come to the fourth commandment, God is saying to his people Israel, "That principle I set up in creation, I want you to continue." He also attaches a variety of ceremonial laws and civil laws to the Day.
- The Christian believer must remember that there are particular laws that no longer apply to the Christian, because we are not the nation of Israel. But the creation principle – that still applies to us. We need to work hard and rest well until Christ comes again.

Heading 2: How do we work hard?

- People will argue for a day of rest but forget that this commandment also mentions six days of work.
- It's striking that this commandment shows us that God actually want his people to work, or to be involved in some sort of constructive activity for a large percentage of our week.
- The Bible is reminding us not to be too precious about our time, but to remember that "work", in whatever form, is glorifying to God so glorify God by working hard in your workplace, in your homes, in your retirement, and in your church!

Heading 3: How do we rest well?

- Some people live to work and it takes over their life. But what the principle in the fourth commandment does is remind us that we don't live to work!
- The fourth commandment reminds us that resting well involves physical and spiritual refreshment. We must take time out from our normal day to day routine to refresh our bodies and our souls.

- The words “holy” and “blessed” in Ex 20:8 and 11b show us of the need for one day a week of more concentrated spiritual activity.
- The way that God refreshes our souls has not changed since creation – it’s through worshipping him with other people. It is good for us, to take at least one day out a week to meet with God’s people and to worship with God’s people.
- In the New Testament we read about believers meeting together on the first day of the week, the Lord’s Day, the day Jesus rose from the dead!
- Some just have to work on a Sunday and the Bible is sympathetic towards them; and so should everyone in the church. However we must do what we can free up time to meet on Sunday.
- Those who are free on Sunday should remember the great privilege they have and make the most of it and be flexible to help those who can’t make it at the set times.
- Isaiah 58:13b calls the Sabbath, the Lord’s Day, a delight. Let’s pray that God would make it so for each and every one of us!