

Palisades Community Bible Church

Online Bible Study

What Is So Important About The Sabbath?

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If you're over 50, you probably remember a time when stores and businesses closed on Sundays. When I was a kid, adults would say; "They roll up the sidewalks on Sunday."

It was part of our culture to take Sunday off. That also meant respecting the businesses and their employees' privilege to take Sunday off. So, we spent time at home, or with family, friends, etc. but, MOST OF ALL, Sunday was the day for worship.



Again, if you're over 50, you probably remember Sunday mornings; Sunday school, followed by the Worship Service. There might be other meetings at the church. Then, that evening, a time of fellowship and worship. Wednesday eves were usually a prayer meeting and/or a worship service. If

you're older than 50, you may remember piling the family in the wagon and going to church...and spending all day on Sunday!

"WOW! That's a lot of church!" you say? Is it?

Before we feel like we're about to get smacked for not going to church, let's step back. Let's take a view one might not expect on a discussion about the Sabbath and look to the **Scientific Method**. I want to ask you to hang in here. What you're about to read you may have never read, and may never find anywhere else. I hope it's a blessing to you!

If you went to school 50 years ago, you probably got several lessons on the Scientific Method. It's not a common thing in today's culture, but it is revealed in

the Bible, and it's extremely important. You see, the Scientific Method is a Biblical concept. God created science. The first step is introduced in Genesis 1.

Do you remember the very first step in the Scientific Method? **'Make no judgement or assumption without first understanding the frame of reference.'** Far too many jump to conclusions without first neutralizing their own opinions and looking at the frame of reference. Take a look at the following:

Genesis 1: 1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

Do you see the two frames of reference? If we clarify them, we understand this passage more clearly.

Frame of reference #1: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth": God was not ON the earth; He was outside the heavens and the earth creating them. God was over and above and all around what He was creating.

Frame of reference #2: "Now the earth was formless and....hovering over the waters." God was between the surface of the earth and its gaseous atmosphere. He was hovering there.

If you miss the frame of reference, you miss what God was doing, and why.

First, He was creating what we call the 'universe' (that word does not appear in the Bible – rather, we see "the Heavens and the Earth."). Then, God hovers just above the surface of the earth, which is covered with water, and under the umbrella of the gaseous atmosphere which is so thick that no light can penetrate. This is the frame of reference for the next creative act!

Now, why do we look at Frame of Reference when looking at the Sabbath? Well, first, it's the INTELLIGENT and RESPONSIBLE thing to do! To ignore the frame of reference for any Biblical topic is to ignorantly, stupidly plod along being led by whatever notion strikes us. If we call ourselves by Christ's name, yet only react, in human terms, to what we find in God's word, we are like this fellow:

James 1: 7 That man should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. 8 He is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

So, let us continue in the frame of reference that sets up the Sabbath. Please read these passages and note the frame of reference. I've given you a hint along the way:



Genesis 1: The First Day

3 And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. 4 And God saw that the light was good, and He separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light “day,” and the darkness He called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

The Second Day

6 And God said, “Let there be an expanse between the waters, to separate the waters from the waters.” 7 So God made the expanse and separated the waters beneath it from the waters above. And it was so. 8 God called the expanse “sky.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

The Third Day

9 And God said, “Let the waters under the sky be gathered into one place, so that the dry land may appear.” And it was so. 10 God called the dry land “earth,” and the gathering of waters He called “seas.” And God saw that it was good.

11 Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth vegetation: seed-bearing plants and fruit trees, each bearing fruit with seed according to its kind.” And it was so.

12 The earth produced vegetation: seed-bearing plants according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. 13 And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

The Fourth Day

14 And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to distinguish between the day and the night, and let them be signs to mark the seasons and days and years. 15 And let them serve as lights in the expanse of the sky to shine upon the earth.” And it was so. 16 God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night. And He made the stars as well. 17 God set these lights in the expanse of the sky to shine upon the earth, 18 to preside over the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. 19 And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

The Fifth Day

20 And God said, “Let the waters teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the sky.” 21 So God created the great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters teemed according to their kinds, and every bird of flight after its kind. And God saw that it was good. 22 Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters of the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” 23 And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day.

The Sixth Day

24 And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, land crawlers, and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And it was so. 25 God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that crawls upon the earth according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 26 Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness, to rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, and over all the earth itself and every creature that crawls upon it.” 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

28 God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and every creature that crawls upon the earth.”

29 Then God said, “Behold, I have given you every seed-bearing plant on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit contains seed. They will be yours for food. 30 And to every beast of the earth and every bird of the air and every creature that crawls upon the earth—everything that has the breath of life in it—I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. 31 And God looked upon all that He had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

The Seventh Day

2: 1 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. 2 And by the seventh day God had finished the work He had been doing; so on that day He rested from all His work. 3 Then God blessed the seventh day and

sanctified it, because on that day He rested from all the work of creation that He had accomplished. _____?

Hey! Where's the reference on Day 7 to 'there was evening and there was morning'? Are you with me?

The "evening and morning" indicates that God started and finished something in each of those events. What He did on day two, he started and finished. On day three, He started and finished....and, so on. What happened when we get to day seven? God rested from His work. We know he began His rest AFTER his creative works were done, but we do not see an end point. The Sabbath is ongoing.

If you consult any respectable scientific study on the creation of the many creatures on earth, you'll find that there were millions of species that appeared on earth prior to, the creation of Man, and none thereafter. Why? Because God did all that on the sixth day, then stopped. There are no records of new species anywhere after man was created.

The frame of reference of Genesis 1: 1 is that God was outside the universe and created it. Starting in verse 2, God was hovering between the earth's atmosphere and He created everything in and on the earth; all its geographical and oceanographic features, all of life, etc. On the seventh day, God's frame of reference changed: REST. The reason we see no new species on the earth since God rested is because He had resolved, all the way to completion, what He wanted to create. By the way, God also put all the gold and silver, all the water, all the energy into the earth at that time...then stopped.



If you look at the range of scientific disciplines, most of the physical sciences; astronomy, physics, chemistry, etc. tend to lean toward an acknowledgement of God. They study the creation BEFORE day seven. That's their frame of reference.

Those in the life sciences study what came after day seven; biology, sociology, philosophy, etc., and have the frame of reference of what IS.....not where it came from. These scientists often are atheists and agnostics. These disciplines do their research on 'day seven' points of view.

Therefore, life sciences produce research on the natural environment and natural outcomes. They often say they see no evidence of the supernatural handiwork of God, rather, they explain it away with machinations of evolutionary processes. Physical scientists tend to acknowledge God because they are dealing with hard scientific principles like the velocity of light, thermodynamics, etc. The causation of such a massive universe could not possibly have “come from nothing.”

The natural scientists are simply looking on the wrong day; the epoch of rest. The physical scientists are looking at the epochs of the creation days. (epoch: a defined period of time)

What did God do while resting? We see evidence that He considered the important issues of life. For instance, he saw that it was not good for Man to be alone. He did not simply create man and leave him to his own devices – man was too important to God. God created for man a helper, a comforter, a companion, a mate. Even though God had created mates within the animal, and even the plant kingdoms, He spent a restful time to consider what was best for Man.

Keep in mind the frame of reference, here. We are living in the continuing Sabbath period of God’s finalized creation. God gave us example after example of what He wants us doing one day per week: **CONSIDERING THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES OF LIFE.**

God wants us to work. Yes, he created each of us to be productive. We are to build godly homes, produce offspring, raise them up in the nurture and admonition of the scriptures, and we are to take the Gospel of Christ into all the earth. The frame of reference; we are living in a Sabbath epoch; a defined period of time devoted to God’s creation and glorifying Him above everything earthly.

Mark 2: 27 Then Jesus declared, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.

Why is this important? Let us first consider the Ten Commandments found in Exodus 20: 2017.

- 1. I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me.**
- 2. “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water**

under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My Commandments.



3. “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.

4. “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh

day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

Are you seeing a frame of reference, here in the first four commandments? God is to be the singular focus of all that is greater than man, or the creation. God is to be respected, honored, obeyed, and emulated. Look at #3; which comes with a consequence. This means that anyone carrying God’s name, who behaves in contrast to God’s character, will not be held guiltless. That’s a heavy warning!

The first four commandments set the tone for the rest of them. Only God has the supreme authority to say to all of mankind; “you shall not murder, commit adultery, steal, etc.” just look at the deplorable degradation of human governments, today, and their many violations of these commandments. Are they not putting themselves in the focus of severe judgement?

But, what about the average Christian? The bible has no record of God disciplining the godless. Oh, He allowed Israel to defeat them, from time to time, but God’s discipline is applied to His people!

Hebrews 12: 5 And you have forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons: “My son, do not take lightly the discipline of the Lord, and do not lose

heart when He rebukes you. 6 For the Lord disciplines the one He loves, and He chastises every son He receives.” 7 Endure suffering as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father?

Every interaction between God and Man in scripture is from the frame of reference of the post-creation (Sabbath) period. We are in the Sabbath epoch, and our work is to glorify God. There are two ways we glorify God. We OBEY Him. We TELL THE TRUTH about Him.

Jeremiah 7:23 But this is what I commanded them, saying, ‘Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you will be My people; and you will walk in all the way which I command you, that it may be well with you.’

2 John 1:6 And this is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, that you should walk in it.

2 Tim. 4:3–5 “For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship.”

John 14: 6 Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

When it comes to the seventh day of the week, we are to observe a formal Sabbath in which we cease our work, set aside the diversions of this world, this culture, this self-absorbed time, and put our heart and mind on the most important issues of life. This means THERE IS a time to deal with the world: our jobs, our educations, our homes, our recreation. But, there is one day per week for dedicated worship of God; the Sabbath.

Why do you think it is that kids’ soccer, baseball, etc., are so busy on Sunday? Why do you think it is that all the major sporting events occur on Sunday? Why do you think it is that pretty much every major diversion from Sabbath occurs on that day? If you have to wonder, you don’t have the frame of reference of the fallen nature of man. We live in a perfect creation that was infected by sin and was cursed by God. Yet, WE who are called by His name are to live separated

from all of it. We are to put the cause of Christ in our lives higher than all this “stuff.”

That is worshipping God. It's not that we just sat in a pew for an hour. It's that we dedicate ourselves to God every seven days. That is what the Sabbath is for. Read the fourth commandment again; “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.” “Holy” means “dedicated entirely to God and the work of God.” Sunday is to be what our parents called; ‘the Lord’s day.’

That means it is not “OUR day.” For the Christian, it is to be a ‘holy day’, a day dedicated to God. God created the universe and the life on earth in 6 days. On the seventh, he rested. But, what did he do next? He spent time with Adam and Eve! He loved them and walked with them every day. God wants us to spend time WITH Him and ON Him!

God wants our Sabbath to be filled with his words, with prayer, with spiritual songs, with the fellowship of other Christians, with the fellowship of our families. (look at one of the most stressful things in a pastor’s life: keeping to a strict time schedule on Sunday morning!! Where are our priorities??)

1 Corinthians 6: 19 Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price. Therefore, glorify God with your body.

Let us NOT become like the Israelites who disobeyed God while they were just outside the promised land. God made them wander in the desert for 40 years (the #40 is a number of cleansing), or one generation, in order to purge the unfaithful from their midst. When they entered the land, we find an even worse condition:

Judges 2: 10 After that whole generation had been gathered to their ancestors, another generation grew up who knew neither the LORD nor what He had done for Israel.

There is one thing I cry unto God on a daily basis; that America has replicated this problem. Our once God-fearing (respecting) nation has become a people of

murder, adultery, foolishness and greed. The shame of our culture is heavy like a weight.



Proverbs 29: 2 When the righteous thrive, the people rejoice; when the wicked rule, the people groan.

The more I pray on this, the more the Holy Spirit brings to mind two scriptures:

2 Chronicles 7: 14 "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

Note that the heathen, the non-repentant, the atheist is not mentioned here! It is God's people – those who call themselves by God's name. These very people, who call themselves Christians must heed and obey this. We, us, you and I, must humble ourselves, pray, seek God's face, turn from our wicked ways and THEN God will hear from heaven. That's what the Sabbath is for!

The second scripture the Holy Spirit lays on me when I'm praying about the plight of our people is this:

John 13: 34 A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you also must love one another. 35 By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another."

UNITY! We are to function as a dedicated, unified people. How can we love one another if we do not come together? If you think you can watch a worship service on TV and fellowship with other Christians, you are mistaken. I know this virus thing has had everyone in a panic, but it's time to face reality. If you can go to the store, the bank, the diner, etc., you can go to church. Everyone will respect your need to protect your health, just don't use it as a ruse to keep from obeying God's command to keep the Sabbath holy. That's between you and God, and, you may need to pray on it.

John 14:21 "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."

John 14:15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments."

1 John 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.

John 14:23-24 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.

Take this self-test. Consider the fourth Commandment, then ask: What is your Sunday like? Is Sunday just a quick trip to church and then, back to your routine? Is Sunday worship now replaced with a device that may, or may not be streaming God's word? Are you comfortable with how you are spending your Sundays, and does getting up earlier, or spending time in any other worship endeavor make you groan? Is your Sabbath day a Holy, dedicated day? Are you growing in your knowledge of the Bible, or is it about the same as it's been for several years? Are your kids getting really good in a sport, or on computer games, but don't know Jesus?

Perhaps putting your answers to these questions before the feet of Jesus in prayer will give you an idea of what to do, now.

Isaiah 58:13-14 "If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight and the Lord's holy day honorable, and if you honor it by not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words,

then you will find your joy in the Lord, and I will cause you to ride in triumph on the heights of the land and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob." For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.