

THE



# HARVESTER

"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." [Luke 10:2]

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## REMEMBER THE SABBATH

The question is still frequently asked today, "Should Christians observe the Sabbath?" The answer from the Bible is a straightforward NO. It was part of a law which was fulfilled, taken out of the way, and nailed to the cross nearly two-thousand years ago by Christ (Col. 2:14). But my intent here is not to rehash arguments against keeping the Sabbath which are quite well known to most people. Rather, my intent is to look at a few interesting aspects concerning the Sabbath which are seldom discussed.

The term Sabbath has become synonymous with Saturday or the seventh day. But many people don't realize that not all Sabbaths fell on the

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seventh day. The twenty-third chapter of Leviticus illustrates this for us. In verse 24 God instructs Moses that the first day of the seventh month will be a Sabbath. Then verses 27-32 describe the tenth day of the seventh month which is also called a Sabbath. There is no way the 1st and 10th days of the same month can both fall on Saturday. Therefore one of them must fall during the week. This point may not really be all that meaningful to us, but it is interesting nonetheless.

If asked what the purpose of the Sabbath day was, most people would say it was a day of rest. While the Sabbath was a day of rest, and is described as such numerous times throughout the Bible, that was not its purpose. It is like saying that the reason for going to college is to get an education. While a person certainly does receive an education during their time in college, would you expect them to leave college and go to work for minimum wage? Certainly not. The real purpose behind going to college was to be able to get a good job. The education was just part of the process, but a good job was the goal.

Similarly, rest was just part of the Sabbath and not its real purpose. What was the purpose of the Sabbath then? Our answer lies in the book of Isaiah. *"If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words." (Isa. 58:13)*

It is clear from this passage that God intended for His people to put aside all of their cares and

concerns of life for this one day. This day belonged to the Lord and in it the people were to think, not of themselves, but of Him.

Why was that important? It should be clear to us how easy it is to get wrapped up in our own lives and completely forget about something or someone. How many times have you come across something and remembered that you were supposed to have taken care of it weeks or even months ago? Or how many times have you suddenly realized, after bumping into a good friend, that you haven't seen them in months or years? And then you wonder where the time goes.

It is just so easy to get caught up in the daily routine of our lives and let things slip our minds. And one of the easiest things to forget is God. He doesn't call you on the phone, He doesn't send you a note in the mail, and you won't bump into Him at the supermarket. It takes a concentrated effort to make God part of our daily lives or we will forget Him.

God is well aware of this problem, and this is why He instituted the Sabbath for the Jews. He basically said I'm not going to let you completely forget me. One day out of the week I am going to make you lay everything else aside and think about me. He forbade them to do anything which was not directly connected to the maintenance of their physical bodies. This gave them a great deal of time to think, hopefully about God.

Having discovered the true purpose of the Sabbath, and seeing how important it really was, I find myself very confused. I know that the Sabbath was extremely important because it was part of the Ten Commandments. It was right up

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there with, "Thou shalt not kill, steal, commit adultery, etc." We recognize nine of the ten commandments as being the cornerstones of righteousness and morality. How can we then so easily toss aside the other commandment as unimportant?

I simply cannot accept that God would not have also given Christians a Sabbath. Do not we also need to be reminded periodically of the importance of God in our lives just as the Jews did?

Many people today try to make Sunday a pseudo-Sabbath. They feel that a Christian should not work at all on Sunday. And I must admit that the idea is tempting. The only problem is that there is absolutely no scriptural basis for making such an assertion. All the Bible instructs us to do is not to forsake *"the assembling of ourselves together."* (Heb. 10:25) How can we condemn someone who attends the services of the Church and then goes to work? What scripture have they violated?

So if Sunday is not our Sabbath, then what is? The answer is actually quite simple and very beautiful. The purpose of the Sabbath is to cause

the people to think and remember the importance of God in their lives. What could possibly do this better for the Christian than the Lord's Supper?

Jesus even pointed to this at the Last Supper. *"And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." (1 Cor. 11:24-25)*

The importance of the Lord's Supper can never be stressed enough. It is just as important to us today as the Sabbath was to the Jews. And the Sabbath was so important that violators received the death penalty. I think the same type of thing also happened to some in the early Church who failed to properly regard the Lord's Supper. (1 Cor. 11:29-30)

The Lord's Supper is the focal point of our Christian lives. It is here that we are constantly reminded of the sacrifice where our Savior died and we were given life. It is here that we come face to face with the great love which God so bountifully poured out upon all humanity. It is the single most important event in human history. When we observe our Sabbath we should do so with the greatest of reverence and admiration for the One who made it all possible.

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The impossible is what nobody can do  
until somebody does it!

## SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. At the age of ninety-nine Abram's name was changed by God to what?
2. From what country did Solomon bring Hiram, a worker in brass who was to make temple furnishings?
3. When Mary of Bethany rose quickly and left the house, where did the Jews think she had gone?
4. As recorded in the book of Revelation, there was a war in heaven between two foes; can you name them?
5. What did Jael use to kill Sisera, commander of the Canaanite army?

### ANSWERS NEXT MONTH . . .

and remember last month's questions?

1. The sending of what prophet is promised at the end of Malachi? **ELIJAH** (Mal. 4:5)
2. When Ezekiel laid on his right side for 40 days to bear the iniquity of the house of Judah, each day represented how many years? **ONE YEAR** (Eze. 4:6)
3. God is not slack (or slow) concerning what? **HIS PROMISE** (2 Pet. 3:9)
4. What book of the Bible records Paul's voyage to Rome as a prisoner? **BOOK OF ACTS** (Acts 28:16)
5. Kish, Saul's father, sent him in search of some lost animals. What were they? **DONKEYS** (1 Sam. 9:3)

## TALK IS CHEAP!

Some people have a comment to make on virtually every subject. They never say, "I don't know," or just listen in order to learn something. They just spout off their uninformed opinions to any willing listener. Proverbs calls such persons fools. *"A fool has no delight in understanding, But in expressing his own heart."* (Prov. 18:2)

Talk is cheap partly because it is easily available. The book of Proverbs offers some principles to help us evaluate the worth of our words:

\* Sometimes the wisest course is to keep quiet. We need to weigh our thoughts and words carefully if we intend to be helpful (Prov. 11:12; 17:27-28).

\* The one thing we never want to talk about is a confidence with which we have been entrusted (Prov. 11:13).

\* If we know how to use words, we can accomplish noble ends -- for example, defusing a heated situation (Prov. 15:1-2).

\* We need to watch what we say. Our mouths can get us in deep trouble (Prov. 18:6-7).

\* If we give our opinion on a matter before hearing the facts, we will tend to bring shame on ourselves (Prov. 18:13).

\* Talk is cheap, but easy talk can be expensive. Saying the wrong thing at the wrong time can lead to unfortunate consequences (Prov. 18:21).

# GOSPEL MEETINGS

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
August 2 - 4	Pleasant Ridge Church Woodbury, TN	Jim Fritchard (Tecumseh, OK)
August 4 - 9 (Su - F)	New Bethel Church Cullman, AL 7:30pm	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)
August 5 - 9	Antioch Church Livingston, TN	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
August 11 - 16	Rainsville, AL	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
August 18 - 23	Temple Hill Church Smithdale, MS	Harry Cobb (Wedowee, AL)
August 25 - 30	Bonaventure Road Savannah, GA	Jim Maher and Harry Cobb
Aug. 26 - Sep. 1	Ashlock Church Celina, TN	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)

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## WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

1. I must hear the Word of God (Rom. 10:17; Eph. 1:13)
2. I must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (John 8:24; Acts 16:32)
3. I must repent of my sins (Acts 2:38; Acts 3:19)
4. I must confess Christ (Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:9-10)
5. I must be baptized into Christ (Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:27; Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16)