

Sabbath Day

Holy Day of Rest



Basic Beliefs //
GOSPEL SERIES

 True Jesus Church

Sabbath Day

Holy Day of Rest

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A DAY OF REST

Imagine having to work around the clock, seven days a week for your entire life without ever resting. Life would be monotonous, not to mention grueling. We need rest periodically. That is why we go to bed at night, take weekends off, and go on vacations.

Even God rested after creating the universe.

“And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done” (Genesis 2:2).



God does not need to rest the way human beings do because He is almighty and never grows tired. But out of love for His creatures, He rested and instituted a weekly cycle, using the seven-day creation as the prototype.

God has set aside the last day of every week for us to rest from our weekly routines. This day of rest is called the Sabbath day.



God commands the human race to keep the Sabbath day as a special day of rest:

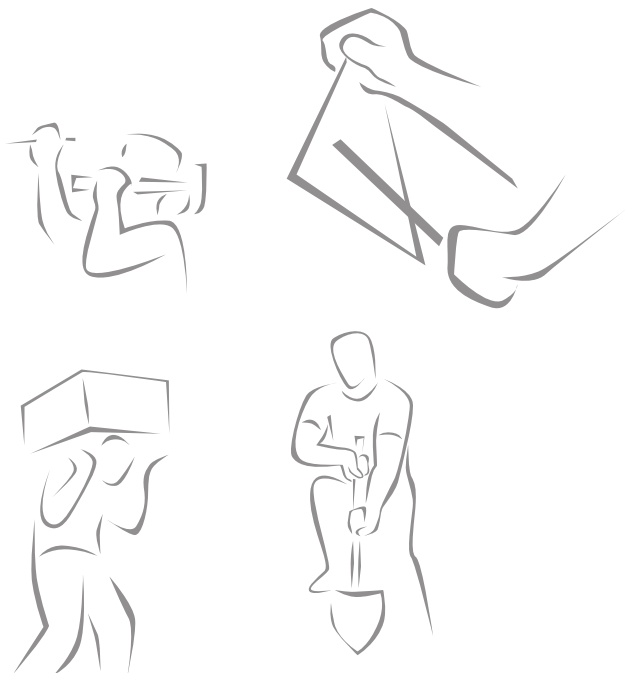
“Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you” (Deuteronomy 5:13–14).



Our Creator loves us and knows that we need to be refreshed after six days of hard work. He does not want to see anyone being overworked.

The Lord Jesus tells us that God had us in mind when He set aside and commanded Sabbath keeping. "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27).

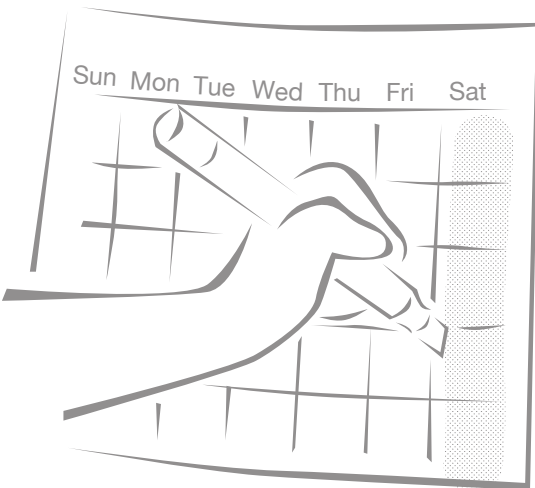
He made the Sabbath for us. What a precious gift from our Creator!



THE SEVENTH DAY

The Bible tells us clearly that the Sabbath is the seventh day of the week. In the western world, we call this day Saturday. Actually, the concept of the weekly cycle came from the first week in history, the creation week, which consists of seven days, including the day of rest. God set apart the last day of every week as the Sabbath.

From the time of their forefathers, the Israelites have acknowledged that Saturday is the Sabbath. The Lord Jesus kept the seventh-day Sabbath, and so did His disciples.



In the history of Christianity, Sunday worship gradually replaced Sabbath observance. The edict of the Roman Emperor Constantine declaring Sunday as the official day of rest further left a lasting influence on the Christian day of worship. As a result of this tradition, Sunday worship has become the predominant practice. But God never commanded Sunday worship.

Since God did not change the Sabbath day, we should still keep the Sabbath on Saturday, the seventh day, rather than on Sunday, the first day. Our Lord Jesus Christ did not do away with Sabbath observance. Being one of the Ten Commandments, the Sabbath is still a day that all Christians must keep. Blessed are those who hold true to God's commandments!



A DAY OF DEDICATION

Unlike the other six days of the week, God made the Sabbath day a sacred day.

“Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made” (Genesis 2:3).

It is as if God put His own signature on this day, calling it His day.

God commands His people to remember the Sabbath and calls this day of rest “the Sabbath of the Lord your God” (Deuteronomy 5:14). While God made the Sabbath for man, we also have an obligation to God to set aside this day as the Lord’s day. We are to rest on this day just as God did. By honoring this day, we honor God.



Because the Sabbath belongs to the Lord our God, we must keep this special day unto Him, doing what pleases Him. God Himself instructs us in the right way to observe this day: "If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on My holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy day of the Lord honorable, and shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words..." (Isaiah 58:13).



Sounds like a lot of rules? Not really. It is a day of "delight," a happy day. By following God's commandment, we can think about how great and loving God is, and how special we are in His sight. We can make every Sabbath meaningful to us if we learn to put aside our own priorities and renew our commitment to our dear heavenly Father. So why not look at the Sabbath as spending some quality time with our Father?

A DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

We are to remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. The reason, as explained in the fourth commandment, is that God Himself rested the seventh day after He made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them. God even blessed the this day and made it holy (Exodus 20:8, 11). We remember this day because God has made it a special day and set an example of rest for us to follow.

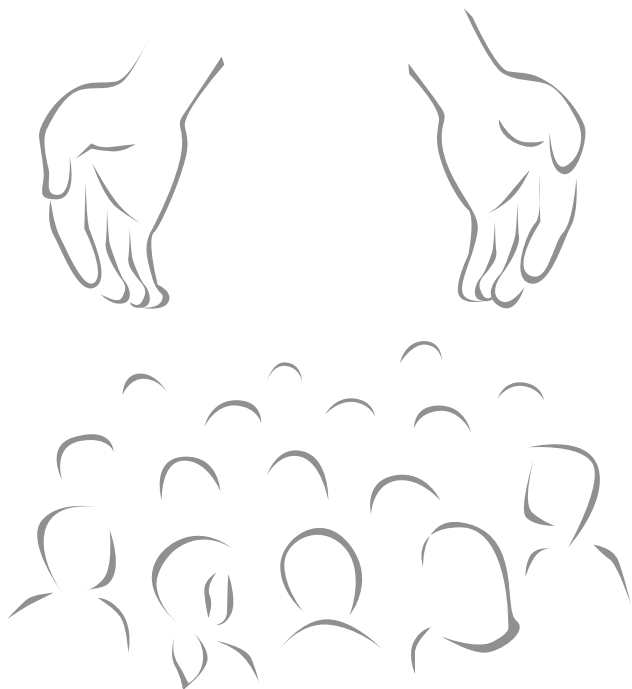
When commanding the Israelites to keep the Sabbath day, God also asked the people to remember how God delivered them from slavery in Egypt.

“And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day” (Deuteronomy 5:15).



Likewise, God has also delivered us, the believers, from a sinful lifestyle under the hands of Satan into the promise of God's eternal kingdom.

Through the Sabbath, God furthermore reminded the Israelites that they belonged to God: "Moreover I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between them and Me, that they might know that I am the Lord who sanctifies them" (Ezekiel 20:12). The Sabbath is God's way of telling us how special we are—that we are His people.



A DAY OF WORSHIP

In our busy schedules, we do not have much time to spend in quiet communion with God. So the Sabbath is a perfect time for coming into God's presence together with all of God's people.

"Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work on it; it is the Sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings" (Leviticus 23:3).

Our Lord Himself set an example of keeping the Sabbath day. "And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day" (Luke 4:16). The synagogue was a place of assembly and worship. It was the Lord's custom to join the assembly every Sabbath.



The Lord's disciples also attended Sabbath worship regularly. Paul was one of them: "Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures" (Acts 17:2).

We may also have prayer gatherings on this day. When Paul and the other missionaries arrived at a place where there was no synagogue, they joined the prayer meetings.

"And on the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met there" (Acts 16:13).

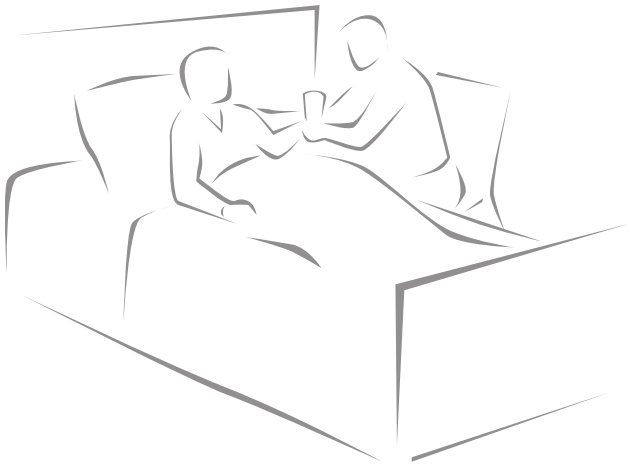
Prayer is a form of worship and assembly that brings us spiritually closer to God. So Sabbath is a good time for prayers.



A DAY OF SERVICE

The Lord Jesus as well as His disciples used the Sabbath day to perform good deeds. The Lord once healed a sick man on the Sabbath; on another, He healed a crippled woman. He wanted to show the people that God can provide rest from sickness and pain. So He encouraged the people, saying “It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath” (Matthew 12:12).

The disciples of Christ also did good work on the Sabbath. They preached the good news of Christ’s salvation. Many people today still do not know of the wonderful message of God’s deliverance from sin. So we should invite our friends and neighbors to come to church to listen to the gospel.



As we gather in worship, we share God's word with one another. This is an excellent way to show kindness. We can find strength and guidance in life through our mutual edification with God's word.

We can also pray for the sick and those who are still under the bondage of sin, so that God may release them and save them. As it pleased the Lord to heal on the Sabbath, we would surely please Him by praying for the physical and spiritual healing of others.



A DAY OF BLESSING

“God blessed the seventh day” (Genesis 2:3). The Sabbath is a day of blessing. By keeping it every week, we receive God’s blessings.



When the Israelites were staying in the wilderness, God provided them sufficient food every sixth day so that they would not need to work for food the following day, the Sabbath day.

Today, many who put aside their own work to keep the Sabbath testify that God has indeed blessed them much more as a result. When we keep the Sabbath by faith, God will provide for our needs. Resting on the Sabbath is like enjoying a paid vacation, and better.

In addition, we will receive God's spiritual blessings, which are far more precious than any material provisions. The Lord promised those who honor the Sabbath, "You shall delight yourself in the Lord; and I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth, and feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father" (Isaiah 58:14). God Himself, along with His love, peace, joy, comfort, strength, and His glorious kingdom will be with us forever.



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