

Title: THE TRUE MEANING OF SABBATH, LUKE 13:10 – 21
(Chatham, NJ; 08/21/16, AM) [Pt – Topical, Acceptability Pattern]

Theme: Jesus challenged the synagogue ruler not only because he had made the Sabbath a burden but also because he failed to grasp its true meaning and practice.

Purpose: To enlighten us to the redemptive meaning of the Sabbath and to foster an attitude that brings people to healing and redemption through the Gospel.

Introduction:

1. We recognize that the commandment concerning the Sabbath does not force upon us the legal demand to worship on the last day of the week.
2. The early church made that switch as in apparent in Acts 20:7.
3. However, even under the Law the Sabbath was meant to be more than rules and regulations.
4. The teachers obviously had justification for the Sabbath: it was the fourth commandment.
5. However, Jesus draws on the true significance of the Sabbath as a day for redemption and freedom.
6. Let's get past the usual discussions we might have concerning the change in the Sabbath regulation and think about the deeper significance of the day.

I. Sabbath, Commemoration of God's Activity

A. Creation, Genesis 2:1-3

1. God blessed the seventh day and made it holy
2. It was a day for commemorating and remembering God's creative activity
3. Does God need rest? Does He need sleep?
4. Resting is likely something that man needed in order to be mindful of God

B. Deut. 5:15

1. It was also a day to commemorate God's redemptive activity
2. Israel remembered and celebrated her freedom
3. To overburden the people with regulations to prevent work probably was not the intent not working on the Sabbath
4. However, avoiding work and chores was a way of not being distracted from remembering redemption
5. Somewhere along the line, Israel transformed the Sabbath into something burdensome

II. Jesus Sought to Re-establish Its Meaning

A. Where the leaders were right

1. The first time capital punishment was carried out was when someone broke the Law of not working on the Sabbath
2. The prophets sometime express God's weariness of their sacrifices and holydays because Israel failed at the more important matters, Isaiah 1:10-17
3. Is. 58:13-14 criticizes more abuses
4. Amos 8:4-6 points out their false motives: they didn't really want to honor the Sabbath, it was more of an annoyance
5. The Synagogue rulers no doubt knew about these abuses and about the prophets' criticism
6. Not all the synagogue rulers in the Gospels are bad people

B. Where the leaders went wrong

1. Fastidiousness about not working led to overregulation

2. Plucking grain, walking too far, and in this case getting healed were things to be avoided for fear of breaking the Sabbath
3. Yet Jesus heals a woman: she was bound by Satan for 18 years
4. **Loosing her bonds was a perfectly good idea considering the nature of the Sabbath
5. Jesus even quotes case law that is also consistent with what they did all the time: untie their animals to lead them to drink
6. The comparison of loosing and untying was not lost on the audience
7. Enforcing the legal burdens on the people had become a burden, and they rejoiced to hear what Jesus says

III. Delight in God's Creation and Redemption

A. A day to be honored

1. Isaiah 58:13 speaks of delighting in it and honoring it
2. To commemorate it as a day when God redeemed them goes beyond the usual avoidance of work
3. To heal of woman on the Sabbath was only natural
4. Why does this bother the ruler so much? Why not rather rejoice that a woman he knew could now walk upright?
5. This was indeed honoring the day

B. Times of refreshing

1. We may not describe our Sunday as a Sabbath, but it can and should still be seen not simply as a duty but as a time of healing and refreshment
2. We commune with the God who created us and redeemed us
3. We should see it as a time to provide our souls with healing water
4. We need to see repentance and change as a means of blessing, Acts 3:26

Conclusions:

1. We have set aside the elder's prayer to help you find healing and peace.
2. Don't forget about the prayer cards.
3. We want you to get spiritual help and strength.
4. Church should be a place where you are built up and fed, not torn down.
5. And it should not be a place where you have to simply put on your best face.
6. We are here to fill our souls with grace and mercy.