

I was most undisciplined in my presentation of my subject last week, and so I am using this opportunity to develop and use material that is very important and yet was omitted from that sermon. Our overall subject is presenting our bodies as living sacrifices; the works that we are called to do in the flesh that are a spiritual and godly service. For by doing this we are not conformed to this world, but prove what is that good and acceptable will of God.

There is nothing that so shows a sanctified life than the way we approach the two major concerns of this life: the well-being of the body and the use of our time. These both are treated in chapter 14 of Romans, by the Holy Spirit revealing what is the key thing in both of these.

We are not to be terribly occupied about what we eat or drink. God didn't give us a body so we could feed it. We don't have a body so we can eat and drink. Get off that obsession. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment, as Jesus said. The body is to serve the mind and the soul—the body is not to be the master, but to be the servant.

The second thing is the use of our time. The most important thing about time in this world is the concept of rest. The commandment concerning the Sabbath underscores that fundamental principle; We do not work so we can rest: we rest so we can work. **IMPORTANT: All work is to rest in Faith; We learn this by the Sabbath. What the Old Testament Sabbath was; Every day in Christ must be.**

**Question: You mean that every day we are not to do our own works, think our own thoughts, speak our own words, find our own pleasures, Is every day to be a delight and a holy day. The answer from the Scripture is Yes. Every day is to be that, and every act of every day is to be an act of worship, praise, and an offering up to God.**

To develop this idea, we must look at Psalm 90

**I. The most important work that we must do in time is to prepare for eternity, to live in the presence of God.**

A. Psalm 90.

1. In this world we labor under a curse: most of our work is repairing the ravages of sin; but still the human race makes progress. 1-4
2. Individually, we are like grass that grows up in a day and then vanishes. 5-11
3. But we have a wonderful promise that has to do with eternity: "number our days." 12-13 There is something more than this life; something more to consider. There is wisdom, not just toil and trouble. This wisdom points to God and to eternity.
4. Our toil is redeemed by your mercy [early] vs. 14-16
5. God's work establishes our work resulting in glory and beauty.

B. This is developed more fully in Colossians 3:

1. If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.
  - a. Jesus is the wisdom: the wisdom we seek is Christ, and He is in heaven and we must seek Him there.

- b. God will show mercy, but it is found only in Christ. Our fruitless years of toil and trouble may be surrendered up to Christ and our work on the earth redeemed and become profitable.
2. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. Then we can be glad and rejoice all our days. The curse is swallowed up in joy.
3. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.
  - a. We have offered our bodies up as living sacrifices and every day become a day of worship and work in faith.
  - b. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin, hence, whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we are to do it all to the glory of God; by faith; We are not our own, we are bought with a price.
4. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.
  - a. This hope transforms our work and our labor. See all of Psalm 16 The offering up of the body of Christ resulted in His rest; the Sabbath, or the rest, of Hope.
  - b. We have this also in Acts 2:25-29 He saw Christ always before His face, and rested in Christ. The death of Christ is the death of my works. See Hebrews 4:1,2,9,10, 16. The rest was not the seventh day; it was not entering Canaan; it comes after David, it comes by faith which comes by the Gospel; it causes you to cease from your own works, not just on one day, but on every day. It is the rest of faith. It comes from the throne of grace where we obtain that "early mercy" that Psalm 90 promised. Glory be to God. Praise the Lord in His Temple.

### C. Mark 8

34 And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

35 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.

36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

D. This is the church's most important business: to preach this gospel of rest and peace for man through all his life: As our catechism says: Question 103.

1. First of all that the Gospel be preached and maintained and I take advantage of the means that God has ordained: diligently attend church and take the sacraments, pray and give tithes and offerings.
2. Then all my days I give up to God to do the works of faith, resting in Christ, forsaking all my works, my words, my thoughts, my pleasures, my desires, for apart from faith and the glory of God, they are all evil and rejected by God and His curse is upon them.

## II. The Sabbath of rest was given to emphasize two things:

A. The church keeps Sabbath in order to point to our everlasting rest in Christ. It means that ALL our time belongs to God.

1. The question is "keeping the Sabbath in a Jewish sense, or in a New Testament sense." We keep no day in the Jewish sense.
2. We are to do all to the glory of God, whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, it is to be for the glory of God.
3. This means obedience: not going our own way, and doing our own thing, but offering up our bodies as living sacrifices in true worship from the heart, not just bouncing through the ceremonies, wishing they were over, chafing against the ministry of the word of God.
4. What do you expect of the ministry? We are supposed to watch for your souls and you give us 35 40 minutes a week? Add Sunday School and weekday study and the minister gets maybe 2 hours out of the week. Less than a football game. Do we wonder that there is appalling ignorance of Scripture and the meaning of Scripture so that heresies abound and people drift off from the church.
  - a. I worry that you are not reading your bible every day. That you are not teaching it to your children;
  - b. I worry that you are not giving up your work to the Lord to do everything by faith and obedience and casting your cares upon the Lord.
  - c. I pray for you every day; my thoughts every night before I sleep, and every morning when I wake up, which is often very early in the morning.
  - d. I pray for you during the day, as you come to mind; as individuals and as families and as a church.
  - e. I wish I could preach a second time on Sunday.
5. I confess that I believe that one of the big mistakes I made when we organized our church was to commit to only one service on Sunday. There was some desire on the part of the founding members to do things like the other churches of our denomination.
  - a. But I think that the old denomination practice is wrong, and there are more and more churches that have evening services. I always had two services before and they were both well attended.
  - b. But we did not have our own building, etc., we had a lot of excuses, but it was a mistake, and I hope that someday you will rectify it.
  - c. I confess that I have chafed against this, especially in recent years. I chafe against the restraint of one sermon a week, when there is SO much that we need to know.
6. But it is also true that you have responsibility to read and learn the Scriptures.
  - a. You are not keeping the Sabbath if you only read the Bible on Sunday, only pray on Sunday, and only think about the Lord on Sunday.
  - b. We need to be reminded of our eternal calling and covenant: As Hebrews 2 tells us: 1 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. 2 For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; 3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; 4 God also bearing them witness, both with signs and won-

ders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

- c. Blessed are those that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

B. That being said, it is also important to note that the day is not to be kept as though it were a holy day in itself. It is kept not in and of itself but because of very important things that we listed above: The gospel ministry, teachings, learning the word, sacraments, public worship; alms. In order to allow the Lord to work in me, ceasing from my own works and beginning my rest all through the week, so that my works are done in rest, not agitation and frantic desire. It is not kept,

1. As though we are made holy because we go through certain ceremonies, for church is to teach us how to live every day. You can be very diligent in church and still your heart can be far from the Lord if you do not take these things to heart.
2. The day means nothing if all of our time is not sanctified.
3. We do not sanctify the altar to make it holy, but the altar sanctifies us. The weak see only the outward things, and judge the strong for outward things, not realizing that our true rest is the rest of faith, which does not rest in ceremonies but in history, the events in history that took our sins away: The ceremonies do not point to our hearts or to the altar or table.
  - a. Baptism to the pouring out of the Holy Spirit; Your purification because of the death of Christ. You are baptize into His death.
  - b. Holy Communion: points to the offering of His body and blood to God on the cross, not on the table or the altar, but on that cross on Mt.Calvary You participate by faith and rest in faith.
  - c. Christ our Lord sanctified time by the offering up of his body in time. 3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: 4 But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. 7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. 8 Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. 9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? 10 Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. We keep Sabbath, but not a Jewish Sabbath, for we have come to Christ and have found rest. Galatians 4
  - d. "14 But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. 15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. 16 And as many as walk according to this rule, peace *be* on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. 17 From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. 18 Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen. (Ga 6:14-18)

Amen and Amen.