

They Shall Do No Work

Exodus 20:10-11, "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."

Dear heavenly Father, we thank You for Your mercy on Your people, that You have given us a day of rest. Thank You that we can rest in You and we pray that You will help us to understand the picture of what this rest is. Please help us to hear Your Word and please be with Mr. Horn and give him words to speak and speak through him. We pray that You will help us to encourage one another to love and good works this day. Amen.

I kept debating back and forth whether we should spend another week on the fourth commandment or not. When I did the Ten Commandment series on Sunday nights, I think I spent eight or nine weeks on it so I'm not planning to do that, but I did think it was worth spending one more week on it before we move in. The reason that I think we need to spend another week on it is that I want us to seriously consider the communal aspect of the Sabbath because it's very easy for us to think we are supposed to keep the Sabbath, but the reality is that it's a community that is to keep the Sabbath. It's the stranger within your gates that is also supposed to keep the Sabbath. Your oxen are supposed to keep the Sabbath, it's not just about professed believers that are to keep the Sabbath. When we think about it, the professed church used to have a great influence, it used to have a great effect on the society because the society used to keep the Sabbath a lot better than most people who profess Christianity today keep the Sabbath. The whole society used to shut down on Sunday's. When I was growing up, everything was shut down on Sunday except they would rotate different drug stores and the only thing they were allowed to sell were prescription drugs, but they would rotate through and society enforced the Sabbath. As we go through this passage we are going to see that the stranger within your gates, the only person that has that ability to cause the stranger within your gates to do it, is the civil magistrate. This is a commandment that includes the civil magistrate and we've lost that. I think we need to spend some time asking ourselves why we have lost that because this isn't something that happened a long time ago. Since Governor Cooper has been in office, he has changed the laws related to the Sabbath in North Carolina, that's how recent it is, the battle is happening now. That law was passed in 2017 to change the time that you can start selling alcohol on the Sabbath from noon to 10:00 am. The battle is still going on and there's no question which direction it's going. He didn't sign it saying that bars can't be open on the Sabbath, he said they could open at 10:00 instead of 12:00. It's really easy when we think about the Sabbath laws, that they go back to Puritan times in America, and there was some of that, but the reality is that the civil magistrate enforcing the laws probably peaked in 1930. Certainly in North Carolina in 1930, is where most local communities, most counties and cities, it

became pretty general to have Sabbath laws, just ninety years ago. This isn't something that happened two-hundred years ago and we've been losing for two-hundred years ago, this was a battle that the churches were winning ninety years ago. In 1961, the NC legislature said that pretty much every county, every city has blue laws, which are laws about keeping the Sabbath, but what we're going to do is we're going to make it standard across the state. That was 1961, that's how recent this battle is, sixty years ago, the year I was born is the peak in a real sense. Maybe it's all my fault. (Laughing) It's the peak, in a real sense, for the blue laws in North Carolina, but then the Supreme Court overthrew it and said it was too vague and it's been slipping ever since then. One of the reasons I want to say this and point this out is, it's really easy for us to go and to look and say, 'How are you going to get a community to keep the Sabbath again? That's from some old thing that happened.' No, this is a recent failure of the church, this is a failure of the church in our lifetimes. This isn't before a lot of the lifetimes of the adults here, this is in the lifetime of the adults here, which means if the church could lose it in the lifetime of the adults here, there's no reason we shouldn't think we can gain it back in the lifetime of the adults here. We've accepted the fact that the church is supposed to lose, contrary to Scripture. One of the reasons that I wanted us to think about the communal aspect of it is because I want to challenge us to ask ourselves the question, 'Why are we losing the Sabbath in our community?' It's not the unbelievers that are causing the Sabbath to be lost, it's because of a failure of the church that is why the Sabbath is being lost and it's been happening recently, it's happening now. I'm not going to give solutions, I'm not sure I know what the solutions are, but I do know what's going to happen, the Sabbath will be kept again. That's a promise of Scripture, the church will fulfill the Great Commission, all authority has been given to Christ and everybody will learn the laws of God. That is a promise of God and whether it happens in our lifetime or not, I don't know. We know that in world history, the direction is towards keeping the Sabbath, not away from it. We're an anomaly, we're not in the normal pattern so we should ask ourselves, what should we do about it to get our society to be in the normal pattern? Because sixty years ago, the keeping of the Sabbath, the obeying of the laws of God was increasing, not decreasing. That's the main thing I want to consider this morning, is the communal aspect and what it means for us. Mostly not going to talk about the things that Jeff talked about a few weeks ago, but I really want us to consider not even the beginning of Exodus 20:10, "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." "In it you shall do no work." That's where I want to start. The context of this is who shouldn't work on the Sabbath. The commandment starts with the idea that six days you shall labor and do all of your work. It's pretty clear in this passage that all these people who are not supposed to be doing any work on the Sabbath day, they're supposed to be working the other six days. That's a really important concept for us to understand. If you're thinking about it, who's supposed to be working six days? Your son, your daughter, your male servant, your female servant, your cattle, the stranger that's within your gates, but it starts with you. I want us to also consider what it doesn't say. What it doesn't say is that you're not supposed to have your wife work on the Sabbath day. Now, does that mean wives are supposed to work on the Sabbath day? No, of course not, but why wouldn't it say to make sure you have your wife not work on the Sabbath day? I think it's creating a contrast here between the people who should have their own agency right? The two become one, the wife has real authority in the home, she

is part of that 'you'. This isn't talking about the male heads of household because children are supposed to submit to their mothers too according to Ephesians 6. As we think about this, I think the point here is we're really talking about unbelievers. You're supposed to keep it because you believe, whether you are a man or a woman or a single mom that has a family, you are supposed to be enforcing this because you're supposed to know as a believer. It doesn't matter for the husband or the wife, both of them fall into the 'you'. One thing about going to Nigeria that is very clear and typical in societies, here the average life expectancy for a woman is like 81 and for men it's like 79, you don't have that many widows. But you go to Nigeria and there are lots of families where you have an average life expectancy of 53, there are lots of families that are headed by women because their husbands died. So we just need to recognize that when this is being written, that was probably the typical, it certainly was the typical lifespan that goes back into the early American history, it would be very typical for somebody to actually be raised by the second husband of their mother or even his wife after because everyone kept dying. In this we shouldn't think of the men and the women, we look and say they will be married 50 or 60 years, that's atypical in the history of the world because people usually died sooner than that. If you're a believing wife in the home, you have an authority and you have a responsibility to deal with this differently, it shouldn't be your husband telling you to rest, it should be you saying that you're supposed to rest. The point of this is that we're supposed to be forcing people who don't know God, to rest, things that don't know God, to rest. Not because you're trying to torment them, but because the Sabbath was made for man to be a blessing. As we went through Hebrews 4, it's very clear that the whole picture of it is the mercy of God and how we rest in the finished work of God instead of our own works. The point of the Sabbath is to make them rest, not so they say they want to do something and you tell them they can't do this or that, but to show the goodness of God by saying the Sabbath is to be a blessing, the Sabbath is a time where you don't have to work, that you can rest from your labor. As we consider this, one of the things that we have to remember is, if your children never work they will never enjoy the Sabbath. If they don't work, they won't enjoy the Sabbath because the Sabbath is resting from work and if they're resting six days a week, don't think all of a sudden they're going to see the Sabbath as something special. Why is it special? It's not sanctified to them, it's the same as every other day and that's a big problem in our society. We need to make sure that's not a big problem in our homes. When we think of what we're supposed to do for the unbelievers, we need to make sure that we start with having them work so they can rest. Let's start with sons. I think it's the natural progression, it goes from sons to daughters and I think there's a big difference. In my experience people do a lot worse job of teaching their sons to keep the Sabbath than they do their daughters, a much worse job. I think in the homeschool environment, the people that I have talked to, it comes down to one thing, fathers do a really lousy job of teaching their sons to work. If you don't teach your sons to work, they won't find joy in rest. If what you do is teach your sons to play, if you teach them to go out and play sports all the time, then on the Sunday when you say they're not allowed to play sports, what do they do? They say it's a miserable day. If their life is filled with play instead of being filled with work, they are going to find the Sabbath miserable and judgement rather than blessing. Remember, the way they look at the Sabbath is how they will look at God because God orders our time. If He orders our time, that six days you get to play, but then one day you have to go and worship God, guess what they are going to think about God? He's a cruel taskmaster. Our society teaches that

they're supposed to play all the time. Sports is not work. I'm not saying there's never a point to exercise, I'm saying we're giving appetites to sons that make them think that this is what the world is supposed to be like and it's not what the world is supposed to be like. School really isn't work either. I want to make sure people understand that, school isn't work either! Work is something that produces something. The point of work is to produce something, the point of work is to have an actual return. When we think of what Paul says in Galatians 4:1-2, "Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father." If all you did was send your slaves to school all the time to learn, would you buy a slave? No! The point of having a slave is so they have a return. Paul is saying there is no difference between a slave and a son, the son is to have a return, not just that you feed them all the time and that you teach them all the time so that they can have a return after they become an heir. They're supposed to have a return now. How many people in this church think that way? If we want our children, if we want our sons in particular, to understand the Sabbath, they have to work, they have to do things, they have to have an expectation from them that they will produce things. If we don't have that, they won't find any pleasure in the Sabbath. If you look, what has happened since 1960? It even happened earlier, the real attacks on the Sabbath happened in the 40's because the two main attacks on the Sabbath in America were the NFL and Nascar. Those are the two main attacks on the Sabbath. When I talk about sports, I am talking about this is how the Sabbath got overturned. In Philadelphia, I think it was 1943, they started to play football games on the Sabbath. The point was that people would go, 'This is a lot more fun than church' and you see the sliding away and you see our society losing the Sabbath because of sports. Slaves, if you think of a slave, you expect the return, you should be thinking of your children the same way. Not that we don't spend more on them than they return, but their labor should be doing something that's productive. If you teach your children to do things that are productive, guess what? When they get older they will be able to provide for themselves. I see in the homeschool arena so often that sons aren't expected to provide towards the household economy, why not? They're not expected to produce anything, they're just expected to be sponges that sponge things up and then go play. That's not what life is supposed to look like, that's not what the rest of their life is supposed to look like. If it is, it will be a terrible life because there are plenty of people that get a check from the government and they never lift a finger and they just sit around and smoke drugs all the time. That happens, I've seen it, that's what the inner cities look like because we say they're not supposed to work. I look and I see there are so many cases where you see young women that are ready to be married and there's no young men around that are ready to be married at the same time because no young men have learned how to work. They never learned how to provide, they never learned how to take something and make it so there is a return from it so that they have profit from their labor and it's good to profit from your labor. Sons need to learn how to do this, sons in particular. Our society says they're supposed to go play sports or just waste their time, it should be filled with idleness and fullness of bread and we know where that leads to as we talked about Sunday night. We know where that leads to. So now boys aren't worried about providing so there are more women that go to college than men. It's too much work and why work? Instead of thinking about working, when God says to redeem the time because the days are full of evil, it means we're supposed to be about work. Then He says not just your sons, but also your daughter. I spent more time on sons than I will with

daughters because I see a much bigger problem. I think it's more likely to be a bigger problem here with sons than daughters because the mothers are doing homeschooling and the mothers also make meals and they also clean the house and they also do laundry and all these other things so they have these girls there that can help them and they have them help them so the girls tend to learn how to work. We need to make sure we're doing the same for the sons because it's a blessing that the daughters learn to work. Mothers tend to have a higher expectation for their daughters to produce than they do of their sons because they know the help they need, they know the ways the household needs the labor of the daughters. For them you need to make sure you are still making the distinction. If they are doing the same food prep, the same childcare on Sunday as they do every other day of the week, you're not giving them rest. You are supposed to be making a distinction, you're supposed to be making a difference so that they understand the Sabbath day is different than the rest of the days of the week. For boys, I think so often we don't make the distinction with work, for girls it's easy to have them do the same thing for their siblings every day instead of saying there should be a distinct difference, the Sabbath day needs to be sanctified. If you want a testimony in your house of the goodness and the kindness and the mercy of God, you need to sanctify the Sabbath day, it needs to be different. Six days they labor and do all their work and one day they rest, that needs to be the fabric of their life, that needs to be the pattern so they understand who God is. "Nor your male servant, nor your female servant." The primary meaning of that word there, 'servant', is slave. It gets translated as servant, but it's a bondservant, it's a slave. It's clear if you have a slave that you own, you should not have them work on the Sabbath, but again the point I want to stress is that the Sabbath is communal, it's not just believers that are supposed to rest. Everyone is supposed to rest. If you had an unbelieving pagan that was your slave, you had a responsibility to make them rest. Not having them rest is a serious sin against them because it testifies of a false god, it says God is like Pharaoh rather than God is like the true God, the God of the Scriptures. In the second reading of the giving of the Ten Commandments, Moses relayed a different reason for keeping the Sabbath. Deuteronomy 5:15, "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." They were to remember how they were treated in Egypt by Pharaoh and how God rescued them because He's not like Pharaoh, He doesn't tell you to make bricks without straw. That is not who God is and they are to keep the Sabbath day so that people remember God is not like an earthly king, God is not like a king that's living in his flesh. That is not who God is. When they consider how to treat their male and female servants, they're supposed to be thinking about how God treated them and that's how we're supposed to be thinking. How does God treat us? How do we want the unbelievers that are around us and affected by what we do, how do we want them to think about God? He is a God that does save us to be His servants, He does save us to do His work, He does save us to seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, but He also gives us a day of refreshing. He gives us a day where we're even supposed to put aside that work, of building up His kingdom, and be built up and edified ourselves and strengthened and refreshed so we can finish that work. We're supposed to give that testimony to the people around us. Now, nobody legally has slaves in America so we should ask how this applies to us, how it applies now. In the Bible study on Tuesday, someone pointed out that someone who owes you money, since the borrower is the slave to the lender, you should be

asking yourself how do you deal with that money. If you're making them work seven days a week to pay you back, you're sinning against them. Even then I think there are broader applications that we should be considering. In the Scripture there are multiple employer and employee relationships. A slave was someone that if they were a Hebrew they were yours for six years and they were permanent if they were a Gentile. A hired servant was for three years, a day laborer was for a single day and you would hire them each day. It's clear from the first two that you had to give them rest since they would be in your household, but the day laborer, you simply wouldn't hire him that day so they do no work for you. It seems to me that that's pretty clear then that the day laborer is the guy that's working at the grocery store and that if you go and make him work you are violating the Sabbath laws. We should be doing everything we can so that nobody does work for us on the Sabbath day. Now, because of a requirement for mercy because the Sabbath day wasn't made to punish, it was made to bless, you should pay someone if they do something for you. It can get to be about the money and the money is not the point. The point is, are you working for a person to have rest or not? Are you working so that the person doesn't rely on the world to survive instead of saying God is their provision. What about salaried employees? I have people that work for me that are on salary and they clearly don't fit into these categories, they're a combination of those. I can't tell my employees not to work on the Sabbath day, they are in their own household. If they were here I could force them not to work, I can't force them not to work, but I can think about it and I can try to structure things. Sometimes they have to do things on the weekend and I get it to them by Friday so they can do it on Saturday, but a lot of times they will still do it on Sunday. I don't think that I am forcing them to violate the Sabbath, but we should be asking ourselves the question, 'What things can we do so that people don't violate the Sabbath?' We should also recognize we have real limits to our authority and we have to accept those limits to our authority. Again, I go back to the reason why I don't think wives are listed, they have their own responsibility and as an authority in their household, they can say they want to do this on Saturday so they're going to work on Sunday and there's nothing I can do to stop it. We shouldn't try to go farther than our authority, but at the same time we should be looking at our authority and trying to use it the best we can so that people won't violate the Sabbath. If we want society to change where we have been losing the Sabbath, if we want to turn that corner and have our society move more towards recognizing God for who He is because that's what the Sabbath is about, it's about recognizing who God is, if we want our society to recognize God for who He is, we need to be thinking about this, we need to be asking ourselves what it should look like, what we should be doing. We need to wrestle with these because that's how we have a testimony, we have to stand firm, we have to encourage other people to do that. It's interesting because you look out there in the world and the world honors the Orthodox Jew who says he can't work on Saturday. It honors the Muslim who says he can't work on Friday, and it mocks the Christian that says they can't work on Sunday. We should just recognize that the reason that we don't receive honor when we say that is because people have seen so many hypocrites that they just assume we are hypocritical and they don't think the Jew who reads Scripture is. That was Jesus' big charge towards the Orthodox Jews of the day, which would be the Pharisees, was you are hypocrites. Yet the world sees them as less hypocritical than the church. We need to start with ourselves and figure it out, but then we also need to be declaring this to the world, to be structuring our lives so that we are declaring it to the world. We need to stand firm in our testimony and say that we can't do this on

the Sabbath because it gives the opportunity to speak of who God is because again, the Sabbath reflects the character of God. Then he goes on, "Nor your cattle." Community is more than just the people who are under your authority, God commands that you give your cattle rest. We don't use animals for work much anymore, but the extent of the commandment is a reminder of the extent of the gospel. The rest that was pictured in Hebrews 4, is not just for believers, it is for the whole world. All of the creation is waiting for that rest. That's what it says in Romans 8:19-21, "For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." That is the rest that is described in Hebrews 4, all of creation is groaning waiting for that eternal rest. When we're commanded to don't even have your cattle work, we're reminded this is the extent of the gospel. The gospel isn't just about man, it's about all of creation any more than it's not just Adam's sin, it's about all of creation. All of creation was affected by the sin of Adam, all of creation is affected by the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The ego of man when we read John 3:16-17, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." That 'world' is not just men, He sent His Son into the world so that the world would be saved, all of corruption, that groaning of creation would end because the world itself will enter into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. That's how far the rest goes, that's why you have your animals rest, because it's a picture of the gospel and the gospel is to more than just men, it includes animals, it includes the creation itself. Now, obviously you can't have a rock rest on the Sabbath day because it's not doing work the rest of the time, but an animal that can do work, you have it rest as a testimony of the extent of the gospel. From the beginning we are to know that it's not just men that are saved, the cattle received rest not because it's laboring to be saved, but because it was subject to futility because of man. After the Lord's Supper we're going to sing 'Joy to the World' because there is this line, 'As far as the curse is found' and the Sabbath commandment is to remind us that that's how far Jesus Christ's rest extends to. He gives rest from all the curse, all of it. All creation is groaning, waiting, so we give our cattle rest because the world needs rest due to the sin of Adam. "Nor your stranger who is within your gates." We tend not to think of this obligation, but this is why over the last sixty years America has completely changed in our use of time. It's completely changed because the church doesn't think the gospel has anything to do with the stranger that's within our gates, that we don't have a duty to tell them to rest. It's a real obligation. The Hebrew word translated 'gates' is used 371 times. I didn't look at all the times, but I looked at about 100 times and of those 100 times, virtually all of them were talking about the gate of a city. There were a few of them that were talking about the gate that entered into the court of the tabernacle and I think there was one that talked about the gate of hell. This is not a gate that's like the gate in your fence at your house, this is a city gate, that's what is being spoken of here. That's really important because it's saying that the civil magistrate has the duty to enforce this commandment because they're the only ones that can enforce it on the stranger that's within the gate of the city. Our obligation isn't just within our family, our obligation isn't just within the church, the obligation is within the culture itself, within the city itself. That's what it's saying when it says 'the stranger within your gates'. We have a duty for those who are strangers and that

word 'stranger', the root is 'to turn aside' so it really means those that turn aside. It can be those that are just traveling through and they turn aside for the night, you are supposed to make them keep the Sabbath. Or it can be someone that moves into your city because there is opportunity there and you are supposed to make them keep the Sabbath whether it's short term or long term, they are supposed to keep the Sabbath. The responsibility is to have people rest and it includes everyone, the foreigner who is among you, people who visit you, anyone, and it has to be a civil matter. It's not just an ecclesiastical matter because if it was the person that was a child of God, they should have gone just like the wife,

'I'm supposed to keep the Sabbath because this applies to me.' So the stranger, the unbeliever, the pagan, you're supposed to make them keep the Sabbath so they understand God is not like the pagan gods. God is not like Allah, God is not like Buddha, God is not like Brahma. God is not like any of them because God gives rest and none of them do. That's why God is different and that's why the Sabbath is important. Yeah, they do all this stuff where they have written the idea of the Sabbath in after the fact, after the reality of Christ, but still the only true religion that says our rest is found in the finished work of Christ, our rest is found in what God does, is Christianity. We have a duty to the strangers to testify to that by making them rest, which brings me to why I wanted Noel to read from Nehemiah 13. Here we see a picture of the enforcement by the civil magistrate. Nehemiah was the governor, "In those days I saw people in Judah treading winepresses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and loading donkeys with wine, grapes, figs, and all kinds of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. And I warned them about the day on which they were selling provisions. Men of Tyre dwelt there also, who brought in fish and all kinds of goods, and sold them on the Sabbath to the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem. Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said to them, "What evil thing is this that you do, by which you profane the Sabbath day? Did not your fathers do thus, and did not our God bring all this disaster on us and on this city? Yet you bring added wrath on Israel by profaning the Sabbath." So it was, at the gates of Jerusalem, as it began to be dark before the Sabbath, that I commanded the gates to be shut, and charged that they must not be opened till after the Sabbath. Then I posted some of my servants at the gates, so that no burdens would be brought in on the Sabbath day. Now the merchants and sellers of all kinds of wares lodged outside Jerusalem once or twice." The governor of Jerusalem doesn't just say that the Jews aren't doing it so he enforces it with them. He enforces it on the men of Tyre who specifically came into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day to sell and after he stopped the Jews from selling on the Sabbath, the men of Tyre still came. It says in verse 21, "Then I warned them, and said to them, "Why do you spend the night around the wall? If you do so again, I will lay hands on you!" From that time on they came no more on the Sabbath" Nehemiah didn't say, 'Oh this only applies to believers, that's all I'm supposed to enforce it on. I'm only supposed to enforce it on people in our community.' He was the governor of Jerusalem and he realized he had the duty to enforce it on everybody. He said if they came back to try and sell, he was going to drive them off, he was going to lay hands on them. Part of Nehemiah's response was because of what God told Jeremiah in Jeremiah 17. I think it's important for us to understand how angry God was with Judah because they failed to keep the Sabbath. "Jeremiah 17:19-27, "Thus the Lord said to me: "Go and stand in the gate of the children of the people, by which the kings of Judah come in and by which they go out, and in all the gates of Jerusalem; and say to them, 'Hear the word of the Lord, you kings of Judah, and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of

enough the rest of the time so they are thankful that they have a day of rest, which is how we're supposed to be. That is how our life is supposed to be structured. If we had a society that was like that, in the Great Depression, do you think people delighted in the Sabbath more than they do now? 1930, what was happening in 1930? Every place in North Carolina passed Sabbath laws, some were saying we want to work, but others were desperate for any kind of work, they will do anything to scratch out some kind of living so then they found greater delight in a day of rest. If you don't have them work they won't find any delight in rest, the rest will become 'I can't play today?' instead of, 'I don't have to work today?' The answer to, 'I don't have to work today?' is that the Sabbath is a day of delight. The answer to, 'I can't play today?' is that the Sabbath is misery. The idea of seeking your own pleasure, there can be real constraints on society, that's why Governor Cooper signed a law that you can sell alcohol at 10:00 am. The reason it was 12:00 before was because there was still the vestige of the church saying people shouldn't be seeking their own pleasure, they shouldn't be going out and getting drunk on Sunday morning, instead they should be going to church. Instead the laws keep changing so they can seek their own pleasure. Understand this is across the board, this is where our nation is. Why can two men marry? So they can seek their own pleasure. A woman is in the body of a man so she should be mutilated. Why? Because she wants to seek her own pleasure. This is where we are as a society. We say there is no time when you shouldn't seek your own pleasure and God says there is a time, the Sabbath is supposed to be this weekly reminder that you don't get to seek your own pleasure all the time. We should be enforcing it and if we don't why should we be surprised when people think you should seek your own pleasure at all times? Doing your own ways, that's about bringing profit to yourself. It's easy for us to switch this and make it about not seeking your own pleasure, not speaking your own words, and make it that we should only speak God's words, but what it is really saying is that we aren't supposed to be pursuing our own kingdom, pursuing our own provision. We're not supposed to be seeking things for us, that's what we are supposed to turn away from, it's our self-centeredness. It's valid for us to be asking how we should provide for our family six days a week, that is a valid thing, not a bad thing. The Sabbath has always been about constraining trade because it's a constraint of sin. Amos 8:4-6, "Hear this, you who swallow up the needy, And make the poor of the land fail, Saying: "When will the New Moon be past, That we may sell grain? And the Sabbath, That we may trade wheat? Making the ephah small and the shekel large, Falsifying the scales by deceit, That we may buy the poor for silver, And the needy for a pair of sandals— Even sell the bad wheat?" It's about going, 'How can I con other people?' and the Sabbath is going, 'God is my provider.' People eliminate the Sabbath and that's why they want to. This isn't written in Amos because it's unusual, this is the normal thing. People that want to eliminate the Sabbath want to pursue their own wealth all the time with whatever means. The society can make it so it's not a profitable day. If you make it so that it starts with the church saying we're not going to go out to eat on Sunday, how quickly would it change that restaurants would stop being open on Sunday if the 70% of people in America that call themselves Christians do the simple thing of not going to a restaurant on the Sabbath day? How many restaurants would close because they say it's not worth it? This is what the church needs to be doing, this is what the church needs to be saying, this is what the church needs to be proclaiming. The nature of God is that He is good and kind and He gives rest, He is not Pharaoh.

Verse 11, "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." It's important to understand because God established the Sabbath in creating the world, it applies to all of the world. I've heard people make the argument that it says husbands are the heads of wives, but it's 2,000 years later, we've matured now and the church has changed. Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. If you look at the argument, the argument is back to Adam and Eve so if it applied back to Adam and Eve, it applies to all of their descendants. That's a really important concept to understand, if you make an argument based on a premise, the scope of that premise needs to be the same as the scope of the application. If you say this is what the world is about, then that means it applies to everything in creation so it's about everything in Creation. That's the argument God is making because God is speaking these words to the Israelites and He is saying, "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." He's saying this applies to all of creation, not part of creation, all of creation. The scope of the application has to be the same scope as the argument and the scope of the argument for the Sabbath is everything in the heavens and the earth, it applies to them because it applies to how God created them and it points back to the nature of God because He is the Creator. So God blessed the Sabbath day. The root word for 'bless' means 'to kneel', such as kneeling before someone to make a request. It can be used the other way too, to receive a blessing. Before we were created, God answered a petition before we made it, to give us a day of rest. That's the picture. God says He is going to give us the Sabbath day to be a blessing. Like you came and begged for rest, I am going to treat it that way so I'm going to give you the Sabbath day, in creation, because even though you don't know it yet and you don't exist yet, you need rest and you need the eternal rest in God. Before we made the petition, God gave it to us. Remember what Moses did with Pharaoh, when Moses goes to Pharaoh and asks for them to go into the wilderness for three days to worship Him, what was Pharaoh's response? You will make bricks without straw. God, even before we approach Him, He says He will give us rest, even before we make the petition of, 'Can we have time to worship You?', He says He will give us rest one day in seven where we don't need to focus on physical things, and we can focus on His kindness, His mercy, and His grace. From the beginning, the Sabbath day was given to be a blessing and we need to make certain in our minds that we consider it a blessing. Hey, if you're not working you're probably not going to consider it much of a blessing because it is a contrast, it's sanctified by being different. If we walk in the flesh we're going to have trouble seeing it's a blessing, we're going to have trouble sitting back and saying, 'But if I don't do any work on Sunday, what's going to happen?' There's always temptations because there are always things going on where we say, 'This will make a big difference if I do this', but the question is if you trust God or not. The question is, do you believe when you pray the Lord's Prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread", that it is God who gives you your daily bread? The Sabbath is a testimony whether you believe that or not, or whether you just say the words. If we walk in the flesh we go, 'I'm saying that, but I still need to figure out how to provide for myself' instead of saying, 'God can provide, do I trust Him?' He sanctified it to make it separate and distinct from the other days of the week. We need to make sure in our lives that we are doing that. God has given us six days to do all our work, gave us six days to figure out how to provide for ourselves. He gives us six days to figure out how to seek first His kingdom because we are supposed to be doing the work of the ministry, not just

on Sunday. As we go we're supposed to be preaching the gospel, as we go we are supposed to be teaching them to obey all things as God has commanded us. We're supposed to be working to do the Great Commission six days and on the seventh day we're supposed to be resting, even from that work, because the seventh day He gave to strengthen the body, He gave it to us to refresh, to exhort one another to love and good works. That's the day we're supposed to be focused on Him rather than focused on how we're supposed to be doing things in the world. We're supposed to focus on His truth rather than worry about the things that are happening in the world around us. Again, not that we don't do works of mercy, but we don't do works to build ourselves up. There's no work that can make us acceptable to God. Exodus 31:14-15, "You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death." They would put the people to death because they would be distorting who God was and they would be saying they could save themselves through their work. When you work on the Sabbath day, what you're saying is you can save yourself through your work, as opposed to Hebrews 4. The whole point is that it's the work that God did that saves us so they were to put people to death that violated it because they denied who God was, that God was the One who sanctified them. When we work on the Sabbath day, we're rejecting and defying reformed soteriology because reformed soteriology says God saves us. It's what it says in Ephesians 2, "Faith is the gift of God lest any man should boast." When you don't keep the Sabbath you are saying the opposite. There are a lot of reformed people that say they hold to the Westminster Confession, they hold to the Second London Baptist Confession, but then you get to the chapter on the Sabbath and they say, 'We don't really hold to that.' If you don't hold to that, you don't hold to the rest, that's what Hebrews 4 says. If you don't hold to that, you don't hold to the rest, you can't hold to a reformed soteriology that it's God who saves, but then turn around and say God can't tell you to rest on Sunday.

Applications:

1. How much of a difference are you making for your children between the Sabbath day and the rest of the six days? Last Sunday evening we talked about the risk of prosperity. Ezekiel 16:49-50, "Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughter had pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty and committed abomination before Me; therefore I took them away as I saw fit" God said He destroyed Sodom, He destroyed Gomorrah, He destroyed that area where the fire and brimstone came down from heaven because of fullness of food and abundance of idleness. Understand why young men in particular aren't expected to produce, it's because we have fullness of bread and we have idleness. We need to recognize that if we were farmers that were wondering if we would produce enough food for us to survive the next year, you would have your five year old out picking wheat. You would have him work, but

when you get a fullness of bread, one of the easy things to forget is you should have your sons work. Otherwise you would be having them work if you thought you needed them. Because we are so wealthy we say we don't really need their work so we will let them sit around all day. This is how prosperity destroys a people because there's no distinction between the six days and the seventh day. There's no need for God, everything is easy. Instead of a day where there's need for rest, it's a day where, 'You mean I can't play the games I play the other days? I can't do this or that? Why is God so mean to me?', which is where we are as a society. We need to make sure our families aren't like that, we need to do more work and it was easy when you had a farm and you needed all the help you could get during harvest and planting, and even the summer where you had plenty of weeds. You would have them work all the time, but now we're not in that society, we're in a society like Sodom and Gomorrah, which means you have to do the work to get your children to work. Again, so many household chores, women teach their daughters to do them, they learn how to work. Make sure your sons understand they have to be providing, otherwise they will get to be 25 and people will ask why he isn't ready to be married yet. Well, he can't provide for a household, why should he be married? This happens in homeschool circles all the time. We need to recognize that we, from an early age, need to be making a distinction between the sixth day where they are doing work and the seventh day. It's easy for us to say, 'But they don't need to work, we don't need the provision because I make enough with my job to be able to provide for everybody.' Ephesians 5:15-16, "See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil." Redeem the time because the days are evil is a statement that there is plenty of work to do. It may not be paid for work because you have plenty of other resources, but God says the days are full of evil, there is plenty of work to be done. When you think about the work that you do and the work that you have your sons do, it shouldn't just be about how you can get more money. There is a legitimate place for that, but it should be about how we further the kingdom to stop the evil because the days are full of evil and if you don't have your children working, you're not redeeming their time and you're not doing the work that you should be doing because you have capacity that you're not using. Again, it's going to take real work to avoid this trap that our society is in, it's not going to come natural. It's not like you can just do what everybody else is doing, you actually have to fight against it because our society is full of bread and has an abundance of idleness so you're going to have to work to change it. Until we work to change it we can't expect to change the world around us.

2. God is a good master, not just because He gives us rest, but because He gives us work. 2 Thessalonians 3:6-10, "But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not disorderly among you; nor did we eat anyone's bread free of charge, but worked with labor and toil night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, not because we do not have authority, but to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us. For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat." Paul is saying you're supposed to cut off, not

that you say they're not a brother, but you're supposed to cut them off from the Lord's Supper if they won't work because they deny who God is. God is a God who created us to work and as a society we decided that we should be hate-filled as a society and that we should pay people not to work, which is what our welfare system basically is, it's paying people not to work. We need to recognize how hate-filled that is because we destroy people by doing that and we've been destroying people by doing that. When God's commands are, 'He who shall not work shall not eat', that is a command of love. When we say the opposite, that is hatred and that's where we are as a society, we are saying the opposite of what God says so we know we are hating people because God is love. God is a good master so when He says to work, we need to make sure that we're saying people are supposed to work six days. We're destroying our society and our culture because as a people, we have decided something different. It starts with the church. We need to ask ourselves if we are doing anything different.

3. The world won't keep the Sabbath if the church doesn't. The church is the light of the world, the society will never know how it's to keep the Sabbath unless the church models it for them. We didn't lose the Sabbath in this country because the civil magistrate gave up, that's not what happened. The civil magistrate kept fighting well beyond the church when the church started to give up on the Sabbath. It gave up because the church decided it preferred to watch football and Nascar on Sunday afternoons than to be focused on God. The church decided that it wanted its rest so instead of cooking, they would go to a Sunday buffet and make other people work. This is how the society lost the Sabbath, it started with the church and we should recognize the only way to regain it is for it to start with the church. We need to be willing to say the things that are necessary to call the broader church to keep the Sabbath. We need to be willing to not just have it be our little assembly that says we should keep the Sabbath, but we should be willing to confront people and say this is a sign that you are in covenant with God, that you keep the Sabbath. Understand, people will go to war over this issue. Some of you have been in the room with me when people attacked me because I said you have to keep the Sabbath. People will get angry about it, but how do you win unless you fight? I'm not saying fight with fists, I'm saying to fight with the sword of the Word. That's what cuts and exposes the marrow. We have to be willing to fight about it, you need to be willing to speak about it. We need to be willing to say the declaration of God's character matters. We can't expect it to happen in the world unless it happens in the church.
4. When we think of the kingdom of God from Daniel 2, that stone that was cut out of the mountain that was cut without hands, that becomes the kingdom that fills the whole earth, that destroys all the kingdoms of the earth and makes them as chaff on the summer threshing floor, we should remember where that mountain is, the Sabbath is kept. Where the kingdoms of this earth have been destroyed, the Sabbath is kept. We know what the end is, the end is the Sabbath is kept, not the other way around. It's really easy for us to look back and to think it was so great 200 years ago in Plymouth where everyone was keeping the Sabbath and then we decayed from there. That's not what happened at all. What happens is, it's a battle for keeping the Sabbath and right now we're re-trenching because the church needs to repent, but we know what's going to

happen in the end. The great mountain that fills the whole earth, that kingdom of God, will cause the Sabbath to be kept, that is what will happen. Six days you shall labor and one day you shall rest, that's what it looks like in the kingdom of God.

5. Another thing we need to recognize is that we need to train our children to grow into both work and rest. The commandment is about the contrast, it's about how that one day is sanctified, about how there's a difference in the six days and the one day. When a baby is born, all their days are the same. There's only about three things they do and they just keep repeating it, but as they grow up they start to be able to differentiate and they start to be able to do more things. We should work as hard on teaching them to work as we do on teaching them to rest because what we're supposed to be doing in training our children, is to train them to understand that the Sabbath day is sanctified. It doesn't mean that you should make your two month old work, no, because he can't rest differently either. But as he can start to rest differently, you need to make sure he is working because the point is the contrast, the point is that the seventh day He sanctified. We need to work on that as we raise our children, as they get older, as they get more capacity to work, as they get more capacity to rest and understand God and things, we need to have them work more and rest in parallel so the Sabbath day is sanctified.
6. We need to recognize that having a 24/7 society is a curse. The church said they didn't want rest so now grocery stores are open 24 hours a day. That's not a sign of blessing, that's a sign of cursing as a society. We don't get any rest. People complain because they can't go to the grocery store at three in the morning, that's a sign that they don't have rest because there is a normal daily rest cycle and work cycle, but we have rejected that so now as a society we think everything has to be 24/7. That's not a good thing, that is a very bad thing, and that is a very destructive thing. It still goes back to the same thing, if we say we don't want rest from God, don't expect Him not to take it away across the board, which is what He is doing.
7. So many churches have changed to think that the conquering of the kingdom is supposed to take place on Sunday morning. That's when you're supposed to be doing the Great Commission, but that's not when you're supposed to be doing the Great Commission. The Great Commission is supposed to be done by the Christians. Here's what is supposed to happen on the Sabbath day. Ephesians 4:11-13, "And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;" The purpose is for the church to get rejuvenated, for the church to be built up, for the church to understand better and be more unified. We shouldn't be thinking that the Sabbath day is for the church to bring in unbelievers. No, that's our job, that's what we're supposed to be doing as we go. We're supposed to be telling people who Christ is, we're supposed to be telling them they need to be baptized, we need to be telling them what Christ has commanded. That's what we're supposed to do, that's what the six days are for. The seventh day is to rest and to be strengthened and to be renewed. I think for the last 150 years in the church, there has been this idea that the church service is supposed to end

with a call to repentance and to belief. No! That's for unbelievers. The church service is for the believers to be strengthened, for the believers to rest, for the believers to be renewed. When we say that all the work of the church is supposed to be done on the Sabbath day why would God still give us rest when we have taken all His work and moved it to the Sabbath day? The Sabbath day is for the church to gather, to be washed in the water of the Word to remove our spots and wrinkles. It's supposed to be a testimony of the love God has for the church, His bride.

8. Isaiah 58, before God promises that if we call the Sabbath a delight, if we turn from doing our own pleasure on God's holy day, if you call the holy day of the Lord honorable, He will cause us to rise on the high hills of the earth. Those are verses 13-14, but I want to read verse 12, "Those from among you Shall build the old waste places; You shall raise up the foundations of many generations; And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In." We should ask ourselves if that is us. That's what we're supposed to be doing. We're in a country that's a waste place, we're a country that's being destroyed. We're in a country where the church has lost its way and the point of this message is not to say look at how terrible things are. The purpose of this message is to ask if this is how some of us are, are we the ones to be rebuilding the old waste places. We're supposed to be raising up the foundation of many generations. If not us, who?

Oh Lord God, we do thank You for Your Word. We thank You for this time that we can consider it. We pray that You bring conviction upon us for how we have failed and that You give us a zeal to be Your people, a zeal to declare that Your ways are so much better than man's ways. Let us have enough love for Your church that we look and see the work that we should do and we go and do it knowing that You will give us rest. We ask this in Your Son's name, amen.