



The Book of Matthew Lesson 6 2Q 2016 Resting In Christ

SABBATH

Read memory verse: “Come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest.” (MT 11:28 NIV)

What kind of rest? Rest from what? Work? What type of work?

Would it not be rest from trying to save self, rest from trying to earn love, rest from trying to justify one’s significance, rest from trying to prove self—the rest of being loved for who you are, for being understood, and rest from trying to fix your own character?

Read first paragraph, “Christ was a living...” What does this mean a living representative of the law?

What kind of law would this be? Does it reveal something about how God’s law functions? How does it function?

Can God’s law be understood written on stone? Why or why not?

It cannot—because God’s law is the law of life, and stone is not alive. Stone cannot accurately reveal a living law.

Then why did God write the 10 Commandments on stone?

First—because God’s law of love was no longer written as the operating system upon the hearts of humans.

Second—because we needed it, because we needed a diagnostic instrument to reveal our terminal condition and lead us to our Designer for healing.

Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the offspring would come to whom the promise had been made; and it was ordained through angels by a mediator. (Gal 3:19)

I am asked concerning the law in Galatians. What law is the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ? I answer: Both the ceremonial and the moral code of ten commandments... “The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith” (Gal. 3:24). In this scripture, the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. {ISM 233, 234}



What about the question Jesus asked, who can convict him of sin?

What is sin? transgression of the law—which law? The law of love, can Jesus be convicted of transgressing the law of love?

But, what about imposed rules—did Jesus violate any imposed rules?

- Did He heal on Sabbath?
- Did He instruct people to carry loads on Sabbath?
- Did He endorse His disciples pulling heads of grain on Sabbath?
- Did He speak with women, prostitutes, tax collectors, Samaritans?
- Did He drive out the moneychangers?
- Did He stop participating in the annual feasts—what about the Lord's supper, did He simply participate in the Passover Festival, or did He replace it, which means He stopped participating in the Passover?

What does this tell us about the traditions that enter into religion?

What is it that ultimately matters? The condition of the heart!

Read the second paragraph, “Jesus’ life fully reflected the meaning...” He was the law of God lived out—no doubt—what command did Jesus give them?

To love each other—this is the command, and all law hangs upon love for God and each other.

Do we get more love when we focus on the 10 Commandments? What happens when we focus on the 10 Commandments? Typically, we get more restrictions, more guilt, more behavior focus and less love.

We get more love when we focus on Jesus, thus the Bible says, “Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Heb 12:2)

Can love be commanded? Then why the 10 Commandments?

How does God get love? Can God get love from people by the use of might and power?

We must put the 10 Commandments back into their proper place—and they were added because fallen human beings needed them—for what? To diagnose and bring us to Christ—but then we are to shift our focus AWAY from the law and place our focus upon Christ! It is only in experiencing in our relationship with Christ, His love, His presence, that we can actually be changed. When we stay focused on the 10 Commandments, which many do, we actually obstruct God's healing plan!



SUNDAY

When you think of a yoke, what comes to mind? What is the purpose of a yoke? What does it do? It is not a bridle; it is not a bit.

A yoke is an instrument that allows one to engage in service, and which shares the load—thus it is an instrument of love!

"Take My yoke upon you," Jesus says. **The yoke is an instrument of service.** Cattle are yoked for labor, and the yoke is essential that they may labor effectually. By this illustration Christ teaches us that we are called to service as long as life shall last. We are to take upon us His yoke, that we may be co-workers with Him. {DA 329.2}

The yoke that binds to service is the law of God. The great law of love revealed in Eden, proclaimed upon Sinai, and in the new covenant written in the heart, is that which binds the human worker to the will of God. If we were left to follow our own inclinations, to go just where our will would lead us, we should fall into Satan's ranks and become possessors of his attributes. Therefore **God confines us to His will, which is high, and noble, and elevating.** He desires that we shall patiently and wisely take up the duties of service. The yoke of service Christ Himself has borne in humanity. He said, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart." Psalm 40:8. "I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." John 6:38. **Love for God, zeal for His glory, and love for fallen humanity, brought Jesus to earth to suffer and to die. This was the controlling power of His life. This principle He bids us adopt.** {DA 329.3}

What is yoke? The yoke of love—and from your own experience, when you are doing something from love, does it make the burden easier?

Read last paragraph, "What else does Jesus mean..." Resting in Jesus means moving one's life into harmony with God's design (i.e. law) and the law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. We actually get healthier, more energetic, feel better, have less disabilities when we live in harmony with God's design—laws:

- Exercise regularly (law of exertion), and while you are using energy and there may be muscle burn while exercising, regular exercise results in greater energy, less fatigue, less pain, better sleep, better mental & physical health.
- Altruism (law of love)—those who volunteer live longer, have less disability, less mental health problems, less dementia and stay out of nursing homes longer than those who don't volunteer
- Law of worship—by beholding we become changed, worship a God of love become more loving, worship a dictator, become more abusive. theatrical.



- Law of liberty—violate liberty in relationships and conflict arises, love is damaged, rebellion is incited, which cause inflammatory cascades which undermine health, promote liberty and love grows!

Living in harmony with God’s design brings rest, brings peace, brings health! This is not magic, it is not a supreme being keeping score and handing out rewards or punishments. It is the way God constructed life to work.

MONDAY

Read top paragraph, “If, as so much...” Because he was dealing with Jews who had burdened their system with inordinate number of restrictions?

How much time did He spend in Samaria talking about the Sabbath?

Read second paragraph, “Knowing that one of the reasons...” Is this the problem? It came down to them failing to avoid work on Sabbath?

No, this was not the issue—read Amos 8:5-6:

“When will the New Moon be over that we may sell grain, and the Sabbath be ended that we may market wheat?”— skimping the measure, boosting the price and cheating with dishonest scales, ⁶ buying the poor with silver and the needy for a pair of sandals, selling even the sweepings with the wheat.”

Notice they were keeping the Sabbath, they were avoiding work, but they didn’t love the Sabbath, it wasn’t a delight to them and they were watching the clock so they could get out as soon as the sun set in order to cheat people.

This issue was not the Sabbath, the issue was the selfishness in their hearts and characters.

The Sabbath was a sign that God makes them holy and they were not holy people:

Also I gave them my Sabbaths as a sign between us, so they would know that I the Lord made them holy.

“ ‘Yet the people of Israel rebelled against me in the desert. They did not follow my decrees but rejected my laws—although the man who obeys them will live by them—and they utterly desecrated my Sabbaths. (Eze 20:12,12)

How did they desecrate the Sabbaths? By doing work? No! The problem was they were observing the Sabbath with selfish, hardened, evil hearts! In other words, they obeyed the Sabbath law without love,



without renewal of the inner man. They kept the Sabbath like the Pharisees did, who killed the Lord of the Sabbath.

What about today? How many SDAs religiously keep the Sabbath, but they find no joy in it. It is not a delight. They watch the clock waiting for sundown so they can go about their business? Then they are also desecrating the Sabbath.

So, what do we learn from Israel's captivity? Why did they go into captivity? Because they were plowing fields on Sabbath? No, because they rejected God and would not allow Him to heal their hearts!

This is an accurate illustration of what happens in reality when we won't let God heal our hearts, we become slaves of sin!

Can parents coerce, pressure, threaten their children to eat broccoli, or spinach, or kale? Yes, but can parents make their children enjoy it?

God can use threats to get behavioral conformity. He can never get love by using threats.

A sullen submission to the will of the Father will develop the character of a rebel. By such a one service is looked upon as drudgery. It is not rendered cheerfully, and in the love of God. It is a mere mechanical performance. If he dared, such a one would disobey. His rebellion is smothered, ready to break out at any time in bitter murmurings and complaints. Such service brings no peace or quietude to the soul. {ST, July 22, 1897 par. 11 }

How many churches have taught their children a god who imposes rules, keeps track of any breaking of the rules and threatens to punish—and then seen their children rebel and leave the church? Or, if they don't leave stay and become rigid legal religionists.

Read the last four paragraphs, "If a hen lays an egg..." Do you read this and get inspired? Does it draw you closer to God? If God did require this what would it say about God?

Do we have any such elements in our worship practices today?

At the GC in San Antonio there were signs in restaurant windows, "Get your Sabbath Vouchers here." What witness were we giving to the non-believers in San Antonio? It is okay to eat in their facility, buy their food, have them wait on us, just as long as we use a voucher, not cash?

What is a voucher? A piece of paper with a proscribed amount of valuable that can be exchanged for goods and services. What is cash?

What picture of God do we present with such behaviors?



How can we present the Sabbath that is reasonable, inspiring, sensible?

TUESDAY

Read first paragraph, “This was the climate...” How do you view the Sabbath? Through which law lens—a rule imposed to test our obedience or a design for our health, for us to participate in and benefit from?

What of this idea that the Sabbath is a day of worship and fellowship “that we cannot do during the workweek”? Can persons worship God and fellowship together on Sunday? In what ways can they not do this on Sunday?

This is stated many times by SDA theologians—but whenever I have asked church leaders, what can be experiences on Sabbath that cannot be experience on Sunday I never get answers? Why? Because they view it through imposed law. Through design law something is different, but what?

Does this question sound similar to the question the woman at the well asked Jesus?

“Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that you are a prophet. ²⁰ Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.”

And what was Jesus’ answer?

²¹ Jesus declared, “Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²² You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³ Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴ God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.” (JN 4:19-24)

What about the Sabbath, if she would have asked Him, you Jews worship on Sabbath, we worship on Friday, or Sunday, what might Jesus have said? Would He likely have said, “The Sabbath is an arbitrary test of obedience. If you don’t observe it you cannot be saved and God will, in justice, punish you?”

Or would have has said something similar?

"Believe me, dear woman, the day on which one worships God is not what ultimately matters; it is the condition of the heart of the worshiper that matters. Very soon, you will see those who worship on Sabbath want me off the cross in order to observe that day. You Samaritans worship a confusing tradition of rituals that does not enlighten the mind and has no ability to



heal the worshiper; we worship the Creator God, and our minds are enlightened and healed by him because all he asks of us is sensible and reasonable. The time has come that all true worshipers will worship the Father with an intelligent, reasonable understanding of who he is—loving, admiring, and respecting the truth about his nature, character, and methods. These understanding worshipers are the kind the Father seeks. God is intelligent and reasonable, and his worshipers must worship him intelligently and reasonably, appreciating and valuing the truth of God's methods and principles. The Sabbath is a sign made for human kind, but the Sabbath is not the reality—the Lord of the Sabbath is the reality.

Did I just say anything to diminish the value and sanctity of the Bible Sabbath? If you think I did, then please reevaluate what I said, because I did not.

WEDNESDAY

Read first paragraph, “It is very interesting...” thoughts? Do you find the arguments most persuasive?

One reason is because regardless of the day of worship, what kind of hearts did they manifest by how they treated each other on Sabbath?

Do you think if they were doing all of this behavior on Sunday, Jesus would have said, your problem is you are missing the right day, please deny healthcare to people in need on Sabbath rather than Sunday and all will be well?

It wasn't about the Sabbath—it has NEVER been about the Sabbath. It has always been about the kind of person God is and the hearts, minds, characters of His people!

The Sabbath cannot be kept holy by people with unholy hearts!

The Sabbath is a gift, a tool, an evidence, a sign—created by God for a need in universal history, what need? To demonstrate God's character in the context of war when great might and power was being wielded.

What is the danger in wielding might and power? That people may stop thinking and obey out of fear. Is this what God wants?

So when Jesus was performing miracles and the masses were growing because of this, He stopped. Why?

On the road to Emmaus, did He perform miracles to convince them? Why not?

Whenever God did use might and power in the past did He get what He wanted?



- Flood—Babel
- Plagues upon Egypt—golden calf
- Fire at Carmel—more rebellion

God wants only the obedience of understanding friends, only intelligent cooperation, trust and love. This can only come when we freely evaluate the issues and come to agreement.

Thus, when Jesus needed to demonstrate His equality with the Father and He created earth, there was the danger of beings bowing out of fear, out of intimidation. So, after six days of expending immeasurable amounts of power, God the Son said, “I rest my case.” God the Son suspended the use of power, He rested and left His intelligences free to think, evaluate, come to their own conclusion.

The Sabbath is a sign, an evidence, a proof, that God is love, that God presents truth in love and leaves us free. That God does NOT coerce. Thus, true Sabbath observers are those who have seen the evidence of God’s character, been won to trust, open the heart and are transformed to be like Him!

Thus the Sabbath is a sign for all those who value God’s methods and practice them!

Why does the lesson spend so much time on the Sabbath—and if you look over our past quarterlies this subject comes up over and over again, why?

THURSDAY

Read MT 12:12 “Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.” Why is it lawful? What law?

The lesson point us to Isaiah 58:7-13

Repair the breach, what does this mean? What is the breach in God’s law? The acceptance of the imposed law construct, the replacing of God’s design law of love, with the imposed law of man.

The Sabbath is the sign, pointing us to creation—because creation operates upon design law. Sunday is the mark of arbitrary, legislated, imposed rules that require policing and inflicted punishments.

Thus those who teach the seventh day Sabbath is an arbitrary test of obedience and that if we don’t keep it God will punish, have accepted the lie of Satan. The breach in the law remains.

The only way to repair the breach is to restore the law of love, the design law back into our understanding and operations.

The spiritual restoration of which the work carried forward in Nehemiah's day was a symbol, is outlined in the words of Isaiah: "They shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities." "They that shall be of thee shall build the



old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in." Isaiah 61:4; 58:12. {PK 677.2}

The prophet here describes a people who, in a time of general departure from truth and righteousness, **are seeking to restore the principles that are the foundation of the kingdom of God.** [what are the principles that are the foundation of the kingdom of God? It is the law of love, truth, liberty, design protocols.] They are repairers of a breach that has been made in God's law--the wall that He has placed around His chosen ones for their protection, and obedience to whose precepts of justice, truth, and purity is to be their perpetual safeguard. {PK 677.3}

In words of unmistakable meaning the prophet points out the specific work of this remnant people who build the wall. "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: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Isaiah 58:13, 14. {PK 678.1}

In the time of the end every divine institution is to be restored. **The breach made in the law at the time the Sabbath was changed by man, is to be repaired.** [The breach made in the law AT THE TIME the Sabbath was changed. The change of the Sabbath was not the breach in the law, it was the evidence of the breach in the law. The true breach in the law was the change in the idea of how God's law functions—from design law to imposed rules. When does a church committee vote to change the laws of gravity or respiration? Why not? Because they cant, so what does it mean that the church did vote to change the Sabbath law? It means that they no longer see God's law as design law, but imposed rules. This led to the infection of a punishing God, in need of legal payment in order to be saved. The legal theory of atonement is the fruit of this change in the law and as long as we continue to teach the legal theory of atonement we have NOT repaired the breach in God's law.] **God's remnant people, standing before the world as reformers, are to show that the law of God is the foundation of all enduring reform** and that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is to stand as a memorial of creation, a constant reminder of the power of God. In clear, distinct lines they are to present the necessity of obedience to all the precepts of the Decalogue. **Constrained by the love of Christ, they are to co-operate with Him in building up the waste places.** They are to be repairers of the breach, restorers of paths to dwell in. See verse 12. {PK 678.2}

FRIDAY

Read top paragraph, "With our without..." Read and discuss questions



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The God-Shaped Brain is now available in Korean and is available at this website:
http://book.naver.com/bookdb/book_detail.nhn?bid=9519886

The Remedy – Dr. Jennings’ New Testament Paraphrase—FREE for ios and android systems.

The Journal of the Watcher is now available as a HARD COVER book at Amazon as well as a movie in itunes for everyone without ios or android, you can now get it in itunes. It is also available as an APP for Apple and Android devices.

May 18-20: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at *The Struggle Is Real* Conference at Seacoast Church in Charleston SC, for more info and to register click this link <http://www.2016summit.net>

October 14-16: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Drakensville, South Africa Campmeeting.

October 19, 20: Dr. Jennings will be speaking in Ladismith South Africa (venue to be determined)

October 21, 22: Dr. Jennings will be speaking in Cape Town, South Africa