

I. Read Luke 13:10-15

- A. The Greek word *sabbaton* means Sabbath. According to *Vines Expository Dictionary*, the root meaning of the word is to “cease and desist.” Theologian John Murray explains:

“The Sabbath was instituted at creation...it belongs, therefore, to the order of things which God established for man at the beginning...it is like the institution of labour (Gen. 2:15), of marriage (Gen. 2:24, 25), and of fruitfulness (Gen. 1:28). The Sabbath institution was given to man as man, for the good of man as man...the Sabbath is a creation ordinance...”

Read Genesis 2:1-3 and consider the following:

1. Did God need to rest after creation?
 2. What was God implicitly communicating to man in establishing a day of rest?
- B. Louis Hodges wrote that “the Sabbath is a creation ordinance, grounded in God’s example of resting (Gen. 2:2), in His command to honor the day and keep it holy (Exodus 20:8-11), and in man’s constitutional need for physical rest and time for spiritual renewal.” He goes on to explain that within the Reformed community there have typically been “two different understandings” of the Sabbath. The first is that of the *Sabbatarians*, who insist on restricting activities to “working and physical rest.” Folks in this camp usually recognize certain exceptions to the above restriction.

Read the following verses and identify the exceptions:

Matthew 12:5

John 5:5-10

Matthew 12:1-4

Luke 14:5-6

The second view is called the *continental view*. According to Hodges, this was John Calvin’s view of the seventh day of rest. He explains that the Lord’s Day is different “qualitatively” from the Sabbath. He concludes that on the Lord’s Day (the seventh day or the Lord’s Sabbath), worship and various “types of restful and relaxing activities, even through they may be strenuous and secular in character,” are appropriate. The *continental view* recognizes the need for one day each week to be *set apart*, but allows for more liberty of conscience in observance.

- C. Another aspect of the Christian's responsibility to find an appropriate way to observe the Lord's Day is implicit in the Sabbath's function as a *sign*. (Read Exodus 31:12-17.) According to this passage, the Sabbath was in essence a foreshadowing, pointing to the covenant promises of God and to Israel as God's Covenant people. According to this view of the Sabbath, it is related to the *ceremonial law* as well as the *moral law*. During the Old Testament administration of the Covenant of Grace, it would also have particular implications for the exercise of the *civil law* of the theocracy of Israel.

If the Sabbath is viewed strictly from the perspective of the *ceremonial law*, what is the consequence for believers in our day?

If the Sabbath is viewed strictly as part of Israel's *civil law*, what effect would it have on believers in our day?

If the Sabbath is viewed strictly as part of the *moral law*, what impact does it have on believers in our day?

- D. The *Westminster Shorter Catechism* asks the question, "Which day of the seven hath God appointed to be the weekly Sabbath?" The answer is, "From the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, God appointed the seventh day of the week to be the weekly Sabbath; and the first day of the week ever since, to continue to the end of the world, which is the Christian Sabbath." (Genesis 2:2-3; 1 Corinth. 16:1-2; Acts 20:7) How should Christians observe the Sabbath today?

What is the danger for Christians regarding the Sabbath in our day? (Read Romans 12:1-2.)

- E. Why did the synagogue official criticize Jesus for healing on the Sabbath? (vs. 10-14)

What point was Jesus making in verse 15?

