

CALVARY CHAPEL OF PHILADELPHIA

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

2ND GRADE

TEACHER'S PACKET

SUNDAY MORNING

Study 4

Commandments 1-4



Commandments 1-4

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

These are the books of the Bible we will be memorizing. New books for this month are in bold. If a student can memorize all the books up to this month's books, you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective This lesson will teach the students about the first four commandments and how they show us the need to worship God above all else.

Key Verses

Exodus 20:1-11—Main Teaching Passage

Books to Memorize

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua

Hook

Today we are going to play a game of Simon Says, but with a twist: there are three "Simons" up front, and the students must obey all of them. Be one of the Simons and use your assistant or other students as the others. Have all three of you give orders at the same time, and give orders that contradict one another. (E.g. if one of the Simons says to stand up, tell everyone to sit down.)

After a while, end the game and ask the students how they think it went. Explain how hard it is to listen to multiple people at the same time. Today we will see that God does not want us to listen to and worship other gods besides Him.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

After God brought the children of Israel out of Egypt in order to bring them to the Promised Land, He gave the people laws telling them how to live. Exodus 20 records some of the most important laws, the Ten Commandments. Today, we will study the first four commandments.

The first commandment said to have no other gods before the Lord. The people who lived in the Promised Land worshipped many different false gods, and the Lord wanted to make it clear that His people were to worship Him and only Him. They could not worship anyone instead of, more than, or in addition to the Lord.

The second commandment told them not to make any idols to worship. An idol is a small statue or image made to look like a god. The Israelites were not supposed to make or worship any kind of image. It didn't matter if that image was supposed to be of the Lord or one of the false gods, idol worship was off-limits.

The third commandment has to do with God's Name. God's Name is special and holy, and it should be treated that way. People must not talk about God in a way that is disrespectful to Him. This kind of talk is called blasphemy. Finally, the Israelites were told to keep the Sabbath day (the seventh day of the week) holy and not do any work. Just as the Lord rested on the seventh day of creation, the children of Israel were commanded to follow His example.

LOOK

Now that we've looked at the basics of what the Bible is and how to use it, we will spend the coming months examining some of the key passages of Scripture. Over the next few weeks, we will be looking at the Ten Commandments, starting today with the first four.

As the children of Israel headed toward the Promised Land, God knew that there would be all sorts of temptations for them. He knew that the people who lived in the Promised Land would try to get the Israelites to worship their gods instead of the One True God. That's why God gave the Israelites the first four commandments. These commandments deal with our relationship with God and how to worship Him.

Israel's relationship with the Lord was essential to how things went for them in the Promised Land. When they were rightly worshipping Him and rejecting idols, they won battles and had plenty of food. But when they turned away from Him and started worshipping idols, it led to defeat in battle, famine, and all sorts of other disasters. The most important thing for the Israelites was having a right relationship with God, and this

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK (Continued)

is true for us as well. We can't live as Christians and please Jesus unless we are worshipping the Lord and making Him the most important person in our lives.. This is why these first four commandments are important not only for the ancient Israelites, but for us today.

As you read these commandments, you might notice some differences between the world the Israelites lived in and our world today. For example, we usually don't see too many people worshipping idols made to look like their gods here in America (though some do). We also don't really have a Sabbath day where everyone in the country has to take off of work. But that doesn't mean that we don't have to follow these commandments. We still must make sure that God is more important to us than any person or thing. Nothing, whether it's another religion, a person, money, toys, or anything else can take the place of God in our lives. God's name is still holy, and we shouldn't joke around about God or use His Name in improper ways. The first four commandments teach us that God must be first in our lives, all the other things we care about must come after Him, and any false gods or things that would keep us from loving the Lord must be rejected.

TOOK

Review the lesson by asking the class what the first four commandments are. Ask what following these commandments meant in the lives of the Israelites and how we can obey them today.

Pray: Thank the Lord for teaching us how to obey and worship Him. Ask Him to help us keep Him first and reject anything that would keep us from worshipping Him.

Parent Question: How do we obey the first four commandments?

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Exodus 20:1-11 by David Guzik

EXODUS 20 – THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

A. Four commandments regarding our conduct before God.

1. ([Exo 20:1](#)) Preface to the Ten Commandments.

And God spoke all these words, saying:

a. **And God spoke:** It is proper to believe that **God spoke** these words to Israel as a whole, as they assembled together at the foot of Mount Sinai. There, *God answered him* [Moses] *by voice* ([Exodus 19:19](#)), as Moses stood among the people at the foot of Mount Sinai.

i. “These commandments were after all addressed to the ordinary Israelite, not to the religious elite of the day: they are expressed in strong simple terms, understandable to all, and deal with the temptations of the common man, not of the theologian.” (Cole)

ii. After this, the people asked that God not speak with them directly, and that Moses be the messenger ([Exodus 20:18-19](#)). After this, Moses went back up the mountain to receive more revelation from God for the people ([Exodus 20:21](#)).

iii. In reading and thinking through these commandments, it should be always remembered that *Israel first heard these commands spoken by God from heaven in an audible voice*. This made the strongest, most authoritative impression upon the people possible.

b. **God spoke all these words:** The following laws were not invented at Mount Sinai. A few aspects of the Mosaic Law show new revelation, but for the most part it simply clearly and definitely lays out God’s law as it was written in the heart of man since the time of Adam.

i. “It is wrong to steal, or murder, or covet, not primarily because these sins are forbidden by the Decalogue. They are forbidden by the Decalogue, because they were previously forbidden by conscience; and they are forbidden by conscience because they are forbidden by the nature of things; and the nature of things is God.” (Meyer)

ii. “It has been well said that the commandments are God’s nature expressed in terms of moral imperatives.” (Cole)

iii. In his book *The Abolition of Man*, C.S. Lewis explained how there certainly is a universal morality among men. He gave concrete examples of how all cultures in the past were able to agree on the basics of morality because these principles are implanted in the heart and mind of mankind.

iv. All cultures have said murder is wrong, and kindness is good. All agree that we have particular obligations to our family. All say that honesty is good and that a man cannot have any woman he wants. They agree that stealing is wrong and that justice is good. There are no cultures where cowardice is good and bravery is bad.

c. **God spoke all these words:** This *God-based moral code* set the God of Israel – the God of Abraham, Isaac,

and Jacob – apart from the commonly worshipped gods of the pagan world at that time. They were often just as immoral or more immoral than their human followers.

i. The *God-based moral code* also established that this people, this nation of Israel belonged to *God* and not to Moses. This wasn't Moses' law (though we often casually refer to it as such). Rather, **God spoke all these words**, and Moses nor any other man was never to think of himself or allow others to think of him as *above* the law. God was above all, and His law was and is the expression of His will.

ii. The *Code of Hammurabi* is another well-known set of laws and principles from this same approximate period. There are some similarities between the Ten Commandments/Mosaic Law and the Code of Hammurabi, but the differences are even more profound. While Hammurabi mentions the gods of Babylon, the emphasis is clearly on *him* as the king and lawgiver (with divine authority, of course). The *Code of Hammurabi* begins with page after page of how wonderful Hammurabi is and how much he has accomplished. Hammurabi is clearly above his own law, since *he* was the embodiment of the law. Not so with Moses; the emphasis is clear: **God spoke all these words**, and *no man is above the law*.

d. **God spoke all these words**: We *need* God to morally instruct and guide us. Though these principles resonate with the human conscience (both individually and collectively), they are certainly *not* the only influence upon our thinking and behavior. We *need* to know that there is a God in heaven who expects certain moral behavior and that there are consequences from obeying or disobeying these commands.

i. The Ten Commandments (and all of the Law of Moses that follows) is a *God-based moral code*. It doesn't just say that certain behavior is unwise or unhelpful; it says that *God commands us to do or not do certain things*, and it either says or implies that:

- God sees our obedience or disobedience.
- God measures our obedience or disobedience.
- God, in some way, rewards our obedience and punishes our disobedience.

ii. Without a *God-based moral code*, it is difficult or impossible to answer the question “*Why?*” in response to any moral demand.

iii. The idea of a *God-based moral code* seems to become less and less popular. While the idea of a moral code remains strong, the tendency grows that the moral code should be based on an individual's inner sense of right or wrong, good or bad – and not upon a standard set by God.

iv. There is a persistent impulse to make one's own moral code, apart from God or His revelation. In the late 1980s, media mogul Ted Turner suggested replacing the Ten Commandments with his own “10 Voluntary Initiatives.” Mr. Turner's list is conspicuous in its failure to mention God or religion in any way. These were Mr. Turner's Voluntary Initiatives:

1.I promise to have love and respect for the planet earth and living things thereon, especially my fellow species–humankind.

2.I promise to treat all persons everywhere with dignity, respect, and friendliness.

3.I promise to have no more than two children, or no more than my nation suggests.

4.I promise to use my best efforts to save what is left of our natural world in its untouched state and to restore damaged or destroyed areas where practical.

5.I pledge to use as little nonrenewable resources as possible.

6.I pledge to use as little toxic chemicals, pesticides, and other poisons as possible and to work for their reduction by others.

7.I promise to contribute to those less fortunate than myself, to help them become self-sufficient and enjoy the benefits of a decent life, including clean air and water, adequate food and health care, housing, education, and individual rights.

8.I reject the use of force, in particular military force, and back United Nations arbitration of international disputes.

9.I support the total elimination of all nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons of mass destruction.

10.I support the United Nations and its efforts to collectively improve the conditions of the planet.

e. **God spoke all these words:** The Bible tells us that the law is holy, just, and good ([Romans 7:12](#)). It tells us that every good and perfect gift comes from God ([James 1:17](#)). These commandments are *good* gifts that came to Israel and humanity at Mount Sinai. The Ten Commandments are good because:

- They show the wise moral guidance and government of God.
- They answer the need of mankind for moral guidance and government.
- They give us a way to teach morality.
- They would make the world so much better if obeyed.
- They are good for all humanity; some of the Law of Moses is specific unto Israel, but the Ten Commandments are universal.
- They are good when they are promoted and held as ideals, even when they are not perfectly obeyed.

i. "The 'ten words' are at once the beginning and the heart of the Mosaic revelation." (Cole)

f. **God spoke all these words:** It is important for us to know, understand, receive, and obey all of these commandments in a fully Biblical perspective, also taking into account what the rest of the Book of Exodus the New Testament also tells us about the law of God.

i. The Ten Commandments were never given with the thought that one might earn heaven by obeying them all perfectly or adequately. The covenant God made with Israel at Mount Sinai was much bigger than the law, though that was its first and perhaps most dramatic aspect. Another aspect of the covenant was *sacrifice*, which was given because both God and Israel knew that it was impossible for them to keep this law perfectly, and they must depend on the sacrifice of an innocent victim as a substitute for the guilty law-breaker. In this sense, the Ten Commandments were like a mirror that showed Israel their need for sacrifice.

ii. These Ten Commandments can also be summarized as Jesus did in [Matthew 22:35-40](#): *Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."* This simplification doesn't eliminate the Ten Commandments; it fulfills them, showing us the heart and desire of God for His people. The problem is that we haven't kept the two commandments either, much less the ten.

iii. More importantly, we know that Jesus Himself was the only one to ever keep the law perfectly – either in the ten or the two. He never needed to sacrifice for His own sin, so could be the perfect sacrifice for our sin. Wonderfully, *His obedience is credited to those who put their love and trust in Him*. [Romans 8:2-3](#) puts it this way: *For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit*. This is God's amazing promise to those who repent and believe on Jesus.

iv. The law is a schoolmaster to us ([Galatians 3:22-25](#)). Before God's plan of salvation in Jesus Christ was fully evident, we were *kept under guard by the law* – both in the sense of being bound by the law, but also held in protective custody. The law, through its revelation of God's character and its exposure of our sin, prepares us to come to Jesus – but after we have come, we no longer have to live under our tutor (though we remember the behavior he has taught us).

v. From the perspective of the entire Bible, we can say that the law of God has three great purposes and uses:

- It is a guardrail, keeping humanity on a moral path.
- It is a mirror, showing us our moral failure and need for a savior.
- It is a guide, showing us the heart and desire of God for His people.

vi. “The great message of the Christian faith is, therefore, that we are free from the Law’s condemnation in order that we may be able to fulfill its obligation by the power of [Jesus] within us.” (Redpath)

vii. “My obedience therefore is not legal, but inspired by love and empowered by God’s Holy Spirit. Does New Testament grace allow a lower standard than Old Testament law? The standard under grace is higher.” (Redpath)

viii. The Ten Commandments are often organized into two groups. The first four focus on our conduct toward God, and the next six on our conduct toward one another.

2. ([Exo 20:2-3](#)) The first commandment: **no other gods before Me.**

“I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me.”

a. **I am the Lord your God:** In the ancient world (including Egypt), men worshipped many gods. Here Yahweh (**the Lord**), the covenant God of Israel, set Himself apart from any of the other supposed deities.

i. In these first few words, God both reminded and taught Israel essential facts or principles about who He is, about His nature.

- *God is above nature*; He is not merely the personification of fire, or the wind, or the sun, or the sky, or any other created thing.
- *God is personal*; He is not a depersonalized force; He relates with and communicates to man in an understandable way. God has a mind, a will, a voice, and so forth.
- *God is good*; He had done good for Israel and now does good for them in giving these commands, the keeping of which not only pleases Him, but is genuinely best for humanity.
- *God is holy*; He is different than the supposed gods of the pagans, and He therefore also expects His people to be different.

ii. It seems that the *structure* of these commands and covenant were familiar in the ancient world. “Most scholars point to the similarity between this historical prologue (followed by its stipulations, witnesses, and provisions for succession) and the great suzerain-vassal treaty forms of the ancient Near East.” (Kaiser)

b. **Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage:** Before God commanded anything of Israel He reminded them what He had done for them. This was a clear foundation: because of who God is, and what He has done for us, He has the right to tell us what to do – and we have the obligation to obey Him.

i. “God did not promulgate a code of laws for the children of Israel, while they were in bondage, telling them that if they would obey it, He would deliver them. He brought them out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, and then gave them His law.” (Morgan)

ii. “God’s blessings are binders; every deliverance is a tie to obedience.” (Trapp)

c. **You shall have no other gods before Me:** The first commandment logically flowed from understanding who God was and what He had done for Israel. Because of that, nothing was to come **before** God and He was the only God we worship and serve.

i. In the days of ancient Israel, there was great temptation to worship the gods of materialism (such as *Baal*,

the god of weather and financial success) and sex (such as *Ashtoreth*, the goddess of sex, romance, and reproduction), or any number of other local deities. We are tempted to worship the same gods, but without the old-fashioned names and images.

ii. It has been said (perhaps first by John Calvin) that human nature is like an idol factory that operates constantly. We constantly deal with the temptation to set all kinds of things before or competing with God and His preeminent place in our life.

d. **No other gods before Me:** This does not imply that it is permissible to have other gods, as long as they line up behind the true God. Instead the idea is that there are to be no other gods before the sight of the true God in our life. According to Cole, **before Me** is literally, *To My face*.

i. This means God demands to be more than *added* to our lives. We don't just add Jesus to the life we already have. We must give Him all our life.

ii. Failure to obey this commandment is called *idolatry*. We are to flee idolatry ([1 Corinthians 10:14](#)). Those lives marked by habitual idolatry will not inherit the kingdom of God ([1 Corinthians 6:9-10](#), [Ephesians 5:5](#), [Revelation 21:8, 22:15](#)). Idolatry is a work of the flesh ([Galatians 5:19-20](#)), which marks our old life instead of the new ([1 Peter 4:3](#)), and we are not to associate with those who call themselves Christians who are idolaters ([1 Corinthians 5:11](#)).

3. ([Exo 20:4-6](#)) The second commandment: **You shall not make for yourself any carved image...you shall not bow down to them.**

"You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments."

a. **You shall not make for yourself a carved image:** The second commandment prohibited not only idolatry regarding false gods (overlapping with the first commandment), it also forbids with making an image of any created thing that we might worship (**you shall not bow down to them nor serve them**).

i. Some take this command to prohibit any kind of representation of God, such as with a painting of Jesus or a picture of a dove to represent the Holy Spirit, or any other representation. However, others emphasize that the prohibition is actually in the making of an image that would be or would likely be worshipped (**you shall not bow down to them nor serve them**).

ii. Speaking later of Israel's experience at Sinai, Moses wrote: *And the Lord spoke to you out of the midst of the fire. You heard the sound of the words, but saw no form; you only heard a voice* ([Deuteronomy 4:12](#)). This established the principle that the worship of God was to be *word-based* and not *image-based*.

b. **Or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath:** In that day as well as in our own, worship was tied closely with images – idealized images, or even images in the mind of man. God will not allow us to depict Him with any such image, nor replace Him with another image.

i. The second commandment doesn't forbid making an image of something for artistic purposes; God Himself commanded Israel make images of cherubim ([Exodus 25:18, 26:31](#)). It forbids the making of images as an aid or help to worship. "If the making of cherubim was permitted, then the prohibition of the 'image' will refer only to the making of direct objects of worship." (Cole)

ii. "To countenance its *image worship*, the *Roman Catholic Church* has left the whole of this second command-

ment out of the decalogue, and thus lost one whole commandment out of the *ten*; but to keep up the *number* they have divided the *tenth* into *two*.” (Clarke)

iii. In [John 4:24](#) Jesus explained the rationale behind the second commandment: *God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth*. The use of images and other material things as a focus or help to worship denies who God is (*Spirit*) and how we must worship Him (*in spirit and truth*).

iv. Paul reminded us of the danger and futility of trying to make God into our own image: *Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man; and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things*. ([Romans 1:22-23](#))

c. **For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God**: God is **jealous** in the sense that He will not accept being merely added to the life; He insists on being supreme, and does this out of love.

i. “God’s jealousy is love in action. He refuses to share the human heart with any rival, not because He is selfish and wants us all for Himself, but because He knows that upon that loyalty to Him depends our very moral life...God is not jealous *of* us: He is jealous *for* us.” (Redpath)

ii. ” ‘Zealous’ might be a better translation in modern English, since ‘jealousy’ has acquired an exclusively bad meaning.” (Cole)

d. **Visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me**: This does not mean God punishes people directly for the sins of their ancestors. The important words are **of those who hate Me**. If the descendants love God, they will not have the iniquity of the fathers visited on them.

i. “‘This necessarily implies – IF *the children walk in the steps of their fathers*; for no man can be condemned by Divine justice for a crime of which he was never guilty.” (Clarke)

ii. “Children who repeat the sins of their father evidence it in personally hating god; hence they too are punished like their fathers.” (Kaiser)

iii. Yet, the focus here is on idolatry, and this refers to judgment on a *national* scale – nations that forsake the Lord will be judged, and that judgment will have effects throughout generations.

e. **But showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments**: It’s possible for everyone to receive God’s **mercy**; if they will only turn to Him in **love** and obedience.

4. ([Exo 20:7](#)) The third commandment: **You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain**.

“You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold *him* guiltless who takes His name in vain.”

a. **You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain**: There are at least three ways this command is commonly disobeyed.

- *Profanity*: Using the name of God in blasphemy and cursing.
- *Frivolity*: Using the name of God in a superficial, stupid way.
- *Hypocrisy*: Claiming the name of God but acting in a way that disgraces Him.

i. Jesus communicated the idea of this command in the disciples’ prayer, when He taught us to have a regard for the holiness of God’s name (*Hallowed be Your name*, [Matthew 6:9](#)).

b. **For the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain:** The strength of this command has led to strange traditions among the Jewish people. Some go to extreme measures to avoid violating this command, refusing to even write out the word *God*, in the fear that the paper might be destroyed and the name of God be written **in vain**.

5. ([Exo 20:8-11](#)) The fourth commandment: **Remember the Sabbath day.**

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 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.”

a. **Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy:** The command is to respect the seventh day (Saturday) as a day of rest (**you shall do no work**). This rest was for all of Israel – for the **son** and the **servant** and the **stranger** – even including **cattle**.

i. This is an important principle that might be too easily passed over. Here God declared the essential humanity and dignity of women, slaves, and strangers, and said they had the same right to a day of rest as the free Israeli man. This was certainly a radical concept in the ancient world.

ii. “The baser sort of people in Sweden do always break the Sabbath, saying that it is for gentlemen to keep that day.” (Trapp)

b. **To keep it holy:** God commanded Israel – and all humanity – to make sure that there was *sacred time* in their life, *separated* time of rest.

i. In their traditions, the Jewish people came to carefully quantify what they thought could and could not be done on the Sabbath day, in order to **keep it holy**. For example, in [Luke 6:1-2](#), in the mind of the Jewish leaders, the disciples were guilty of four violations of the Sabbath every time they took a bite of grain out in the field, because they reaped, threshed, winnowed, and prepared food.

ii. Ancient Rabbis taught that on the Sabbath, a man could not carry something in his right hand or in his left hand, across his chest or on his shoulder. But he could carry something with the back of his hand, his foot, his elbow, or in his ear, his hair, or in the hem of his shirt, or in his shoe or sandal. Or on the Sabbath Israelites were forbidden to tie a knot – except, a woman could tie a knot in her girdle. So, if a bucket of water had to be raised from a well, an Israelite could not tie a rope to the bucket, but a woman could tie her girdle to the bucket and pull it up from the well.

iii. In observant Jewish homes today, one cannot turn on a light, a stove, or a switch on the Sabbath. It is forbidden to drive a certain distance or to make a telephone call – all carefully regulated by traditions seeking to spell out the law exactly.

c. **For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth:** God established the pattern for the Sabbath at the time of creation. When He rested from His works on the seventh day, God made the seventh day a day of rest from all our works ([Genesis 2:3](#)). It's as if God said, *Having too much to do isn't an excuse from taking the rest you need – I created the universe and found time to rest from My work.*

i. When God told them to **remember the Sabbath**, He told them to *remember the rest*. “The term ‘Sabbath’ is derived from the Hebrew verb ‘to rest or cease from work.’” (Kaiser) The most important purpose of the Sabbath was to serve as a preview picture of the rest we have in Jesus.

ii. Like everything in the Bible, we understand this with the perspective of the whole Bible, not this single passage. With this understanding, we see that there is a real sense in which Jesus fulfilled the purpose and plan of the Sabbath *for* us and *in* us ([Hebrews 4:9-11](#)) – He is our rest, when we remember His finished work we **remember the Sabbath**, we *remember the rest*.

iii. Therefore, the whole of Scripture makes it clear that under the New Covenant, no one is under obligation to observe a Sabbath day ([Colossians 2:16-17](#) and [Galatians 4:9-11](#)). [Galatians 4:10](#) tells us that Christians are not bound to observe *days and months and seasons and years*. The rest we enter into as Christians is something to experience every day, not just one day a week – the rest of knowing we don't have to work to save ourselves, but our salvation is accomplished in Jesus ([Hebrews 4:9-10](#)).

iv. The Sabbath commanded here and observed by Israel was a *shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ* ([Colossians 2:16-17](#)). In the New Covenant the idea isn't that there is *no* Sabbath, but that *every day* is a day of Sabbath rest in the finished work of God. Since the shadow of the Sabbath is fulfilled in Jesus, we are free to keep any particular day – or no day – as a Sabbath after the custom of ancient Israel.

v. Yet we dare not ignore the importance of a day of rest – God has built us so that we *need* one. Like a car that needs regular maintenance, we need regular rest – or we will not wear well. Some people are like high mileage cars that haven't been maintained well, and it shows.

vi. Some Christians are also dogmatic about observing Saturday as the Sabbath as opposed to Sunday. But because we are free to regard all days as given by God, it makes no difference. But in some ways, Sunday is more appropriate; being the day Jesus rose from the dead ([Mark 16:9](#)), and first met with His disciples ([John 20:19](#)), and a day when Christians gathered for fellowship ([Acts 20:7](#) and [1 Corinthians 16:2](#)). Under Law, men worked towards God's rest; but after Jesus' finished work on the cross, the believer enters into rest and goes from that rest out to work.

vii. But we are also commanded to *work* six days. "He who idles his time away in the *six* days is equally culpable in the sight of God as he who works on the *seventh*." (Clarke) Many Christians should give more "leisure time" to the work of the Lord. Every Christian should have a *deliberate* way to serve God and advance the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.