

Sabbath

“The one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works,
as God did from His.

Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest...”

Hebrews 4:10-11a.

For over six years now via weekly installment, I’ve been going line by line through the London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689. These are available on Biblecia.com in the devotional archives. They began in August of 2014. I love this confession! It has 32 chapters. This week, I came to chapter 22 (cited just below). Typically, I try to keep these devotionals to not more than two pages. Due to the subject matter, I felt this one needed a little more care than is customary. I humbly pray it’s a blessing to you as you read.

Chapter 22. Of Religious Worship and the Sabbath Day. Paragraph 7: “As it is the law of nature, that in general a proportion of time, by God's appointment, be set apart for the worship of God, so by his Word, in a positive moral, and perpetual commandment, binding all men, in all ages, he hath particularly appointed one day in seven for a sabbath to be kept holy unto him, which from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ was the last day of the week, and from the resurrection of Christ was changed into the first day of the week, which is called the Lord's day: and is to be continued to the end of the world as the Christian Sabbath, the observation of the last day of the week being abolished.”

I am a young earth creationist. The Bible’s veracity does not hang on this, but I’m convinced by its most basic reading and the best in the natural and legitimate non-speculative sciences that the earth is not even 10,000 years old. I say this because I do believe that God’s Sabbath day pattern itself given to Israel is set by the history of the creation week. I believe this is precisely what’s stated here at the start as the “law of nature.”

The fourth of the Ten Commandments commands obedience to the Sabbath day. Made so in the first formal covenant in Moses’ day. Exodus 20:8; Deuteronomy 5:12. It was undoubtedly on Saturday to the Hebrews, the last day of a seven-day week. A day commanded to be set aside as a day of rest and worship. Deuteronomy 6:13 gives us a description of it: “Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the Lord your God; *in it* you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter or your male servant or your female servant or your ox or your donkey or any of your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you, so that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you.” Typology on this abounds in the Bible as to why God gave man this command in Moses’ day.

How Christians today are to keep this commandment is a subject that has some unique nuances in Christ that aren’t to be taken lightly. There are more similarities between Sabbath in the New Covenant (NC) and the Old Covenant (OC) than dissimilarities I’d say, and both remain established in Jesus, but no other of the Ten Commandments is expressly abrogated in the NC like the Sabbath day is, so we need to see it, as with all things to some degree or another, in Christ’s NC with his church. It is somewhat unique. *Saturday- the Mosaic Sabbath- has been abrogated.* Though treated less, I’d say this change is even more

astounding than that regarding circumcision which has also been abrogated without the kind of prescription one might expect. In both Sabbath keeping and circumcision, one must sit at the Cross in a few unique and wonderful ways to divide rightly why Christians needn't make a practice of obedience to either in the NC whether weekly with the Sabbath, or with our boys in circumcision. Now, I firmly believe that the Christian is actually in complete fulfillment of these things by NC teaching, but Saturday is not my Sabbath and I did not *have to* be circumcised on the eighth day of my life to in life share in the NC. There are definite distinctions that need to be made. It's made clear in biblical description (Acts and the gospels) that the Sabbath has a definite Christological nuance, and likewise in treatments in our various writings, but again, we just can't afford to take this lightly.

The confession makes it clear that the Sabbath rest has taken on an entirely new meaning in Christ. Amen. There's only seven days in a week. Yet God has made a distinction in our main day. You see it above: "...the observation of the last day of the week being abolished." Why? How? We must speak of a wide picture of grace. I'm much more inclined to speak of the Sabbath as applicable seven days a week and not only to Sunday. That it's more about a general proportion of time than any specific day. That proportion of time is to be far more than just one day a week. The Law sets forth a day; the Gospel sets forth in a sense a new kind of day. We'll get there.

Jesus taught, "...The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." Mark 2:27. Sabbath had been so abused by his ministry years. Numbers 15:32-36 shows a man in open rebellion to God's command killed for gathering wood on the Sabbath. I think it's clear that he was disregarding the Sabbath in that day. God is not unjust. This demonstrates a holy severity in deterrence that may have led to at least some of the later abuses on Sabbath in Israel's history, but it had still been so abused in tradition (oral vs. written) by Jesus' day. Jesus clearly taught on their abuses. He said in many ways things like, "Watch out and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." Matthew 16:6. Leaven here is like things added to God's recipe that mess up the product. He always upheld the truth, and even traditions that were not necessarily bad at all, but he separated bad (subtracting if you will) tradition often like chaff. Scripture alone gets the ascendancy with Jesus. *Sola Scriptura!* He showed that not only was he coming to fulfill and honor the Sabbath in his work, but that many of the Jewish leaders in his day had misunderstood at least some parts of it all along. Again, Sabbath was for man, *not* the other way around. This is especially clear in examples such as his talk about David and the priests in Matthew 12:1-8 regarding actions or religious worship that did not violate the Sabbath at all. Another serious problem tradition can create is what's seen in Mark 7:1-13. *Sola Scriptura* again. Jesus took a fifteen-hundred-year-old truth from Scripture, held their tradition up next to it, held them accountable to Scripture, and showed why the tradition was to be placed in the fire. See also John 5:10; Mark 3:2; Matthew 12:9-12 and Luke 13:14 for more interactions based on traditional assertions where Jesus' dealing on such things show his approach to be often much different than theirs. It's a solid conclusion based on such passages I think to say that Jesus condemned the additional subtractions of many in his day. *They added to things from Moses so much in tradition that they ended up subtracting meaning.* I feel this is at the heart of what Jesus contends with them on Sabbath about quite often. It's never wrong to actually obey, but very often adding layers of obedience to God's word becomes disobedience to God for the sake of obedience to man. There are many such examples of this in Christian history too. We do not want to add in

such things in the NC regarding the Sabbath day. No one should have done it in the OC, but all the more in the new. Paul shows a similar truth in condemning the addition of circumcision to grace that subtracts the Gospel in his letter to the Galatians. Some have done this with specific days of the week.

Jesus came and did something to his Sabbath. Think of it like a remixed song made holier. He himself worked on the Sabbath day of the week in a way they felt violated it. He never broke it, but he showed its proper bounds, and as we'll see, he made the new day. The Apostles all knew full well that Jesus brought them a dutiful Sabbath rest in worship, for sure, from Acts 2 on. They'd lived through its transition. What follows is massive. Paul says, "No one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day—things which are a *mere* shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ." Colossians 2:16-17. Incredible! We could also discuss the numerous ancient commanded feasts also being abrogated here, but Sabbath is our focus. This is a statement, especially considering the precedent of Sabbath Day obedience, that would be utterly incomprehensible to a righteous man unless its author was certain that a drastic change had been made to such things in Christ. The Sabbath was not an interchangeable day of the week. See again Deuteronomy 6:13. Sabbath wasn't to be on the 2nd, 4th or 1st day of the week. It was the last day. Saturday. Yet in Christ, without Jesus even explicitly stating it, the day itself was no longer a matter to be judged by. This is incredible. God will not judge based on it. And no one can judge you for saying it is no longer a commanded obedience to rest in worship on Saturdays, Paul said. You better know what you're talking about here, folks. This is one of God's Ten Commandments! Did Jesus make a change to the Sabbath? Was it just to shift it a day, or was it something more that then shifted it a day to the right in pattern? I'll argue for the latter.

The Sabbath, as with all of God's Law, is a wonderful command. Psalm 119:97; Joshua 22:5. See again above where Paul says, "...the substance [of it] belongs to Christ." Bottom line in my theology of Sabbath as a Christian: in Jesus alone we obey and therefore are not guilty of violating the Mosaic Sabbath *in its fullness* 365 days a year. Jesus has brought us into a rest that God's ancient Sabbath only typified in the Law. A specific day on which you worship God now is *not* the point and can even be dangerous to demand. Meaning that one's worship on any other day would somehow not be acceptable in Christ. This is a NC reality. The NC does not demand *a day* any more than it prescribes *a place*. Our traditions cannot add layers. Description is not prescription. *We are not prescribed a day as the Law did*. The perpetuity of the Sabbath law is not found on just another day of the week; it's in Christ himself. It was patterned to changed to the first day of the week, but that specific day is not required as I trust we'll see before we're done here. No one is to be stoned or excommunicated for worshiping on Saturday today because the NC does not demand a specific day for one's worship. Patterning it is not the same as commanding it. I feel this can be proven easily. I'll add that anyone *not in Christ* even today is guilty of not worshiping God on his ancient Sabbath. The curse of the Law that Jesus bore for his elect includes all of the Law which includes Sabbath disobedience. Christ must carry that for a sinner, as with all sin, or the sinner himself must. It's the same with all of the Law that Christ removes us from the jurisdiction of it, but this of course includes the Sabbath too. A non-believer is guilty of not giving God the 7th day of his week. A Christian would be as well if Christ had not brought Sabbath to its fullness in himself. No other of the Ten Commandments is spoken of like Paul

speaks of Sabbath. He says it's not a matter of judgment in the NC. Does he or anyone say such of murder? So again, it must get a specific look. We don't violate the Law. Of course. God forbid! So, what has Christ done that makes that statement from Paul (statements) anything more than in error? Christ has brought us the Sabbath. Everyday. So, go to church on Sunday like the first church did and worship him for it. That's our pattern. He rose from the dead on a Sunday, so we often go on that day, but every day is our Sabbath worship.

A believer has entered the rest that the Saturday Sabbath pictured and so fulfills it in Jesus entirely from his regeneration onward. The believer has rested from his works. He is in the Sabbath. In a very real sense this is true of all of God's commandments. We now repent when we sin...because we know we've been forgiven. We work in the Sabbath...because we know we are at rest. We're not guilty for our true violations in the end in Christ for it all by his mercy. Ephesians 2:1. But there's something more specific with the Sabbath, I think. Just as with circumcision, Passover, feast days, the tithe, etc., we must practice our hermeneutics. How do we obey the Sabbath? We dare not just disregard it. And we're not Seventh Day Adventists. I believe that just as Jesus told the Samaritan darling in John 4:21 that worship on every mountain would in him alone become an actual equal place of worship, though Jerusalem had indeed been his own specifically established city for over a thousand years by then, I can reverently play a bit with the imagery here and say that I believe that every day has similarly become our Sabbath, and not just one day a week. Remix, not renege. Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath. He is the Sabbath rest for all who come to him. I've stood on the Mount of Olives. I've also taught on Mars Hill. I've looked up at Calvin's pulpit in Geneva, stood atop Ziggurats in Iraq and by the Castle Church's door in Wittenberg. Christ fills it all with his truth! And daily! God rested (finished) his work in creation in six days. On the 7th day the Hebrew had the Sabbath. In the Mosaic Law, he gave them many works to perform in a six-day work week, and the day of rest ended the week. He then (the Son) in the Gospel, finished his earthly works (his entire life, teaching, and obedience both active and passive) in creating his new creation through his Resurrection on the 1st day of a newly consecrated covenant. We are now in the last days. Christ has made many changes and some without a specific word, but yet clearly by his work. We baptize both boys *and girls* who believe. We marry only one wife as from the start. We gather on Sundays. We do not circumcise as for necessary religious obedience. We do not offer sacrifices for sins. We do not have a temple, etc., etc., etc. Christ changed so very much by virtue of the Sabbath rest he brought his own by his blood. It was always his intent to change many things through his incarnation from before the foundation of the world. Our weekly rest is for us. We are not for it. We are for Christ in perpetual rest. Church should be a part of each of our lives. That's on Sundays for the very best of reasons—Christ rose on one, but we *dare not* prescribe what God has not.

In the NC we see how the Sabbath God gave our ancestors typifies a weekly rest from manual labor as an ultimate picture of rest before God for holiness or fellowship by one trusting alone in the merits of Christ alone. Our rest in Christ then is a true Sabbath rest. Jesus has "sat down" having "accomplished eternal redemption" by his "one offering," etc. Hebrews 10:14. He too rests from his works now in the Sabbath he made. We don't work to merit his work. That's absurd. We stop working in honor of his work. We work (Titus 3:8; Ephesians 2:10; James 2:17) but clearly not to accomplish what only God could accomplish. We run the race, even as to win, but Christ has set the track. So, in our Sabbath rest: "...This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent." John 6:29. There are other

reasons we can deduce for sure for why God blessed his own with the Sabbath, but the picture of a rest from works, as in fulfillment of God's Sabbath in the Law, to trust in Christ alone, is colossal for the Christian. The writers of Scripture make much of it. It makes us even anathematize former commanded works like a boy's circumcision (Genesis 17:10; Leviticus 12:3) that subtly seek to "perfect" what Christ has done! Galatians 5:11-12; 1:6-9. No works! Grace alone! Not even works with the ancient precedence circumcision had can perfect the Faith. It even went before the Sabbath in the Law by the way. The Apostles hammer this home like only the heart of David could have when David spoke of the Lord's sure mercies made to his fathers that would bring him peace. Israel's peace from the God who is love, all of it that God so lavishly demonstrated in the OC, came entirely from God's unmerited grace and unilateral promise to the first Hebrew, Abram. In Christ, we all now take our seats. In both the OC and NC this is true, but the NC takes it higher. This includes all the worshipful obediences commanded as well. Paul's theology in the NC is replete with its references to a salvation in Jesus "apart from works." Romans 3:20, 21, 28; 4:2; Galatians 2:16, etc. Our works are the fruit of our justification in Christ, not its basis. In an absolutely precise sense, every sound Reformed exegete would argue that all works (Sabbath, evangelism, you name it) are only acceptable works if worked *in* Christ's regenerated grace. They're only acceptable from the believer. So, all works are actually only "workable" in rest. I'm arguing that this is the reality of the Sabbath Christ brought us into by his work, and now in his rest. We obey the Sabbath, not on *a day*, but in this new day if you will. The nuances to this are demanded, again, I think, by Paul's talk of Sabbath under Jesus' teaching.

The NC and the OC are a perfect pair, but the contrasts between them must also be maintained as it is most proper and necessary to say indeed that Christians are *not* under the Mosaic Law. "Sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace." Romans 6:14. And thank God we're not. Hebrews 8:6. Perpetuity does not equal jurisdiction. Scripture says things like: "The Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ." John 1:17. This is no throw away phrase. Consider also please what we read in Galatians 3:24: "The Law has become our tutor *to lead us* to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor." *Sola Scriptura and Tota Scriptura*, amen, but Christians, by God's plan and wondrous works (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Acts 20:28) are under the NC, not the OC. Cf. Romans 8:2; Galatians 4:21-26; Hebrews 8:13; 10:28-29; Luke 22:20. What we say of Sabbath is incredible in Jesus. Our Hebrew ancestors say the amen tonight. There has been a *radical* change in God's elect through Christ's work. A New Covenant. He himself never changes, but what he demands in our worship surely has. The change is so radical that you reading this have never once offered up a blood sacrifice. And nor should you. Passover gave way to Passover. Sabbath gave way to Sabbath. In Christ, by God the Holy Spirit's monergistic work, we rest (retire) from works as a hope to ultimate spiritual blessing *because* we have those blessings in Jesus. Ephesians 1:3; 2:6. The true Hebrew always knew that God's promised mercies alone were their hope as well under Moses and so they rested *in obedience*. They obeyed *in hope*. Sound familiar? It should. Our hope is in Christ whose works now save us while we are to be about his works. We work, but in a complete rest from works.

One's understanding of Hebrews 4 will shape their understanding of the NC relationship between the Mosaic Sabbath day and the rest that I'm arguing each believer fulfills by faith in Jesus the Christ every day. We'll cite from Hebrews 4 in just a moment,

but it's amazing to think that in Christ we now have the rest that Joshua the son of Nun could never have given. They crossed over the Jordan River. When Israel settled in Cana after the conquest and the wilderness wanderings, they had only a type of the rest we have now after Christ crossed death. Joshua entered Israel and eventually had a rest, but he still looked ahead to Christ. In Christ we too have a rest that we await the complete fulfillment of in heaven, but between Joshua's day and ours God has given the NC. Joshua couldn't give this rest in the OC, but Jesus *did give it to us already* in the NC. We understand Sabbath in ways no OC brother could while they were alive on earth. I'm not saying they weren't regenerate. But Christ had not come and taught. The NC could not begin until Jesus' death. Hebrews 9:16; John 16:7. I love the lyrics of the hymn, "Jesus! I am resting, resting." I'd love to share them with you. They reflect my love of the Sabbath in Christ. I work hard in utter rest every day. The music and lyrics are by Piggot and Mountain.

*Jesus! I am resting, resting in the joy of what Thou art;
I am finding out the greatness of Thy loving heart.
Thou hast bid me gaze upon Thee, and Thy beauty fills my soul,
for, by Thy transforming power, Thou hast made me whole.*

...

*Ever lift Thy face upon me, as I work and wait for Thee;
resting 'neath Thy smile, Lord Jesus, Earth's dark shadows flee.
Brightness of my Father's glory, sunshine of my Father's face,
keep me ever trusting, resting, fill me with Thy grace.*

Like Joshua, but at the same time not like Joshua, we rest. The Sabbath Joshua obeyed weekly was if you will a perpetual type on top of the other type of his rest when in Cana. He had the type. We now worship in the reality of the antitype himself. Joshua does indeed now tonight have the true Sabbath too as I write this and I believe has since his death, but he did not have it revealed to him as we do today in his lifetime. Like Abraham his very great grandfather, Joshua too, along with all the Israel of God, looked ahead beyond Cana to heaven. See Hebrews 11:10. But Christ Jesus, this Joshua, God the Son, has done what Nun's son could not. It was not Joshua's rest to give back then. Remember, *its substance was alone in Christ*, Paul said. The substance of Sabbath that Paul speaks of is in view only after Jesus' incarnation. Hebrews makes this plain as well. All of Scripture does. Luke 24:26. Sabbath rest is actually only in Christ glorified. Ascended. Reigning. Lord. The Spirit has come, etc. If the Hebrews of old could truly have entered what God's Sabbath rest pictured then God says that, "He would not have spoken of another day after that..." Hebrews 4:8. The day God speaks of in Hebrews 4, the day of Sabbath in its fullness would only be known after that first Sunday around AD 30 when Jesus opened the way into the holiest place by his Cross and God's people entered the Sabbath rest. Every Christian therefore fulfills the Sabbath by believing in him. When? On Sundays? Or all days? Rest, new creation. Rest on all days. Such truths remove specific day commandments (sorry Adventist friends) from any "make-it-or-break-it" reality in the NC.

Consider Paul's again incomprehensible words unless one has in mind the kind of fulfillment to Sabbath I'm advocating for here. Paul has a view of days that make them all equal in worship. This is the NC view. In Romans 14, he speaks about believers and the consciences of others who are weaker regarding certain practices. A mature believer in Rome or Corinth (for example) could eat the meat of a cow or chicken that had been sacrificed to a false god or goddess. It wouldn't harm him or be sinful at all. He has learned that nothing that

goes into him can defile him. Mark 7:18. But Paul explains that a weaker brother (not mature) who does not understand this, under what may be a good and otherwise safe conscientiousness, may feel he's eating something he shouldn't and that we should be mindful of this. Something that is maybe even sinful. Paul says be sensitive to others. He affirms what's true regarding eating anything, but speaks out of great love. In Romans 14:14 he says, "I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean of itself..." (why I eat bacon) but he speaks out of love for another that yet "...to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean." It's not unclean, but out of love, we deal patiently and kindly with each other. He writes, "If because of food your brother is hurt, you are no longer walking according to love. Do not destroy with your food him for whom Christ died." Romans 14:15. It's somewhat hyperbolic to say "destroy" (*ἀπόλλυε, apollymi*) here but there is a wonderful principle of deference to others clearly taught. To put others first in Christ and Paul masterfully deals with two primary matters along such lines in the treatment.

He then speaks of Sabbath and perhaps other Pagan observances in vv. 5-6 when he says: "One person regards one day above another, another regards every day *alike*. Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God." Romans 14:5-6. It's not syntactically deductible, but I find no reason to think that Paul has any other "day" (*ἡμέραν, hēmera*) in mind here than the Sabbath day. This is either the Sunday Sabbath that he himself helped establish the pattern for in Christ, or the Saturday Sabbath of his ancestors on which he often entered the synagogues. Yet he speaks of it as an indifferent matter. And reader, "...happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves." Vs. 22b. Worship on Sunday, but please don't prescribe it based on an alleged perpetuity with the OC that Paul explicitly deals with in Christ. The Sabbath law was one of the Ten Commandments! *If Sunday was prescribed or commanded by Jesus, or if Saturday was still the commanded day, Paul could never say this. Not even to a weaker brother out of love.* This isn't just some dietary proclivity, even if we consider the holiness code, it's a commandment in the Decalogue itself. The things Paul says of it have a nuance that in Christ you're actually fulfilling it or Paul's casting a commandment behind him. Something he'd never do. Statements like this would be blasphemous if Christ had commanded the Sabbath on Sunday. Sabbath is not ever adiophora if it's commanded except that this weaker brother is in Christ and like with foods, days of the week he worships on are what they are. This again does not remove our pattern. We simply cannot place any day as commanded by God as *the Sabbath day* in the NC. We give God his due time (I pray far more than just one day a week) and Sunday is the pattern, but if we somehow condemn a man or even just find him unclean who worships on a Tuesday we are in error. What if a man works on Sundays to feed his family and simply cannot get to church then, but attends his church with his family on Wednesdays? Is Christ not available for worship? It was no option in the OC on what day we worshiped, but is it in the NC? Can we not illustrate it simply in this way? Jerusalem was the commanded city after David for the convocations, but did Christ not make a change? I'm not advocating a complete equivocation here for all things, but with regard to Sabbath and Paul's clear teachings on it, I am saying it's clear what the Sabbath is now in Christ. We fulfill it in him. It's clear how we fulfill, and not at all set aside, this commandment.

In his inimitable study Bible, John MacArthur says the following on Romans 14:5: “Though it was no longer required by God, the weak Jewish believer felt compelled to observe the Sabbath and other special days associated with Judaism. On the other hand, the week Gentile wanted to separate himself from the special days of festivities associated with his former paganism because of its immorality and idolatry.” Paul is dealing here in several matters of conscience, but his words would be entirely contradictory if the same Sabbath obediences *to a specific day of the week—even if now we’re saying it’s Sunday—if worship on Sundays was the commanded day*. No, we worship on Sundays as a pattern set, but we know the fullness of Sabbath in Christ. It is not just on a day commanded. We shouldn’t mistake pattern for command or description for prescription.

Furthermore, no one should deny that Paul has Sabbath observances in mind in Galatians 4:10-11 when he says, “You observe days and months and seasons and years. I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.” His argument here is precisely his argument to the Colossians that I’ve belabored already that they are observing things, even the Jewish Sabbath and festival day observances themselves, and not being as they should be, aware of the substance of all such things in Christ that fill each day. They’re dealing in the shadows and types and not the substance. *I think Paul speaks of Sabbath here again in a way that reflects his awareness of its fulfillment in Jesus*. He’s *not* saying, “You’re fools for doing this *on Saturdays, but you should be doing it on Sundays now*.” No. That’s not in his thinking I’d say. The NC has flooded his thinking. The Galatians pursued all these things to “perfect” Christ’s salvation. Or even to get them in the NC as the Judaizers had been saying. We see in the letter that their principle error was in regard to circumcision. That’s how Paul addresses it, but the idea that any of these things somehow could make them saved is a blasphemous impossibility in the full view and a departure from what he’d taught them. Galatians 1:6. They were fools Paul said who were in danger of turning after a false gospel. Galatians 3:1; 1:6 (again) respectively. Pursuing such would be evidence of not understanding what it means to be in union with Christ by faith alone and thus any professed faith for them would end in shipwreck as Christ would profit them nothing. Galatians 5:2. This warning helps us on many fronts. Even as Gentiles, had they pursued or felt salvation was only possible for them by doing such things, such works, they’d be guilty of the same error of many Jews for not resting (Sabbath) in Christ. Why? “Because *they did not pursue it [righteousness] by faith, but as though it were by works*.” Romans 9:32. (Bracketed word mine due to vv. 30-31). The “day” is treated here again by Paul in an astounding way that I submit are consistent with our understanding that in Christ, the perpetual Sabbath rest is what it means to be justified by faith alone in Christ alone. We have (past tense) entered that rest. We looked at Hebrews 4 a bit. We indeed have the pattern set of Sunday for us in the Bible. I believe it’s very proper to call Sunday the Christian Sabbath. But we must be careful not to exclude Wednesday worship (for example) as equally legitimate. A man loses no favor with God if he must work on the first day of the week, and so goes to God’s house to worship on a Thursday.

Pastors, elders, deacons and laborers in the church are no doubt their busiest on Sundays. It’s not a restful day for us, especially depending on the number of services we conduct, but we know that our labors in worship are not in violation of the rest we live in. We know the substance of it all and what we’ve been commanded to do for the elect of God. We do not violate the Sabbath. In Christ, we establish all of the Law. Romans 3:31. God has

commanded a day to be set aside to him. We should obey it. There is a pattern set for us. There was a day commanded to our fathers that was to bless them and direct their hearts to God. It's the same with us.

God makes it clear that the Sabbath in its full NC glory wasn't possible until Christ sanctified it in the NC. The Jewish Sabbath was Saturday. The Christian Sabbath is Sunday. Jesus rose from the grave on a Sunday, and so our pattern was set in him—the firstborn from the dead. John 20:1; 1 Corinthians 16:2; Acts 20:7. By the time John wrote Revelation, the pattern had been so clearly set that the Apostle John could say to his readers, “I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day” (Revelation 1:10) and expect everyone to know (as I think it's clear) that it was a Sunday he was talking about. Sunday is “The Lord's day.” But again, my concern in this is our prescription of the day. Sabbath is in the Decalogue. If we don't properly understand what it means to have our Sabbath in Christ in the NC we have a problem with Paul's treatments on the day.

I do not dismiss the confession here, but I would argue for a better wording had I been present with these noble men that didn't have any appearance of seeking just to take the Sabbath day to the right one day. A wording that didn't make Sunday anything more than a set pattern without the echo of the command to only one day in the week at all possible here in part of their words. Paul said no one can judge a believer regarding Sabbath observance. If you say to me that it's Sunday and not Saturday, and condemn or at all imagine to be sinning one who worships on a Tuesday, I say you've overstepped the boundaries Paul showed.

In Christ, our Sabbath is today.

Blessings!

Thank you for your attention to this letter.