

The Lord's Day

by Andrew Murray

The Lord's Day is a day of rest and fellowship with God, a sign that He desires to sanctify man and take possession of him.

Scripture: Genesis 2:3, Exodus 31:12, John 20:19, Revelation 1:10

Topics: "Holiness", "Sabbath"

Description

Andrew Murray emphasizes the significance of the Lord's Day as a divine gift for communion with God, highlighting its purpose to sanctify and bless humanity. He explains that God desires to fill us with His holiness and that the Sabbath serves as a reminder of His rest and finished work. Murray encourages believers to view the day as a time for personal fellowship with God, away from distractions, and to embrace the rest that comes from faith in Jesus' resurrection. He stresses the importance of making the day holy and dedicating it to God, allowing Him to work within us. Ultimately, the Lord's Day is a call to experience God's presence and to be transformed into His likeness.

Transcript

"And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all His work which God had created" Genesis 2:3.

"On that day, the first day of the week, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said unto them, Peace be unto you" John 20:19.

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day" Revelation 1:10.

Man lives under the law of time. He must have time for what he wants to do or obtain. In a wonderful way God gives him time for communion with Himself. One day in seven God separated for fellowship with Himself.

The great object of God's gift of this day is that it may serve as a sign that God desires to sanctify man.¹ Endeavour to understand well the word "holy." It is one of the most important words in the Bible.

God is the Holy One. By revealing Himself, God communicates His holiness to that which is holy. We know that the temple was holy, because God dwelt there. God had taken possession of it. He gave Himself to dwell there. In this way, God also wants to sanctify man. He wants to take possession of him and fill him with Himself--with His own life, His disposition, His holiness. For this reason, God took

possession of the seventh day, appropriating it to Himself. He sanctified it. He also calls man to sanctify it and to acknowledge it as the Lord's day--the day of the Lord's presence and special working. He who does this--who sanctifies this day--will be sanctified by Him, as God has promised. (Read with attention, Exodus 31:12-17, especially verse 13.)

God blessed the seventh day by sanctifying it. The blessing of God is the power of life, lodged by Him in everything. He blesses grass and cattle and man with the power to multiply.² And so He lodged in the seventh day a power to bless, and the promise that everyone who sanctifies this day will be sanctified and blessed by it. We must accustom ourselves to always think of the Sabbath as a blessed day that certainly brings blessing. The blessing bound up with it is very great.³

There is still a third word that is used when speaking of the Sabbath. "God rested on the seventh day," and, as it stands in Exodus, "was refreshed" or gladdened. God will sanctify and bless us by introducing us into His rest. He wants to bring us to see that we are not to burden ourselves with our cares and weaknesses. We are to rest in Him, in His finished work, in His rest, which He takes because all is in order. This rest is not the outward termination of employments. No, it is the rest of faith, by which we cease from our works as God did from His, because all is finished. Into this rest we enter by faith in the finished work of Jesus, in surrender to be sanctified by God.⁴

The seventh day is changed into the first day of the week because Jesus finished the second creation in His resurrection, and we enter into life and rest by the power of His resurrection. There is no specific command on this point. In the New Testament, the Spirit takes the place of the law. The Spirit of the Lord led His disciples to the celebration of this day. It was the day, not only on which the Lord was raised, but also on which, in all likelihood, the Spirit was poured out. It was the day not only on which the Lord manifested Himself during the forty days, but on which the Spirit also specially worked.⁵

The chief lessons that we have to learn about this day are the following:

The principal aim of the Sabbath is to make you holy, as God is holy. God would have you holy--this is glory, this is blessedness--this is His blessing, this His rest. God would have you holy, filled with Himself and His holiness.⁶

In order to sanctify you, God must have you with Him, in His presence and fellowship. You are to come away from all your struggling and working to rest with Him. You are to rest quietly, without exertion or anxiety, in the certainty that the Son has finished everything, that the Father cares for you in everything, and that the Spirit will work everything in you. God can reveal Himself in the holy rest of a soul that is converted to God, remains silent before His presence to hear what He speaks to him, and depends on God to achieve all.⁷ It is thus that He sanctifies us.

We sanctify the day of rest, first by withdrawing from all external business and distraction. Then, by employing it especially as God's day--belonging to the Lord--for what He destined it to be, fellowship with Himself.

Take care that you do not use the day of rest only as a day for the public observance of divine worship. It is especially in private personal communion that God can bless and sanctify you. In the church, the understanding is kept active, and you have the ordinances of preaching, united prayer, and praise to keep you occupied. But there we do not always know whether the heart is really dealing with God--is taking delight in Him. This takes place in solitude. Accustom yourself, then, to be alone with the Lord your God.

Not only speak to Him, but let Him speak to you. Let your heart be the temple in whose holy silence His voice is heard. Rest in God. Then God will say of your heart: This is my rest, here will I dwell.⁸

Young Christian, hold in high regard the holy, the blessed day of rest. Long for it. Thank God for it. Keep it very holy. And, above all, let it be a day of inner fellowship with your God--living conversation with His love.

Holy God, I thank You for the holy day which You give me as a token that You will sanctify me. Lord God, it is You who did sanctify the day by taking it for Yourself. Sanctify me in like manner by taking me for Yourself. Teach me so to enter into Your rest, so to find my rest in Your love, that my whole soul will be silent before You, in order that You may make Yourself and Your love known in me. And let every Sabbath be to me a foretaste of the eternal rest with You. Amen.

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