

## **HOW TO KEEP THE LORD'S DAY HOLY.**

The subject for our consideration is "How to Keep the Lord's Day Holy." I would like to begin by spending a little bit of time understanding the Scriptural basis for the Lord's Day. Then, I will move on to the practical aspects of how to keep the Lord's Day holy.

First of all, as we think of understanding the Scriptural basis for the Lord's Day, I would like to take you back to the book of beginnings, the book of Genesis 2 where we have recorded there as God finished His creation work. Genesis 2:2-3 says, *"And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. (3) And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."* We have the Creation being finished. It says that God rested. It was not because He was weary but because the creation work was completed. "God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it."

### **[I] The Scriptural basis for the Lord's Day.**

1) The concept of a day of rest in seven is a Creation principle. By that we mean it stands as a principle to be observed and respected throughout time, spanning the covenants and man's history. It stands with other creation and early human history principles such as the establishment of the home which we also have in Genesis 2:24 where it says, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." We could think also of other early historical covenants and directions given like those to Noah. Therefore, as a Creation principle it is something that is meant to be observed and respected throughout time and throughout human history.

2) The Old Testament Sabbath regulated, but did not establish the day of rest principle. We mentioned in the first point that it was a Creation principle. As the Law came to the Israelites in Exodus 20:8, the Law was given. The fourth commandment is, "Remember the

Sabbath day, to keep it holy." It is noteworthy and significant in Exodus 16, as we have the giving of the manna to the children of Israel. We know the account and the stipulations. They were to gather twice as much on the sixth day because there would be none on the seventh day. We believe the happenings in Exodus 16 preceded the giving of the Law in Exodus 20. Moses refers to this thought. He says, "today is a Sabbath unto the LORD" (Exodus 16:25). Therefore, as the Law was given in Exodus 20, significantly attached to that were the words, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."

As we think of the Old Testament Sabbath, the Old Testament Sabbath was actually a clear type of the rest that we experience as New Testament Christian rest. Man's first full day was a day of rest. Man was created on the sixth day and man's full day of existence was on the seventh day — the day of rest. Later sin entered and spoiled that rest. Consequently man needed to labour, and we have the gathering of the manna and the gathering double on the sixth day in order that he could rest on the seventh day. It is a type of the works of the Law. There is another day of rest which has been provided through our Lord Jesus Christ. Hebrews 4:9 says, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His." Jesus provided the plan of salvation for us. Jesus said, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do" (John 17:4). Therefore, the rest we experience today — the salvation rest we experience — has been provided through Jesus our Lord.

3) The words of Jesus. In Matthew 12:1-3 there is an interesting discourse between the scribes and pharisees and our Lord. It was a point that was often contested with Jesus as to His observance of the Sabbath day. In this discourse of our Lord, I would like to identify three principles that Jesus made very clear that were part of a lawful observance of the Sabbath day.

A) Jesus was saying that works of necessity were lawful to be done on the Sabbath day —that which related to the sustenance of life both for ourselves and for one's animals, one's livestock. I take this from

verses 3 and 4 where He gives the example of David. The pharisees had challenged Him because His disciples were picking some grain to eat as they moved through the field and He says, "Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungered, and they that were with him; How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat." If we turn to Exodus 29, we would find the showbread was only for the priests. A stranger was not to eat of it. We do not find that David was condemned for this action, and our Lord using it here, gives His approval as well. Therefore, we see this principle clearly laid forth. We could turn to other Scriptures where Jesus mentioned that as well as far as leading the ox to the water. Later on in this discourse He refers to rescuing a sheep that has fallen into a pit. Thus, Jesus was saying works of necessity were lawful to do on the Sabbath day.

**B)** Works relating to spiritual service were sanctioned. This second principle I see is in verse 5, where He says, "Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the Sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?" What was Jesus referring to here? If we would turn to Numbers 28, we have there mentioned the priests were to prepare and offer a special sacrifice on the Sabbath day. As they went about the work to prepare and offer that sacrifice the labour that was involved technically would have been forbidden on the Sabbath day but since it related to Temple service or to the worship (the spiritual service) it was sanctioned.

We conclude that Jesus was helping us understand that works of compassion were lawful to be done on the Sabbath day. When Jesus healed the man with the withered hand, He mentions in verse 12, "Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days." It is interesting to note also what Jesus tells them in verse 8. "For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day." Jesus was trying to emphasize to them also in verse 6 "That in this place is one greater than the temple," referring to Himself. The Jews revered the Temple, and Jesus was helping them to understand that He as Lord was here in a position to say what was correct and lawful Sabbath day observance. He also mentions in verse 7 "if ye had known what this meaneth, I will

have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless." Jesus was saying that if they had understood the meaning of the Sabbath day — the true meaning and purpose for the Sabbath day — they would not have been condemning the disciples for what they were doing. They were erring in the understanding of the purpose of the day.

We know that Jesus fulfilled the Law perfectly. He came not to "destroy the law ... but to fulfil [it]" (Matthew 5:17). We also know that the Jews (the pharisees) had added many of their own ideas to the Law, and particularly to the Sabbath day. It was a very cumbersome and technical direction as to what was considered acceptable and unacceptable observance of the Sabbath day. While Jesus carefully fulfilled the Law in every aspect, He did not have a lot of time and rather denounced them very severely for all their additions to the Law which in many respects (not only in this law but in other laws as well) detracted from the true meaning of the day, and from the true meaning and purpose of the law.

Jesus said also "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27).

Therefore, I believe Jesus' comments here and in other places were an effort to help restore and return the thinking of men to the proper and true spirit and meaning of the Sabbath day.

4) We see an apparent shift in the New Testament from the seventh day to the first day. Sometimes this is a point of confusion for people. I was impressed as I studied for this subject of the significance of the Lord's Day being the first day of the week. I would like to look at a few things that clearly help us see the significance of this. First of all, there were two Old Testament feasts that typified (that were typical of) that were held on the first day. What they typified also happened on the first day. In Leviticus 23:11 we have the feast of the first-fruits. It mentions there clearly that the feast of the first-fruits was to be held on "on the morrow after the Sabbath," or the first day of the week. We know the fulfillment of that type. Paul in writing to the Corinthians helps them understand that our Lord Jesus Christ, as He rose from the dead was the fulfillment of that type of the feast of

the first-fruits in His resurrection of the dead on the first day of the week.

The other Old Testament feast was the feast of Pentecost which we also find in Leviticus 23:15-16. It clearly mentions they shall count off seven Sabbaths and then "the morrow after the Sabbath," which is the feast of Pentecost, again on the first day of the week. We know what happened on the day of Pentecost, there in the book of Acts as the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Church. It again was the fulfillment of this type. Thus, we have the fulfillment of those Old Testament feasts being a type of the resurrection of the Lord and of the giving of the Holy Spirit.

In the New Testament in John 20:19, 26, we have examples of the disciples gathering on the first day of the week. John 20:1 begins with, "The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene." We have the resurrection being understood and the fact of the resurrection being realized by Christ's followers. Then verse 19 says, "The same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you." Then verse 26 says, "And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you."

Another reference which also indicates that, is in Acts 20:7. This indicates that the gathering of the disciples and the Early Church on the first day of the week apparently had become a common practice. "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." We have again the Christians gathering together on the first day of the week. As we think of understanding the Scriptural basis for the Lord's Day, we do not have commanded or specifically mentioned anywhere in the New Testament that we should now observe the first day of the week as the Lord's Day. However, I think looking at these types and at the apostolic precedent of gathering together on the first day of the week, we recognize the significance of the first day events. It be-

comes very clear that it certainly is appropriate for us to gather and to observe the first day of the week as the Lord's Day.

The Scripture mentions in Acts 20:7 how that they gathered together to break bread, and Paul preached to them. They were remembering again the death and resurrection of their Lord. We are accustomed to thinking about the resurrection on Easter Sunday, but I think we should be gripped with this fact every first day of the week that this is the day, the first day of the week, that our Lord rose from the dead. As we gather together in collective worship, we should be thinking about the resurrection of our Lord and what it means to us. I would like to remind you of the words of the songwriter as we continue to think about this idea of the first day of the week. He pens words like this, referring to the first day.

"On thee, at the Creation, the light first had its birth.  
On thee for our salvation, Christ rose from depth of earth.  
On thee, our Lord victorious, the Spirit sent from heaven.  
And thus on thee most glorious, a triple light was given."

There we have it. The first day of Creation, light was created. Also, on the first day of the week, we know that our Lord rose from the dead, and the resurrection —Jesus as Light of the world. We also looked at how the Holy Spirit was given at Pentecost also on the first day of the week —The illumination of the Spirit the gift of God to men — all on the first day of the week. It is very significant as it relates to the plan of salvation.

The Old Testament Sabbath observance was to be observed for two reasons. We have them stated in Exodus, one was to help the children of Israel to remember their deliverance from Egypt. Secondly, another reason God says that they were to keep my Sabbaths was as a sign that "ye are my holy people" [Exodus 31:13; Ezekiel 20:12, 20]. It is parallel to why we remember the Lord's Day. On the first day of the week we think about our deliverance from sin and the power of sin through the death and the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We also think of the fact that we are God's special people, "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people" (1 Peter 2:9)

## **[II] How to keep the Lord's Day holy.**

I would like to read, first of all, our statement in our Statement of Christian doctrine and Rules and Discipline on page 17 what it says there about the Lord's Day. It says, "1. The Lord's Day shall be well observed by God's people and shall be made a day of devotion and worship. Church services and Sunday Schools shall be regularly attended; feasting and pleasure seeking shall be strictly avoided. Members shall seek to avoid labor and business on the Lord's Day as much as possible. Both young and old shall be taught how to keep the Lord's Day holy and exercise themselves constantly in showing reverence for God's house and all that pertains to it." Then, we have three references and we will notice some of them as we move through. The title for this subject is from this paragraph and here we have it, "young and old shall be taught how to keep the Lord's Day holy." It mentions that "young and old shall be taught how to keep the Lord's Day holy." One reason this address was included in the Winter Bible School subjects was that our discipline mentions that there needs to be teaching on the observance of the Lord's Day, and how to keep the day holy. It is our interest as children of God to do that and we want to address that. It mentions, "young and old shall be taught." Perhaps the reason for that is that the areas of challenge may vary due to our age. We will notice that as we move through the message.

In the second place, I want to define what we mean by holy — "keep the Lord's Day holy." Vine's dictionary gives this definition for holy, "It signifies being separated unto God." The Lord's Day is a day that is separated unto God in a special way for His honour and glory. We know that we have been called as God's children to be a holy people as well. Peter tells us that in 1 Peter 1:15. "But as he which has called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." That word "conversation," means life — in all manner of life. We are thinking of keeping the Lord's Day holy and keeping it in a way that is fitting to a holy people that are serving a holy God.

I wanted to say also that in my thoughts of understanding the Scrip-

tural basis for the Lord's Day that as far as the regulations of the Old Testament which the Mosaic Law gave to the Old Testament Sabbath, we do not necessarily look to that to establish our observance of the New Testament Lord's Day. There are some principles, however, that we can benefit and learn from. Colossians 2:14 talks about the "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." He clearly mentions the Sabbath days.

We know the term Sabbath was a rather broad term to the children of Israel. Many of their feasts were also called Sabbaths. However, I think it is very clear that as far as the Old Testament regulations for the Sabbath day, it was part of Mosaic law that was fulfilled and taken away in Christ. As I mentioned, we can look at, and glean, some principles from this observance that I think also apply and help us in our understanding today.

Isaiah 58:13-14 mentions, "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, honourable; and shalt honour 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." I think the language used here is very clear. It mentions turning away from our own pleasure and doing the Lord's pleasure on the Sabbath day. Again, we are taking that principle and we are applying it to the Lord's Day. It is a turning away from our own pleasure and doing that which pleases the Lord. As we think of the New Testament observance of the Lord's Day, we do it not because of laws and regulations but because of a desire in our hearts to please the Lord and to honour Him. It is only possible, I believe, to keep the Lord's Day holy as we are a holy people, as we have been born again and have received the new, Divine nature within. It is one that causes us to have our affection set "on things above, not on things on the earth" (Colossians 3:2). That is all part of keeping the Lord's Day holy — doing those things that please the Lord out of a

heart that desires to praise and honour Him.

Now I would like to look more directly at how we can keep the Lord's Day holy. My first couple of points are rather basic points and then we will look at a few practical considerations as well.

1) We keep the Lord's Day holy by making it a day of worship. That is mentioned in our statement of doctrine. It says that, "shall be made a day of devotion and worship." I have a number of sub points under this idea of making it a day of worship.

A) We should make it a day of worship, and personal worship and devotion and meditation. Another verse that is mentioned in our discipline statement is Revelation 1:10. It refers to John on the Isle of Patmos where it says, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet." Then, follows the description of the vision of the glorified Christ. It says John was "in the spirit." What does it mean that he was "in the Spirit?" Well, I think it means he was in the spirit of worship. The Scriptures are clear that "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). John was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day and we notice two things that were a result of him being in the Spirit on the Lord's Day. 1) It placed him in a position where he could see God — he could see the Lord. 2) It placed him in a position where he could receive enlightenment, direction, and revelation from Him. There are three other references in the book of Revelation, in addition to Revelation 1:10, where it refers to John being in the Spirit. Each time it precedes again a revelation from God. Revelation 4:2; 17:3; 21:10 all refer to him being "in the Spirit."

The challenge and thought for us is that as we are in the spirit of worship and we spend time personally before God, it places us in a position where we can see God and receive from Him the spiritual understanding and inspiration that we need. The challenge I find is that we really should have more time on the Lord's Day to be in the Spirit —to be in a spirit of personal worship with the Lord, but do we?

As we come apart from our temporal duties, we really should have more time to spend with the Word of God and with the Lord in personal devotion and worship. The challenge I find is, is it really that way? Yes, we may be occupied even with responsibilities that include spiritual service. Maybe we need to study to teach Sunday School, have a devotional, or maybe we even need to preach but we need to remember our service needs to be preceded by worship in order to be effective and useful. The challenge is that on the Lord's Day we would take the time to be in the Spirit.

**B)** We should make it a day of collective worship. We notice from the book of Acts how the disciples gathered together on the first day of the week. We also know the example of our Lord. It is referring to the synagogue worship but it mentions various times or it says, "as his custom was" (Luke 4:16). He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. The synagogue worship parallels our worship experience somewhat. Jesus was regular in synagogue worship on the Sabbath day. We note in the account we read in Matthew 12 that He went into the synagogue after His discourse with the Pharisees. The challenge is that we would be regular in worship. Our discipline mentions that "Church services and Sunday Schools shall be regularly attended."

As we travel, we should plan to be where we can be in the house of God on the Lord's Day. We need to make our plans so that we can be with the saints and gather with them in worship on the Lord's Day. I thought also of our young people as we think of wedding trips, our youth, most of the time get married on Saturday. Where do we plan to be on the Lord's Day? As fathers we should be involved enough to see that those plans are made and carried out. It is important as we think of the establishment of a new home that they honour the Lord on the first full day of their life together by being in the Lord's house on the Lord's Day.

Yes, I know we hear this thought expressed sometimes around us (shifting to another thought) that I can worship God anywhere. I can be out in the mountains, fishing, or here or there. We believe that we can worship God in other places, but I believe for the children of

God they will be with the saints of God in the Lord's house on the Lord's Day.

C) We need to be sincere in our worship. We honour the Lord only as we are sincere in our worship. Isaiah 58:13 was mentioned in our statement of doctrine. It mentions the hypocritical fast that Israel was observing. They were going through the motions of fasting but it was not affecting them. It was not changing their lives. It was not causing them to reach out in compassion to their neighbour, or to their brother. They were simply going through the motions. It mentions there that they bowed down their heads, "as a bulrush" (Isaiah 58:5), but it was not acceptable to God because it was not in sincerity and truth. I ask the question, are we sincere in our worship? As we think of our collective worship, we know that when our Lord was here on the earth, He was very observant as to the conduct that transpired in His Father's house. He had some stern rebukes and some corrections to make.

What would Jesus say if He was present in our assemblies on the Lord's Day? Would He challenge those whose heads are nodding in sleep with this thought, "What, could ye not watch with me one hour" (Matthew 26:40)? Or, as the congregation kneels for prayer and some whisper to their neighbour, would He challenge them with this thought that my Father's House, "is the house of prayer" (Luke 19:46)? Would He overturn the Bibles of some to rid them of photographs that are hidden among the pages distracting the worshipper? Would He, as One who is able to know the hearts and thoughts of all men maybe addresses some who may be sitting prim and proper but their thoughts are far away, or are on their material pursuits of the week coming up and challenge them with this thought that you have made, "my Father's house an house of merchandise" (John 2:16). These challenges can come close home to us at times, but the thought is, are we sincere in our worship? We want to beware that we are not merely going through the motions, but we are truly worshipping and communing with God in worship.

D) We must give the Word a prominent place. We notice that in Acts

20:7, where it says, "Paul preached unto them." I am glad to be part of a church where the Word holds such a prominent place in our worship services. Our devotionals come from the Scriptures — from the Word. Our Sunday School lessons are a study of the Scriptures. We have the preaching of the Word. What does the psalmist say? He says God, "hast magnified thy word above all thy name" (Psalm 138:2). Therefore, we honour the Lord on His day by giving a prominent place to His Word — a study of His Word — a preaching of the Word. We honour Him when we exalt and honour His Word. In 2 Timothy 3 Paul describes the perilous end times. He then moves on in chapter 4 and instructs Timothy to "Preach the word; be instant in season" (2 Timothy 4:2).

2) We keep the Lord's Day holy by making it a day of giving. I will not elaborate on this too much because we do have the message in the circuit on sacrificial giving. In 1 Corinthians 16:2 Paul directs the Corinthians to "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." There can be a collection, and we give to the Lord on the Lord's Day. We give of our finances. The offering is passed and we give. It is a way of honouring the Lord. The proverb writer says, "Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase" (Proverbs 3:9).

Giving honours the Lord because we give back what He has given to us. I was reminded as well that in giving, we must do as Paul. He addressed the Macedonian Christians in 2 Corinthians 8:5, "This they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves." In all our giving we must remember to give first ourselves. Service, worship and giving honour the Lord, but only as they are accompanied with holiness. Therefore, give yourself to the Lord's service. If you are asked to teach a class, give yourself to that work and do it as unto the Lord. If you are asked to lead the singing or have devotions, do it as unto the Lord. Give yourself to Him.

3) We keep the Lord's Day holy by making it a day of praise. In our history study I appreciated very much that it was mentioned about

the singing and how much singing is a part of our worship services. The psalmist says in Psalm 69:30-31, "I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving. This also shall please the LORD better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs." Certainly, we keep the Lord's Day holy by keeping it a day of praise and singing unto the Lord a song. Truly the Lord hath done great things for us, "The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad" (Psalm 126:3). Therefore, may we, as we think of singing and praising God, as families find time on this day perhaps to sing together. We can perhaps as families go to sing for others — the elderly or the shut-in, and provide inspiration and encouragement for them. It is a way of keeping the Lord's Day holy, when we keep it as a day of praise to Him.

### **A few practical considerations.**

These were more basic points, foundational principles. The New Testament, the Scriptures do not give specifics, a lot of specifics as we think of observance of the Lord's Day. However, I think as we endeavour to evaluate the spirit of the day and these foundational principles that we have looked at that we are to be doing on the Lord's Day, it helps us understand other activities and functions that fall into an acceptable category.

The Lord's Day, in society about us, is anything but a holy day. It is a day for their own pleasure and for doing what they want to do. We need not be fooled: it can easily rub off on us. What are some things that could fall into the acceptable category of keeping the Lord's Day holy? I thought of evangelism efforts. Many of us, in our congregations have at least a Sunday a month where we go out in the local community and distribute literature. Maybe we even do some door-to-door visitation. It is a way of keeping the Lord' Day holy. We are doing His work on this day. We are spreading the good news of salvation, seeking to share it with others. It is a way of keeping the Lord's Day holy.

Also acceptable would be family visiting for the purpose of spiri-

tual fellowship and encouragement. Maybe that is where we need the encouragement the most that we keep it on a spiritual plane, and that we do not only discuss the natural and the material things. I think it is all right in our visiting to discuss the natural things too, but if we spend our time discussing how to be the most profitable in our business, we are missing the point. We should remember it is the Lord's Day and seek to encourage one another in a spiritual way.

Visiting the sick, the elderly, the widows, we noted from Jesus' example that doing works of compassion, was lawful on the Sabbath day. I think the principle is that works of compassion and reaching out to others on the Lord's Day is also acceptable and a way to keep the Lord's Day holy. Resting and quiet times for the family, also is an acceptable way to spend the Lord's Day. It is a time for physical refreshment as well as spiritual refreshment as we come apart and are refreshed as we enjoy the rest and quiet times as a family. We should be planning ahead and preparing to limit our work in a natural way on the Lord's Day. For farmers this may mean having the feed at the right place so that there is less work perhaps on the Lord's Day. For others the applications may vary, but again we should be seeking to find ways to minimize and limit our work on the Lord's Day.

It could be a day of writing letters, perhaps to missionaries —those from our congregation who are serving on the foreign mission fields. Letters of encouragement to them, letters of encouragement to those who have been bereaved of loved ones, is a profitable way of keeping of keeping the Lord's Day holy as we involve ourselves in these activities.

### **A few things that would fall in the more or less unacceptable category.**

Our statement of doctrine mentions that we "shall seek to avoid labor and business on the Lord's Day as much as possible." Purchases, business activities, and so on, need to be avoided as much as possible. Yes, even buying gas, though we can do it so easily, you know, with a card, slipping it into the pump. We need to be keeping a guard there. We need to be keeping a wall there so that we do not become accustomed to buying and purchasing things on the Lord's Day.

There may be times of emergency, or times perhaps where we are involved in the Lord's work, maybe it does become necessary. However, for the most part I think we should avoid buying gas on the Lord's Day. Vending machines can even be a small area but it is a way of breaking down our conviction as we would utilize these things.

Time spent with catalogues or trade magazines, farm papers, is an area we should seek to limit. It is a day for other reading material like the church papers and things that encourage and strengthen us spiritually. A lot of excessive, strenuous, physical activity and exercise should be avoided. We are in the winter season now. We do not have winter necessarily but often there is ice skating. What about our young people? A number of hours on Sunday afternoon skating hard, playing ice hockey? I hardly think it is fitting to keeping the Lord's Day holy is it?

Feasting is also mentioned in our statement. I think we have made some progress as a group in these areas, and in this area. I recall as a young boy, preachers preaching against the idea of the mother staying home on the Lord's Day to prepare the Sunday meal. I do not know if any of you remember that at all. I do not remember that my mother ever did that, but it must have been done some because I remember teaching coming that it is not a proper emphasis for the Lord's Day. Maybe the challenge that faces us is that we keep our meals more simple and avoid the feasting aspect. We are not doing as much strenuous physical labour. Consequently we should not need as much to eat either.

In general, we need to guard against those things that make the Lord's Day seem like any other day. We had those experiences when we were not able, due to emergency or illness, to do what we normally did on the Lord's Day and it does not seem right, does it? We should ever seek to preserve that feeling of what is proper on the Lord's Day for those things that militate against our receiving the spiritual nourishment and refreshment that we so much need. The songwriter said, as he reflected on the worship on the first day,

"O holy day, O happy day, O day of days the best,  
We worship at God's glorious throne;  
And there find peace and rest." He goes on to say ...  
"Our faith is increased,  
And our love is renewed,  
And our hearts are with power  
from heaven endued."

We can so easily become lax in observance. There is a very close correspondence between the way that we keep the Lord's Day and the way we will live in general. If we are careful to keep the Lord's Day holy, it will help us in our total life to live a holy life. The two are closely related. May we be challenged to keep the Lord's Day holy. As I preached this message somewhere else, a brother shared with me afterwards, and mentioned an old saying that he had come across. It was from the old country (it mentions Europe I believe). The saying went something like this, "You tell me what the young people of Europe are doing on Sunday, and I will tell you the future of the nation." As we think about that is there a message, or is there a lesson for us? As we ponder and think what we do, and what our youth do on the Lord's Day, is it indicative of where our convictions are? Or, where we may be heading as to the observance of the Lord's Day?

In conclusion, I would like to turn to another verse in Isaiah 56:4-7. I was blessed with this verse as I was studying for this subject. Again, it is an Old Testament reference. Again, the Sabbath day is in focus. "For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; (5) Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. (6) Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; (7) Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their

sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people." This speaks of the inclusion of the gentiles perhaps, as we think of those who respect and keep the Sabbath day, and how God will give them a place. I was impressed with that fact as we honour the Lord's Day and observe the Lord's Day, I believe God will make for us a place, and we can anticipate the eternal Sabbath rest with Him in glory.

*J.Nolt PA.*