

The Seventh Day

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: Genesis 2:1-3.

B. Many Christians are concerned whether they should be keeping the Sabbath today.

II. Facts that help to understand the Sabbath.

A. There is no mention of a morning or evening in this passage.

1. This confirms that these days emphasize development and not time.
2. The Sabbath is a perfect thing--it is something in which we simply step.

B. The supreme meaning of the Sabbath is rest. The true Sabbath is the ending of a specific effort, not the keeping of a specific day.

C. Man is the last act of God in creation, so the Sabbath is God's last act. God continues to act, but not in creation.

D. The weekly Sabbath is a picture or reminder of the real Sabbath, which is rest.

1. All the Old Testament shadows pointed to Christ.
2. When the work of Jesus was completed, the shadows were no longer needed. (Colossians 2:13)
3. The Sabbath was no longer observed because it ended when the picture of God's rest had become complete through the cross.

E. Though the shadow-Sabbath ended at the cross, the true Sabbath continued and continues today. (Hebrews 4:9-10)

1. The Sabbath means to cease from one's own self-effort.
2. The implication is that one depends on the work of another--God in the believer.
3. The secret of the Christian life is to depend upon the work of another.
4. The true Sabbath God blessed and hallowed.

F. Rest is designed to produce fruit and make one adequate.

G. Maintaining rest is a challenge.

1. One form of rest is experienced when one comes to Christ.

2. The other form of rest is experienced when one yokes himself to Christ after having become a believer--this is the end of seeking one's own way.
3. Entering into the yoke of the Father turns the plan of one's life over to Him.
4. The curriculum will be humility.
5. The one who loses his life for Jesus' sake will find rest.

Application questions:

1. Does the rest of the Sabbath mean one ought not to exert any effort? Explain.

2. Should a New Testament believer be expected to keep the Sabbath day? Why, or why not?

3. How can you challenge other Christians to cease from their own self-effort and depend upon God's power for good works? Explain.
