

THE TEN PLEASURES

ISAIAH 58:13-14

THE PLEASURE OF RESTING IN GOD



FIRST BYRON CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

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INTRODUCTION

Children, have you ever decided you didn't like a food before you tried it? Then, when you actually tasted it, you said, "Wow, that's actually really nice." The fourth commandment is a bit like that. Most Christians haven't really tried it, but they've decided they don't like it. But when they eventually do try it, they're surprised at how much they enjoy it. I'm asking you to give this commandment a chance.

Or maybe, you had food poisoning after eating something and it put you off eating that food ever again. Some Christians have been put off the fourth commandment because they were poisoned by their family's or church's legalistic approach that focused on all the things you couldn't do. Again, I'm asking you to give this commandment a chance, because it can be a great pleasure when purified of legalism.

We've called this series the ten pleasures (not nine pleasures and one misery). If you want to have maximum pleasure in life, give God's Word a hearing and give God's Word a go as we answer this question: **How does Sunday help us enjoy resting in God?**

BACKGROUND

The first passage we're going to look at is Exodus 20:8-11. The immediate background to this is of course God's deliverance of Israel from Egypt (Exodus 19:3-6; 20:1-2): Redemption > Relationship > Rules > Reward. The fourth commandment is one of God's ten rules for helping Israel keep their redemptive relationship with him healthy and happy, obedience to which will be generously and graciously rewarded. The first four guide our relationship with God: We worship (1) the right God; (2) in the right way; (3) in the right direction; (4) at the right time.

The second passage we're going to look at is Isaiah 58:13-14. The background to this is Isaiah's prophesy that after exile for their sins in Babylon, Israel will turn from their sins to God and correct the sins that brought them under God's judgment. One of those reformations would be a new positive and pleasure-filled view of the Sabbath Day.

I'm not going to spend time in this sermon justifying the change from the Sabbath on the seventh day of the week to the Lord's Day on first day of the week. The principle of one day in seven remains constant. The day and name was changed because in addition to the seventh day creation rest, God's people now had the extra motivation of the first day salvation rest when Christ resurrected.



1. THE LORD'S DAY IS FOR HOLY REST (EXODUS 20:8-11)

The key word in the commandment is 'holy.' The essential meaning of 'holy' is 'separate' or 'cut off.' It calls for difference and distinction. Whatever else, Sunday is to be different. But what kind of different? The first difference is that in contrast to the other six days of the week, Sunday is to be a rest day. Here's the summary of what our Reformed Catechisms teach us (Shorter 58-63, Larger 116-121, Heidelberg 103).

1. THE LORD'S DAY IS TO BE SANCTIFIED (SEPARATED) BY:

Salvation rest: All the days of my life I cease from my evil works,
and yield myself to the Lord,
to work by His Holy Spirit in me;
and thus begin in this life the eternal sabbath.

Physical rest: holy resting all that day,
even from such worldly employments
and recreations
as are lawful on other days

Sacred rest: and making it our delight to
spend the whole time
in the public and private exercises of God's worship,
except so much as is to be taken up
in the works of necessity and mercy

2. THE LORD'S DAY IS TO BE SANCTIFIED BECAUSE

- God's given us his own example (Gen. 2:2)
- God's specially blessed the Sabbath Day (Gen. 2:3)
- God's allowed us six days of the week for our own work and recreation
- God's claimed special ownership of it
- God's got our good and the world's good at heart
- God's Son maintained it (Matt. 5:17-18), stripping off human laws, reformed it for good uses.

CHANGING OUR STORIES WITH GOD'S STORY

Rest in the Savior first. There's no point in trying to rest on Sunday if you haven't rested in the Savior. Rest from evil works and good works. That's the most important rest of all.

Rest by worshipping: We rest our bodies by exercising our souls in public and private. God has designed worship to renew and refresh our bodies, minds, souls, relationships, perspective.

HOLY REST IS
HOLISTIC REST



That sounds pretty miserable to me.
How is this a pleasure?



2. THE LORD'S DAY IS FOR HOLY PLEASURE (ISAIAH 58:13-14)

The second way the Lord's Day is to be different is in the nature of the pleasure we seek and enjoy.

Enjoy Monday-Saturday Pleasure

"If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day...not seeking your own pleasure..." (13, 14).

The Lord wants us to find pleasure in our work/study/play six days a week. All our time is God's time, but he gives us six whole days for finding pleasure in our work/study/play. Then he simply asks us one day for pleasure in himself.

Enjoy Sunday Pleasure

...and call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the Lord honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly; then then you shall take delight in the Lord (13-14).

This is the positive side of the commandment. God wants us to have pleasure and delight on the Lord's Day too, but it's a different kind of pleasure and delight compared to the other six days.

Enjoy Sunday Blessings

...and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken (14).

As we've already seen, the Lord promises rewards if we keep his rules within a redemptive relationship. But there's a special reward connected with obedience to this command: high flying and deep nourishment.

CHANGING OUR STORIES WITH GOD'S STORY

The weekly rest day is to be the happiest day. Call it a delight then make it a delight. God's not deceiving us here. It's not bait and switch tactics. He really wants us to pursue pleasure on Sunday: the pleasures of worshipping, learning, praying, fellowshiping, eating/drinking, serving, helping, receiving, loving, reading, listening, teaching, sharing, giving, and so on.

The weekly rest day was made for humanity (Mark. 2:27-28). If you want to improve your physical, emotional, mental, relational, and social health, here is free healthcare. It's a day for refreshing, re-orienting, re-centering. Evening worship is the biggest help towards maximizing pleasure.

[MORE SUNDAY PLEASURE](#)
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SUMMARY



A NEW CHAPTER

- **Gospel:** Jesus promises rest in the Gospel (Matt. 11:28) and gives us an opportunity to experience that more clearly and exhibit that more physically on the Lord's Day.
- **Jesus:** Jesus' rest gives us a greater reason to rest and a deeper kind of rest. He (not sport) is the Lord of the Sabbath (Matt. 12:8). As Kevin DeYoung said, "Rest, Rejoice, Repeat." Or as B B Warfield put it: "Christ took the Sabbath into the grave with him and brought the Lord's Day out of the grave with him."
- **Worship:** Jesus has freed us from all unnecessary work/study/play one day a week, so we can enjoy higher, deeper, wider, better pleasure. It's like getting a snow day every week (Mark 2:27). We worship by resting and rest by worshipping. It's a 'no-ought' day. It's freedom day not restriction day. We are to exhibit our status as image-bearers and freed slaves.
- **Monday:** Resting on Sunday will transform Monday-Saturday. Just try it. Organize your week to make Sunday rest possible. You'll be surprised how efficient and productive you can be
- **Practical:** Alistair Begg wants us to ask: "Does this activity promote rest and worship?" If you have children, you need to prepare resources and activities and adopt a positive attitude.
- **Love:** Help others to keep the day separate by not making them work if they don't have to.
- **Prayer:** Give me deeper rest in Jesus through deeper rest on his day.
- **Heaven:** Hell's a place of forever restlessness, but heaven's a place of forever rest and pleasure.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is the fourth commandment such a sticking point for Christians? For you?
2. How has this sermon changed your view of and practice on the Lord's Day?
3. Look up 'The Sabbath Manifesto.' What are secular people saying about a weekly rest day?
4. How can you stop legalism from adding human rules to God's rule?
5. What do you find delightful about the Sabbath? What makes it a pleasure?
6. How can you help children view the Lord's Day as the best day of the week?