

**Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes**  
**Second Quarter 2014: *Christ and His Law***  
**Lesson 5 “*Christ and the Sabbath*”**

**Read for this week’s study**

Gen. 2:1–3; Heb. 1:1–3; Acts 13:14; Mark 2:23–28; John 5:1–9; Isa. 65:17.

**Memory Text**

“ ‘The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath’ ” (Mark 2:27, 28, NKJV).

**Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide**

- I. Introduction
- II. The Jewish Sabbath?
- III. A Time for Rest and Worship
- IV. A Time for Enjoyment
- V. A Time for Healing
- VI. A New Creation
- VII. Further Study

**Questions and Notes for Consideration**

**Moderator: Daniel Duda**

- 1. This week’s lesson covers the attitude of Christ toward the Sabbath. Was the change of the rest day from a seventh-day Sabbath to the first day “Lord’s day” a later historical development, or does it go back to the intentions of Christ and/or his early disciples? Is this something that was later “read into” the text or something that was intended and done by Christ himself?
- 2. The origin of the Sabbath is crucial in our coming to a decision about the validity of the fourth commandment. If the Sabbath goes back to Creation, then it is valid for the first human being, the last, and therefore all in between. However, if it is only connected with the Jewish nation/dispensation, then different nations/dispensations can establish their own day of rest.
- 3. Two different reasons are given for keeping the Sabbath in the fourth commandment versions of Exodus 20:8-11 & Deuteronomy 5:12-15. Is this significant? Are they mutually exclusive? Can they be reconciled? Do we have to choose [just] one?

4. “The understanding of ‘rest’ in many modern languages may lead some to believe that the Sabbath should be spent sleeping and generally relaxing. While we can definitely enjoy these activities on the Sabbath, the true meaning of rest is ‘cessation,’ ‘stop,’ or ‘pause.’” (Monday’s lesson) What is the primary purpose of the Sabbath in the Creation narrative? What determines our understanding and application of this gift?
5. “Many who claim to keep the Sabbath do not always understand what Sabbath keeping entails. As did some of the Pharisees in Jesus’ time, people even today have imprisoned the Sabbath behind rigid walls of rules and regulations (while others have almost made it a day no different than any other). The Sabbath is supposed to be a delight, not a burden, but it is still a day to be kept holy.” (Tuesday’s lesson) The lesson mentions that the 39 commandments about how to keep the Sabbath properly at the time of Jesus just made the Sabbath a yoke to many people. Would fewer commandments make it less of a yoke? What is the proper approach to Sabbath keeping? How do you determine if you are keeping Sabbath or breaking it?
6. What is the meaning of the story in Mark 2:23-28? The section title is “A Time for Enjoyment”. Is that the meaning of the story? Did the Pharisees get upset because Jesus advocated too much enjoyment or were they worried about His situation ethics?
7. “In Mark 2:27, 28, Jesus said that the Sabbath was made for the benefit of humans, not vice versa. In other words, the Sabbath was not made *to be* worshiped, but rather to provide opportunities *for* worship. As God’s gift to *all* humans, the Sabbath is not meant to oppress but to provide release and liberation.” (Tuesday’s lesson)
8. Jesus does not deny that the disciples were out of line with traditional Sabbath observance. Jesus does not take an easy way out, explaining that the disciples were hungry. He quotes a scriptural precedent, which conveyed more than just an ancient biblical example of how someone got around a law. Jesus puts himself on a par with King David, who during the period of the incident (1 Samuel 21:1-6) had already been anointed as a king by Samuel, but not yet enthroned (because Saul was still the king). David was on the run, gathering support, waiting for his time to come. The implication is that Jesus is the true King, marked out by God (by his baptism), but not yet recognized and enthroned. Jesus’ action and its explanation were a coded Messianic claim that in Him a new day was dawning and that his Kingdom was breaking in.
9. “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the son of man is also Lord of the Sabbath.” [Mark 2:28] Do the enigmatic words of Jesus mean that just any human being is the ‘Lord of the Sabbath,’ and therefore free to decide how to keep it or not to keep at all? Or is it a reference to the messianic figure of Daniel 7, whose arrival and enthronement signals the start of God’s kingdom and thus as a Messiah, He is the true representative human being?
10. “Review the Sabbath-healing stories in Mark 3:1–6, Luke 13:10–17, John 5:1–9, 9:1–14. What lessons do these miracles teach about the true purpose of the Sabbath?”

[...] “In response to the Pharisees’ charge that Jesus broke the Sabbath with His healing miracles, He reminded them, ‘My father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working’ (John 5:17, NIV). If God did not allow the healing, it would not have happened. When it comes to relieving human misery, God does not rest.” (Wednesday’s lesson) What are the implications for our understanding the Sabbath and keeping the Sabbath?

11. “In its own unique way, the Sabbath provides a view that reaches back to earth’s earliest history and stretches forward to humanity’s eventual destiny. Again, we can say that the Sabbath points both to Creation and to Redemption.” (Thursday’s lesson) Classical Christianity preaches a replacement story. However, the Bible presents a restoration story. How important is it—what are the implications, to follow the Bible rather than a medieval notion?

Castrol Company says about their products: “It’s more than just oil, it is liquid engineering.” Analogically we can say, “Sabbath is more than just a day, it is a different story!”

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Can you imagine how the universe spent the next 24 hours as they celebrated with God the first seventh-day Sabbath? Now it was not man’s seventh day. It was our second day. And if the Sabbath were designed to give us a rest every seventh day since our creation, we should be observing Thursday. The first Sabbath was God’s day of celebration. The universe joined with Him and we were merely visitors. In fact, a little time had to pass before we discovered all that had gone on that week, though the whole universe had watched. Now we’re celebrating with God how good it was. And God called on His family throughout the universe to join with Him in reflecting on the significance of what had been done, the answers that had been given to Satan’s charges, the falsity of his accusations, and the truth about freedom, and love, and generosity on the part of our gracious Heavenly Father.

You see, the Sabbath was given after sin, not before. If it was given before, we might think of it as again an arbitrary test of our obedience. But it was given after sin, because we needed it very much. It must have seemed to the universe looking on that the great controversy had been won that Friday night. But Satan’s most serious charge against our God had not been dealt with. No event of creation week had dealt with his most serious charge that God had lied to His children when He warned that the consequence of sin is death. Nothing during creation week, eloquent as it was, dealt with that most serious charge. God waited thousands of years to answer that question. Finally, in the fullness of time, God sacrificed Himself, in the Son, to demonstrate the truthfulness of His word. As we considered two Friday evenings ago, He did not ask us to prove the truthfulness of His word. He could have by leaving us to die. Instead, He came Himself and died that awful death. And Jesus knew why He was dying. He put it all in the larger view of the

great controversy. He knew about Satan's charges. So as He died, He said, "It is finished." Just as God, at the end of creation week, said, "I've finished the work for this week." But when Jesus died on the cross He said, "We finished it all." For the most important answer to the most devastating accusation had been given at such infinite cost. Look at John 19:30 on the list.

"It is finished." (KJV)

What was finished? Well, look at John 17:4, next door.

"I have finished the work which You have given Me to do." (NKJV)

His work was to reveal the character of God to angels and to men. On Friday evening, when Jesus died, at the end of crucifixion week, all the major questions in the great controversy had been answered and all of Satan's charges against God had been met. And how significant that the next day was the seventh-day Sabbath. Jesus could have gone to heaven on Friday to hear the universe tell Him that it was more than enough; everything is clear. Instead He waited over the Sabbath hours.

Can you imagine what the universe was doing? Surely the whole universe paused to reflect on the significance of what they had seen. They joined with the Father in celebrating the costly victory that had been won, and in thanking Him for the costly evidence that had been presented. For now they knew that the universe was secure for eternity. As I understand it, this is the Sabbath God asked us to remember. We need to pause and be reminded of those truths in which the angels rejoice. This is certainly no mere test of our obedience. Caught up in the great controversy as we are, we need the message of the seventh day. Surely that is what Jesus meant when He said the Sabbath was made for us, we weren't made for the Sabbath. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, session 10, "The Reminder of the Evidence" recorded March, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/10MMCAG>*

You see, the Sabbath has answered the basic questions of thoughtful people through the years. Questions such as: Where have we come from? Why are we here? Where do we go in the future? And above all, what kind of a Person is our God? And what does He want of His children? The Sabbath all through the years has always answered those four questions. Where have we come from? Creation, in the beginning, and all that happened then. Why are we here? How do we attain to the greatest good in life? Our whole purpose is restoration of the damage done, by faith in God, being His holy, trusting people and discovering all the good things that will come to those who trust God. And where do we go in the future? The Sabbath has always pointed forward to the second coming and the earth made new. And what about our God? Every Sabbath we are reminded that God is just like Christ, our Creator, for Christ is God. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, session 10, "The

Reminder of the Evidence” recorded March, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/10MMCAG>*

**Recommended Listening:** The entire audio of Conversations About God session 10 is available at <http://pkp.cc/10MMCAG>.

### Further Study with Ellen White

Though sin has entered the world to mar His perfect work, God still gives to us the Sabbath as a witness that One omnipotent, infinite in goodness and mercy, created all things. Our heavenly Father desires through the observance of the Sabbath to preserve among men a knowledge of Himself. He desires that the Sabbath shall direct our minds to Him as the true and living God, and that through knowing Him we may have life and peace. {6T 349.1}

For this reason He had chosen the Sabbath upon which to perform the act of healing at Bethesda. He could have healed the sick man as well on any other day of the week; or He might simply have cured him, without bidding him bear away his bed. But this would not have given Him the opportunity He desired. A wise purpose underlay every act of Christ’s life on earth. Everything He did was important in itself and in its teaching. Among the afflicted ones at the pool He selected the worst case upon whom to exercise His healing power, and bade the man carry his bed through the city in order to publish the great work that had been wrought upon him. This would raise the question of what it was lawful to do on the Sabbath, and would open the way for Him to denounce the restrictions of the Jews in regard to the Lord’s day, and to declare their traditions void. {DA 206.2}

Jesus stated to them that the work of relieving the afflicted was in harmony with the Sabbath law. It was in harmony with the work of God’s angels, who are ever descending and ascending between heaven and earth to minister to suffering humanity. Jesus declared, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.” All days are God’s, in which to carry out His plans for the human race. If the Jews’ interpretation of the law was correct, then Jehovah was at fault, whose work has quickened and upheld every living thing since first He laid the foundations of the earth; then He who pronounced His work good, and instituted the Sabbath to commemorate its completion, must put a period to His labor, and stop the never-ending routine of the universe. {DA 206.3}