

2 June 2024 — Sabbath is Jesus Rest The First Reading: Deuteronomy 5:12-15

I know this beautiful woman, a Christian. I married her under an Oak tree in Birdwood.

She was a regular church goer — but now I never see her.

She goes to church on Saturday; her husband goes to church on Sunday. She's gone back to her roots as a 7th Day Adventist — she strictly obeys the 3rd commandment. **"Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy"**.

She keeps that commandment to the letter.

Today we that Jesus didn't keep that commandment.

He was branded as a lawbreaker, lawless.

"For this reason, the law-keepers began to how they might kill Jesus".

As we heard Jesus was walking along and became hungry— he walked into a crop and picked some grain to eat.

Immediately the Jewish Law keepers **said**. **"Look he is breaking the law"**. "He's working on the sabbath".

The law says you do not work, you do not harvest, you do not cook, you do not prepare food on the Sabbath — because you are supposed to be keeping it Holy.

They caught Jesus out — he had broken the law.

Not long after, on another Sabbath day, Jesus came across a man with a crippled hand — a crippled "right" hand as Dr Luke says.

Jesus is going to heal this man. Jesus is going to restore this man.

Everyone knew it and they were watching and waiting.

He said to the crippled man "Stand up" — "Stand up" in front of everyone — "Stretch out your hand". At this moment the man saw that his hand was completely healed.

The people were overjoyed — not because the man had been healed — but because they had caught Jesus out again.

For this reason, the law-keepers "began to plot how they might kill Jesus".

Of course, Jesus is not a law breaker - Jesus is not causing trouble - there's something here for us today.

We worship on Sunday, Sunday is our day of rest -we work on the Sabbath and worship and rest on Sunday.

What's the message - are we lawless?

Jesus said: *The Sabbath was made for people, not people for the Sabbath.*'

If we obey the sabbath law to the letter, that is worship on Saturday, and try to obey all the laws that go with that -then the sabbath restoration depends on us - on our obedience - the Sabbath becomes a work, and obligation - certainly no rest.

You see we are so mixed up -we think worship is us doing something for God - turning up, singing songs and psalms, making an offering. True worship is when God serves us, Gottesdienst.

Worship is where God restores - and then we respond in thanks and praise - a little bit in here - but mostly our thanks and praise should be out there offering a living, alive sacrifice as Paul says.

True worship is a sabbath rest- being restored.

Remember the olden days when we would give our missionaries a one-year sabbatical - from that word sabbath.

A year to rest, and be restored, and refreshed by God's word. We've banned that - and now we call it study leave -where we exhaust our missionaries and make them pay for it.

If we get caught up in the law and demand that we worship on Saturday and then busy ourselves making sure that we have obeyed all the laws that go with it then we have made our selves more important than the Sabbath.

If we are busy, busy, obeying all the laws, and fretting, fretting that we may have missed one or broken one accidently - then where is the rest?

If we are angry and upset that others don't obey the law that you are trying to obey — then where is the rest?

Jesus reminds us that the Sabbath was made for us —to give us a sabbatical. To restores us so that we can be God's best people in the world.

The man with the crippled right hand was at the synagogue — why?

If you were looking for compassion would you not go to where God's people are?

We should always remember that every time we gather for worship, that there are hurting people all around us — looking for something good.

A withered crippled right hand is disaster — In a right hand world — the right hand is always the "clean" hand the left hand the dirty hand — you know what I mean.

It was a social disaster to have your right hand damaged in any way.

Was it damaged?

God cursed **Jeroboam with a withered right hand** when he abused and desecrated the temple with Golden idols.

Jesus liked figs apparently — he cursed the fig tree and it wither when it did not produce any figs.

Was this man cursed by God.

Was he an outcaste.

We don't know for sure.

We only know he hung around the temple looking for compassion.

Jesus calls the man to do what he can't do. "Stretch out your hand".

What is the internal dialogue? If I could stretch out my hand I wouldn't be here.

But he does what is impossible — he stretched out his hand — he is healed — he is restored by God —he is having a sabbath right there and then.

The Sabbath is for people.

We to are asked to do the impossible

We are asked to confess, repent, believe, our confessions says, **Father it is the work of the Holy Spirit to acknowledge our sins and turn to you for forgiveness.**

The sabbath is for people — The sabbath is to restore us — the sabbath is to make us right with God — the sabbath is Gottesdienst — gods act of salvation to us.

When did God's greatest act of salvation happen for us?

Well surely it was on Sunday. When Jesus defeated death, the devil, and rose to eternal life.

A Saturday Sabbath is us ticking off the long list of things the Law requires.

A Sunday Sabbath is celebrating Jesus' resurrection — Jesus making us right with God.

A Saturday Sabbath almost makes Jesus death and resurrection redundant — Yes Jesus died for me but I'm still going to make my self right with God by obeying this Sabbath.

A Sunday Sabbath makes Jesus death and resurrection central in our lives. It says that Jesus has made us right with God. Jesus has a life of thanks for us to live.

A Sabbath is any day, moment, year, lifetime when you come to believe that Jesus has made you right with God.

Today is the Sabbath day of a lifetime for little Erin in her baptism.

There is no other Sabbath rest besides Jesus. He alone fulfills all the law, and He alone provides the sacrifice that pays for our sin.

Jesus is God's plan for us to stop working in an attempt to please God.

We don't rest on one day — we rest forever from trying make our selves right with God.

Jesus said: *The Sabbath was made for people, not people for the Sabbath. I am Lord of the Sabbath.*

Jesus has done it — what are you going to do with all your spare time — I'm going to offer my body as a living sacrifice — a living servant with Jesus — as Paul says.