

Sabbath Keeping Principles

The Great Test of Loyalty

The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty, for it is the point of truth especially controverted. When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. While the observance of the false sabbath in compliance with the law of the state, contrary to the fourth commandment, will be an avowal of allegiance to a power that is in opposition to God, the keeping of the true Sabbath, in obedience to God's law, is an evidence of loyalty to the Creator. While one class, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers, receive the mark of the beast, the other choosing the token of allegiance to divine authority, receive the seal of God. {GC 605.2}

The work of Sabbath reform to be accomplished in the last days is clearly brought to view in the prophecy of Isaiah: "Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment, and do justice; for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil." "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; even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer." [Isaiah 56:1, 2, 6, 7.] {4SP 283.2}

There is need of a Sabbath reform among us, who profess to observe God's holy rest-day. Some discuss their business matters and lay plans on the Sabbath, and God looks upon this in the same light as though they engaged in the actual transaction of business. Others who are well acquainted with the Bible evidences that the seventh day is the Sabbath, enter into partnership with men who have no respect for God's holy day. A Sabbath-keeper cannot allow men in his employ, paid by his money, to work on the Sabbath. If, for the sake of gain, he allows the business in which he has an interest to be carried on on the Sabbath by his unbelieving partner, he is equally guilty with the unbeliever; and it is his duty to dissolve the relation, however much he may lose by so doing. Men may think they cannot afford to obey God, but they cannot afford to disobey him. Those who are

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careless in their observance of the Sabbath will suffer great loss. {RH, March 18, 1884 par. 7}

Preparation for Sabbath

Isaiah 58:13; Luke 23:54-56

On Friday let the preparation for the Sabbath be completed. See that all the clothing is in readiness, and that all the cooking is done. Let the boots be blacked, and the baths be taken. It is possible to do this. If you make it a rule, you can do it.

The Sabbath is not to be given to the repairing of garments, to the cooking of food, to pleasure seeking, or to any other worldly employment. Before the setting of the sun, let all secular work be laid aside, and all secular papers be put out of sight. Parents, explain your work and its purpose to your children, and let them share in your preparation to keep the Sabbath according to the commandment. {CG 528.2}

In many families [on Sabbath] boots and shoes are blacked and brushed, and stitches are taken, all because these little odds and ends were not done on Friday.

They did not “remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.” . . . {CG 528.3}

On Friday the clothing of the children is to be looked after. During the week they should be all laid out by their own hands under the direction of the mother, so that they can dress quietly, without any confusion or rushing about and hasty speeches. {CG 528.4}

Cooking

Exodus 16:23

We should not provide for the Sabbath a more liberal supply or a greater variety of food than for other days. Instead of this the food should be more simple, and less should be eaten, in order that the mind may be clear and vigorous to comprehend spiritual things. Overeating befogs the brain. The most precious words may be heard and not appreciated, because the mind is confused by an improper diet. By overeating on the Sabbath, many have done more than they think to dishonor God. {CG 532.1}

While cooking upon the Sabbath should be avoided, it is not necessary to eat cold food. In cold weather let the food prepared the day before be heated. And

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let the meals, though simple, be palatable and attractive. Provide something that will be regarded as a treat, something the family do not have every day. {CG 532.2}

The Sabbath should be as sacredly observed on the camp-ground as it is in our homes. We should not let the bustle and excitement around us detract from its sacred dignity. No cooking should be done on that day. The instruction which God gave to Israel should not be disregarded: "Bake that which ye will bake today, and seethe that ye will seethe;" for "tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord." Exodus 16:23. God meant what he said when he gave these directions; and shall we, who are presenting to the people the claims of the divine law, break that law ourselves, merely to please the appetite? -- God forbid. There has sometimes been almost as much cooking done on the Sabbath as on other days; and the blessing of God has been shut out by our failure to honor him in keeping the Sabbath according to the commandment. {GosHealth, April 1, 1898 par. 15}

All needful preparation should be made beforehand. On Sabbath morning, if the weather is cool, let hot gruel, or something equally simple, be provided, and for dinner some kind of food may be warmed. Further than this, all cooking should be avoided as a violation of the Sabbath command. {GosHealth, April 1, 1898 par. 16}

How to Open Sabbath

Before the setting of the sun let the members of the family assemble to read God's word, to sing and pray. There is need of reform here, for many have been remiss. We need to confess to God and to one another. We should begin anew to make special arrangements that every member of the family may be prepared to honor the day which God has blessed and sanctified. {6T 356.5}

Dressing for Sabbath

Exodus 19:10

Many need instruction as to how they should appear in the assembly for worship on the Sabbath. They are not to enter the presence of God in the common clothing worn during the week. All should have a special

Sabbath suit, to be worn when attending service in God's house. While we should not conform to worldly fashions, we are not to be indifferent in regard to our

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outward appearance. We are to be neat and trim, though without adornment.

The children of God should be pure within and without. {CG 531.2}

On Sabbath morning the family should be astir early. If they rise late, there is confusion and bustle in preparing for breakfast and Sabbath school. There is hurrying, jostling, and impatience. Thus unholy feelings come into the home. The Sabbath, thus desecrated, becomes a weariness, and its coming is dreaded rather than loved. {6T 357.1}

How shall we spend Sabbath

Isaiah 58:12-14

When the Sabbath begins, we should place a guard upon ourselves, upon our acts and our words, lest we rob God by appropriating to our own use that time which is strictly the Lord's. We should not do ourselves, nor suffer our children to do any manner of our own work for a livelihood, or anything which could have been done on the six working days. Friday is the day of preparation. Time can then be devoted to making the necessary preparation for the Sabbath, and to thinking and conversing about it. Nothing which will in the sight of Heaven be regarded as a violation of the holy Sabbath should be left unsaid or undone, to be said or done upon the Sabbath. God requires not only that we refrain from physical labor upon the Sabbath, but that the mind be disciplined to dwell upon sacred themes. By conversing upon worldly things, or by engaging in light and trifling conversation, we virtually transgress the fourth commandment. Talking upon anything or everything which may come into the mind, is speaking our own words. Every deviation from right brings us into bondage and condemnation. . . . {GW92 207.1}

In order to keep the Sabbath holy, it is not necessary that we enclose ourselves in walls, shut away from the beautiful scenes of nature and from the free, invigorating air of heaven... But the mind cannot be refreshed, enlivened, and elevated by being confined nearly all the Sabbath hours within walls, listening to long sermons and tedious, formal prayers. The Sabbath of the Lord is put to a wrong use if thus celebrated. The object for which it was instituted is not attained. The Sabbath was made for man, to be a blessing to him by calling his mind from secular labor to contemplate the goodness and glory of God. It is necessary that the people of God assemble to talk of Him, to interchange thoughts and ideas in regard to the truths contained in His word, and to devote a

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portion of time to appropriate prayer. But these seasons, even upon the Sabbath, should not be made tedious by their length and lack of interest. {2T 583.1}

During a portion of the day, all should have an opportunity to be out of doors. How can children receive a more correct knowledge of God, and their minds be better impressed, than in spending a portion of their time out of doors, not in play, but in company with their parents? Let their young minds be associated with God in the beautiful scenery of nature, let their attention be called to the tokens of His love to man in His created works, and they will be attracted and interested. They will not be in danger of associating the character of God with everything that is stern and severe; but as they view the beautiful things which He has created for the happiness of man, they will be led to regard Him as a tender, loving Father. They will see that His prohibitions and injunctions are not made merely to show His power and authority, but that He has the happiness of His children in view. As the character of God puts on the aspect of love, benevolence, beauty, and attraction, they are drawn to love Him. You can direct their minds to the lovely birds making the air musical with their happy songs, to the spires of grass, and the gloriously tinted flowers in their perfection perfuming the air. All these proclaim the love and skill of the heavenly Artist, and show forth the glory of God. {2T 583.2}

If we desire the blessing promised to the obedient, we must observe the Sabbath more strictly. I fear that we often travel on this day when it might be avoided. In harmony with the light which the Lord has given in regard to the observance of the Sabbath, we should be more careful about traveling on the boats or cars on this day. In these matters we should set a right example before our children and youth. In order to reach the churches that need our help, and to give them the message that God desires them to hear, it may be necessary for us to travel on the Sabbath; but so far as possible we should secure our tickets and make all necessary arrangements on some other day. When starting on a journey we should make every possible effort to plan so as to avoid reaching our destination on the Sabbath. {6T 359.4}

No buying or selling on the Sabbath

Nehemiah 13:15-22

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Those who discuss business matters or lay plans on the Sabbath are regarded by God as though engaged in the actual transaction of business. To keep the Sabbath holy, we should not even allow our minds to dwell upon things of a worldly character. And the commandment includes all within our gates. The inmates of the house are to lay aside their worldly business during the sacred hours. All should unite to honor God by willing service upon His holy day. {PP 307.3}

We should in no case allow burdens and business transactions to divert our minds upon the Sabbath of the Lord, which He has sanctified. We should not allow our minds to dwell upon things of a worldly character even. {2T 583.1}

It is the grossest presumption for mortal man to venture upon a compromise with the Almighty in order to secure his own petty, temporal interests. It is as ruthless a violation of the law to occasionally use the Sabbath for secular business as to entirely reject it; for it is making the Lord's commandments a matter of convenience... It is not a small matter to rob a neighbor, and great is the stigma attached to one who is found guilty of such an act; yet he who would scorn to defraud his fellow man will without shame rob his heavenly Father of the time that He has blessed and set apart for a special purpose. {4T 249.3}

Before the Sabbath begins, the mind as well as the body should be withdrawn from worldly business... {6T 356.3}

Traveling on the Sabbath

When compelled to travel on the Sabbath we should try to avoid the company of those who would draw our attention to worldly things. We should keep our minds stayed upon God and commune with Him. Whenever there is opportunity we should speak to others in regard to the truth. We should always be ready to relieve suffering and to help those in need. In such cases God desires that the knowledge and wisdom He has given us should be put to use. But we should not talk about matters of business or engage in any common, worldly conversation.

At all times and in all places God requires us to prove our loyalty to Him by honoring the Sabbath. {6T 360.1}

Mental and Spiritual Preparation

Jeremiah 17:19-26

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Before the Sabbath begins, the mind as well as the body should be withdrawn from worldly business. God has set His Sabbath at the end of the six working days, that men may stop and consider what they have gained during the week in preparation for the pure kingdom which admits no transgressor. We should each Sabbath reckon with our souls to see whether the week that has ended has brought spiritual gain or loss. {6T 356.3}

There is another work that should receive attention on the preparation day. On this day all differences between brethren, whether in the family or in the church, should be put away. Let all bitterness and wrath and malice be expelled from the soul. In a humble spirit, "confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." James 5:16. {6T 356.2}

It means eternal salvation to keep the Sabbath holy unto the Lord. God says: "Them that honor Me I will honor." 1 Samuel 2:30. {6T 356.4}