

Q4 L12 - **Sabbath: Experiencing and Living the Character of God** - 2020-12-19

Jean Ross: Good morning, everyone. We'd like to welcome you all to "Sabbath School Study Hour" coming to you here from the Granite Bay Seventh-day Adventist Church in Granite Bay, California. We'd like to welcome all of our online members and those who are joining us across the country and around the world, part of our extended Sabbath school class. Now, we've been sending through our lesson dealing with the subject of true education, and we're nearing the end of this quarter. And so today our lesson is lesson number 12. It's entitled "Sabbath: Experience and Living the Character of God." So if you have your lesson quarterly, we encourage you to pull it out, open up to lesson number 12, and you can read along with us a number of Bible verses that we highlight there in the lesson.

We'd also like to let you know about our free offer. And so for those of you joining us, if you'd like to receive the free offer, we'll be happy to send that to you. The free offer, "Is Sunday Really Sacred?" That is the free offer that we have. And if you'd like to receive that, all you'll have to do is call the number 866-788-3966 and you can ask for offer number 150 and we will be happy to send that to you. Again, the number to call is 866-788-3966, ask for offer number 150, and we'll send that right to you. Or if you like, you can text the code SH042 to the number 40544 and you'll be able to get a digital download of the book, "Is Sunday Really Sacred?" And I'm sure that'll be a great blessing to you if you do that.

Well, before we get to our study, we always like to begin with prayer. We know the Bible is God's book, so we need the Holy Spirit to guide us. So let's bow our heads for prayer. Dear Father, we thank You that we're able to gather together and open up Your Word and study a very important subject talking about the Sabbath and how we as Christians can live in harmony with the principles found in Your Word, especially the Sabbath-rest principle. So we'd like to ask Your blessing. We know that we are separated by space, but yet we can still be united in Your Spirit. So be with those who are joining us online across the country and all around the world, and we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Today, our Sabbath school lesson is going to be brought to us by Pastor Doug.

Jolyne: I'm not Pastor Doug, but I can sing. And well, I'm going to lead you in one of our first Christmas hymns, "Angels from the Realm of Glory," hymn number 119. And I invite you at home to pull out your hymnals and sing along. Stand if you want, and we will sing together all four verses.

Doug Batchelor: Thank you, Jolyne and Hafdis. And I'm going to let them get our microphone adjusted. We're in a new facility, we're using a new studio, and we're still working out a few bugs. And I want to welcome everybody who is watching right now and joining us for our Sabbath school time, and we're very glad that we could get together with you. We know that we have people who are joining us from all different parts of the planet, and specially this time of year.

Now, at the time of this broadcast we have just--for the live recording--we've just finished Thanksgiving; but by the time it's going to be broadcast, it will be just before Christmas. And so wherever we are in the continuum of time, we want to wish you a happy Sabbath, and we're glad that you can study with us.

And we're--as Pastor Ross mentioned, we're continuing--we're on the second to the last lesson in the study on education, and the study today is more specifically dealing with "Sabbath: Experiencing and Living the Character of God." And, you know, if you haven't heard yet, the study for next quarter is on the Book of Isaiah, and all the pastoral staff are kind of drooling for the opportunity to teach some of those lessons because Isaiah is just a wonderful book that covers the whole spectrum of the gospel.

Anyway--but we have a memory verse for today, and the memory verse is from Mark chapter 2, verses 27 and 28. And there's a few of the saints gathered here. If you want to say that with us, Mark chapter 2, verse 27 and 28, "And he said to them, 'The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the son of man is also Lord of the Sabbath.'"

You know, an important point to remember in this verse--some people use this verse, they say man wasn't made for the Sabbath so you don't need to worry about the Sabbath anymore. It's not at all what Jesus is saying. Jesus is saying that first God made man on the sixth day, then He made the Sabbath on the seventh day for man. And you notice the way you spell man there is M-A-N. It's not spelled J-E-W. Some people say the Sabbath was made for the Jews. The word there is actually the word anthropos, where we get anthropology. It means man, mankind in a general sense, humanity. So the Sabbath wasn't made just for the Israelites or just for the Jews.

Jesus said the Sabbath was made for mankind, and he's referring back in the Garden of Eden. So--because I run into people all the time. They say, "Well, the Sabbath--they didn't really keep the Sabbath until Mount Sinai. It's just something for the Jewish nation." Jesus sort of explodes that idea by saying, "No, it's made for mankind, and it's back in the beginning." Man was made the sixth day. Sabbath made the seventh day to be a blessing for man.

And so he was--basically Christ was saying God did not create man to serve the Sabbath; He created the Sabbath to be a blessing for man. Because in this particular dispute that you're reading about in Mark chapter 2, they were giving the disciples a hard time for, you know, rubbing some grain and putting it in their mouths in the Sabbath day. And Jesus said, "You've got it all backwards. God did not make man to exist for the purpose of the Sabbath; He made the Sabbath to be a blessing to man."

All right, so that's our memory verse. And we're going to be talking about to some of the things we learn from the Sabbath truth in our study today. First and foremost, it tells us that--in the first section, the Sabbath is a time to be astonished. I don't know if you ever thought about it that way. "I can't wait for the sun to go down Friday so I can be astonished." What do they mean by that? Think about the first Sabbath that was in the garden. It was just--you know, man has just come into existence.

Now, when God made man and woman--and you realize that there are kind of two accounts of creation that you find in Genesis. You got the account of what God did for the first 6 days and the seventh day. Chapter 2 includes that. Then he backs up, Moses, and he gives more detail about the sixth day. Again, how woman was specifically created and more details about the garden. But unlike a baby that is born having to learn--a baby has to learn to talk. A baby has to learn to walk, to eat, and many other things. A baby has to learn what the philosophy of life is and what different words mean, and it's incredible how much a baby takes in and learns in just a few years.

Adam came something like a computer from the factory with certain software pre-installed. You know what plug and play means. Adam from the time that God breathed into him and he woke up, God downloaded into him his own image. And Adam knew how to talk. Adam knew how to walk. I think there were certain things that Adam knew right out of the box, as you would say. But as he looked around at the environment that he was in and he could behold just the beauties of creation, Adam was just overwhelmed with a sense of joy. God took him and put them in this garden, of a sense of awe. And you think about how beautiful the garden must have been.

You know, they say there are several components to a beautiful Japanese garden. Some of the most beautiful gardens in the world are in Japan. I don't know if any of you have been in Japan, but they just--they have some of the most beautiful gardens, and they take it very seriously. They're the ones, of course, who are famous for developing those little bonsai trees, and they just clip every little leaf and they train them and they just--they look like these little miniature, you know, elfy trees. And so they take their gardening very seriously. And they say that some of the things that make a garden beautiful, you need water, plants, stones, fish in the water, if you could--clear water. You know, they have their little koi ponds; a bridge, and lights or lanterns, and those are some of the components.

You know, you find all of those things really in the Garden of Eden. I don't know about the bridge. It does say there were four rivers. There may have been a way to get across, but--anyway, can you imagine what that must have been like? And this is not a Japanese garden, this is a garden that is planted by God. So when they looked down, they were filled with awe. And what did they see when they looked up? They saw the heavens in all of their glory. And--you know, I can't prove this, but I think it's not unreasonable to wonder, could Adam see better than we can?

You know, not too far away from us, there is an aviation legend who lives up in the hill in Grass Valley. One of our members is his doctor. His name is Colonel Chuck Yeager. Last I heard, he's still alive, 90 something years old. Was

flying into his 90s. He broke several records, and one of the things you can read about General Yeager in his biography is he had, like, 20/10 vision. And so when they--he was flying, he could see enemy aircraft before anybody else could see him. He had like eagle eyes and--well, if he could have that, what did Adam have? I think not only that. But, you know, when I was a kid, I could put my hand this close to my eye and I could see my fingerprints. My vision was really good. I can't do that now. I got to get it way out here, and then they're fuzzy. I think Adam's vision was almost like microscope and telescope. And so he saw everything so much clearer, and I think there was a sense of awe and wonder.

So his first day of existence--he's made on the sixth day. What is his first day? His first full day is Sabbath. And so God designed, after He made man, another day of time. What happened? Do you think that God left Adam that day like the deist thing? God kind of created things and walked away, or do you think that God created Adam and then He walked and talked with him in the garden, as the song says? I think God was with Adam and Eve, and He was communing with them and there was this sense of awe and wonder and joy. The Sabbath should be a memorial of the creation and that kind of awe and wonder and joy.

You know, you look at the things that are mentioned in the second chapter of Genesis and it tells about, of course the first chapter, you know, the days that God made things and He made man in His image. Second chapter more specifically mentions a paradise garden, beautiful rivers that irrigate the planet. There was no salt sea back then. It was probably clear lakes. Precious stones and gold and minerals, exotic animals and birds, fruit-laden trees. And then after it mentions all these things, it says rest, which basically is time for you to enjoy all the wonders of creation. So one of the important things you can do on Sabbath--weather-permitting. I've got some friends that called me this week from Alaska, and it's starting to get cold up there. And he said, "Yeah, I went for a hike with snowshoes." So even on the Sabbath you can go for a hike. Of course he ran into a moose and had to run for his life, but--that was the reason he called. But yeah, you know, it's good to get out in nature on the Sabbath day as much as you can.

Look at the things. Even though our world is groaning under the curse of sin--the whole creation groans and travails together. Even though the world is not as beautiful as it was when it came from God's hands, there are still a lot of beautiful things that can be seen in the world at eye level. If you look below, if you look above, there are wonders everywhere.

So the Sabbath is a time to be astonished. And, you know, God made these things so that we would think about Him. Isaiah 55:9, "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways than your ways." Everything that they looked at, it was to make them think of God. Think of the immensity of space. One man looked up and he realized that our world--do you think Adam knew the world was round? Or did Galileo discover that, or Copernicus? I think he knew all that. That was some knowledge was lost. Did he know something about the cosmos? Probably. You can read in the book "Patriarchs and Prophets" that he was studying the tiniest mote. Now mote is, you know, but the smallest thing you can see floating in the sun beam. And so Adam's interest in God's creation went from the tiniest mote to these massive worlds.

Let me just talk to you for a moment about the--some simple facts about the immensity of space. Our sun--you can put approximately 1 million planet earths inside the scope of our sun. Our sun is a comparatively small star, but astronomers estimate that our sun is one of 200 billion stars--not solar systems or planets, 200 billion stars in just our one galaxy that we call home called the Milky Way galaxy. So we live in the middle of a fiery pinwheel of 200 billion other suns, and many of them could have planets around them.

When you look up at night--they focused the Hubble on one little place in space. Now, if you want to rent the spaceship Hubble, different universities can do it, you have to pay a lot of money. And some of the universities got together and they said, "We want to aim this Hubble at nothing. Find a place in the sky where you think there's nothing. We want to aim it there." And because--you know, the size of your lens aperture if it's dark, you leave it open, slower shutter speed--you leave it open longer to capture more light.

They aimed it at a piece of the night sky where they thought they saw nothing, and it's--when you hold a grain of rice up against the sky--the piece of sky they focused on was smaller than a grain of rice at arm's length. They focused there for 10 days. It was very expensive. They took what they call the Ultra-Deep Field space photograph, and after 10 days they then looked at what they had and it showed a blizzard of multi-colored galaxies billions

and zillions of light years from earth in that little piece of sky. And they thought, "Wow, I wonder if we zoomed in and did it again even longer." They found another place. And then they took the ultra, ultra deep space picture. It was filled with even more, and they started realizing that--if you ask an astronomer how many stars are out there, they'll say there are approximately as many stars out in the universe as there are grains of sand in all the beaches of the world.

So you think about--and how much life there must be out there besides humanity. In the Bible when they tried to describe it, they say 10,000 times 10,000 and thousands of thousands. By the way, that was the highest number in Greek that they had. So space is immense. So as Adam looked above and he looked below, he started thinking about atoms and quarks and the God particle and all the microscopic things. The world is what you would call wonderful. And then it gives you a little more detail about that sixth day of creation that'll help us learn some things about the Sabbath. Genesis 2:24 says God made all the animals pass before Adam.

You might think--I've heard scoffers that say, "How could God do that?" There are so many different kinds of animals in the world today that he could never name them all in one day. I don't think he named every subspecies, and a lot of the subspecies didn't exist and they have come through breeding. It's like, for instance, right now you know how many kinds of dogs there are? You couldn't name all the different varieties of dogs there are. There are hundreds of different breeds of dogs. But when Adam was naming them, there were two dog-like animals and he said dog, or whatever he said. So he didn't mean to say Beagle, Lhasa Apso. I can't even think of all the names of--you know, Greyhound, Wolfhound. All that. He just said dogs. And then when it came to the pachyderms, he said pachyderms. The elephants, he didn't say woolly mammoth and mastodon and--you see what I'm saying?

And so I think he just named the main categories of creatures that day, but he noticed that the bull had a cow and the rooster had a hen, and he started feeling a little lonely. And God wanted him to feel that yearning for companionship after his own kind and said, "Okay, Adam, I got a surprise for you; but first, you're going to go to sleep and you're going to wake up married." That happens in Vegas all the time. But--and God performed the first surgery, and he took a rib. And, you know, it came from his side to show that woman was not to be trampled. It wasn't from the foot. She was not to hen peck. It was not from the skull. It was from the side, under his arm for protection by his heart. And He took that bone and He made wife.

When He woke up, God performed the first wedding. Isn't that pretty when you think about it? One of the first miracles that God did after creation was to perform a wedding; one of the first miracles Jesus did was for a wedding. And I don't want to go too far with this; but, you know, we often get a question and people kind of dance around wanting to know on the Sabbath day is marital relations appropriate. Well, my idea of it is God created man with certain perfectly holy healthy desires like eating is a desire. It's God's plan. He made all these luscious things and He says, "Eat freely from the things except this one thing." And so God expected people to enjoy the pleasures of food. Oh, well, when it comes to the Sabbath, it's hard for me to imagine the last thing you hear God saying on the sixth day to Adam and Eve is, "I pronounce you man and wife. Be fruitful and multiply, but you got to wait 24 hours for your honeymoon." So you can probably tell what my understanding of that is, but--and it's a time for rediscovery.

This is our next section. Genesis 26, verse 5, "Because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws--" Now, did the Sabbath originate at Mount Sinai? A lot of people say, "Yeah, that's when God first did it." And there is a verse that tells us. When you see the Ten Commandments in Exodus, it's more general. When you read the repetition of the Ten Commandments in Deuteronomy chapter 5, God says, "For you were slaves in the land of Egypt, therefore the Lord commands you to keep the Sabbath day." And He says remember to let your servant rest.

So He emphasized make sure and let your servant rest. Some people say, "Well, that proves that it was just given to the Jewish nation." Sabbath was not just for the Jewish nation; it was for all people all time. Notice--did Abraham live before Moses or after Moses? Abraham is after--or before Moses, and God says, "Abraham obeyed My voice. He kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws."

So did God have law before Moses? Yes, He did. And you can read in Exodus chapter 4. Exodus 4, of course, is before Exodus 20. When God tells Moses, "I want you to go find your brother Aaron, and I want you to go to

Pharaoh." Before he goes to Pharaoh, first he goes and he gathers together the elders of Israel. And you go to Exodus 4:29, "Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of Israel, and Aaron spoke all the words that the Lord had spoken to Moses." "I've seen your tears. I'm going to bring you out of Egypt and--" And it says they bowed their heads and they worshiped.

Now, probably in what was shared, they said, "We need to return to the Lord. You're acting like the Egyptians, and you're following Egyptian gods." You know, the golden calf, you understand. They'd gotten mixed up in Egyptian worship. Notice what the Pharaoh says when Moses says, "Let my people go." Now you're in Exodus 5, verse 5. "And the Pharaoh said, 'Look, the people of the land are many now, and you make them rest.'"

You know what that word rest is there? Shabbat, it's the exact same word for Sabbath. So evidently when Moses and Aaron had met with the people and said, "You need to start obeying the Lord. He's going to deliver you. You need to return to the truth of the Scriptures and worship Jehovah." It says they bowed their heads and they worshiped. They believed in worshiping Him again. Now they're keeping the Sabbath, but the Pharaoh doesn't like that, says, "You're making them Shabbat." And so he doubles their labor load and doesn't give them any straw. So I think the Sabbath is before the Ten Commandments.

Now, if those verses don't convince you, this I hope will convince you. And I know I'm preaching to the choir here, but we've got a lot of friends watching that I also want to understand. Exodus 16. Ten Commandments are given in what chapter? Exodus 20. So this is before Exodus 20. Exodus 16. God said, "Look, I know you're hungry." I'm paraphrasing. "Six days a week I'm going to rain down this substance," they named manna. "You're to gather it. Just gather enough one day at a time until you get to Friday, the sixth day, then you can gather twice as much because I won't rain any down on the seventh day."

Here's what it says. "And so it was on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for each one. All the rulers in the congregation came and told Moses. And he said to them, 'This is what the Lord has said: 'Tomorrow is a Sabbath rest, a holy Sabbath to the Lord. Bake what you're going to bake today. Boil what you will boil. Lay up for yourself all that remains to be kept until morning.'" Cook it in advance to be ready to eat tomorrow. "So they laid it up until morning as Moses commanded, and it did not stink and there weren't any worms."

Now why does he say that? Because you read earlier when God gave them manna, some of them tried to keep it over and the next morning it had a terrible smell and it was wormy. Why do you think God allowed that to happen? Why did He want them to gather manna 6 days a week? Why couldn't they gather a week's worth once a week? What does that manna represent? "Man doesn't live by bread alone, but by every word." Jesus said, "I am the bread that comes down from heaven." How often should we be gathering that manna? "Give us this day our daily bread." So we should be gathering it every morning, and it's assumed that on Sabbath you gather together to feast on the Word and sometimes there's a potluck.

But--so I think God is--and when did they go gather the manna? What time of day? Morning. What happened if they waited too late? It melted, it evaporated. Kind of like, you know, whipped cream on a hot pie just start to dissipate after a while. It is soaked on in to the ground, and it was gone. And so the idea--what is the lesson there about the manna? You don't want to wait too late in the day before you have your worship. You know what the best time is for morning worship? Morning, early in the morning.

Look at how--I did a whole sermon once years ago. I doubt anyone remembers, but I do. It was called "Early in the Morning." I went through the Bible and talked about all the things that happened early in the morning, everything from the resurrection to when Mary came to the tomb and other passages. They had to gather the manna in the morning. You need to come to the Lord first thing before the cares of life start to crowd in upon you and distract you and dampen your faith. And then--so He said gather what you've gathered Friday so the Sabbath day you will have more time to rest. Did He want them to eat on the Sabbath? Yeah, that's why they gathered twice as much. Said, "You can bake it. You can bake the manna. You could, you know, do fondue with it. You can do whatever you want with it, but just do it the day before." And then he says, "You shall kindle no fire through your dwellings."

Now, I just want to pause and talk about that a little bit because that's been misunderstood. I heard a--kind of a sarcastic sermon by Jimmy Swaggart years ago when he said, "Yeah, these Adventists, they don't keep the

Sabbath. It's impossible to keep the Sabbath. Every time they drive to church, the spark plugs in their cars are firing. And if you build a fire on the Sabbath, you're breaking the Sabbath, and they're breaking the Sabbath all the way to church." Because it says you're not supposed to kindle a fire. I thought, "Where did you--really you're ridiculing God. God's the one who said that."

Is that what it's talking about? No. What did you have to do to kindle a fire? Kindle, by the way, is a verb. It means to build in a fire. What does it mean to kindle a fire? Men, they had to go out and gather wood. Did they have matches back then? You've seen people, you know, making fires and--he said, "Look, if you can have a fire--" If someone was cold, they could have a fire in the desert. Just don't start a fire. That was very work intensive. Get your wood--He said, "Do not go out of the camp." Why did He say don't go out of the camp? Don't go out gathering wood. Remember man was stoned for gathering wood on the Sabbath day. Get your wood gathered before, and have your manna gathered before, and get the fire started before the Sabbath. Now it's gotten cold here in Northern California.

We have a little wood stove in our house. We gathered wood up in Covelo, brought it home. Yesterday I said, "Nathan, could you please stack some wood there by the back door?" Last night before Sabbath, I started the fire. It's still going now. I haven't had to kindle a fire. See the difference? And that's what He's talking--He didn't expect everybody to shiver in their tents every Sabbath, especially in Jerusalem when it's higher and it snows there in the wintertime sometimes. So I've heard people take that and they just totally abuse what the intention of the verse was.

All right, did we learn something? Let's keep going. What else do we learn about the Sabbath, talking about the Sabbath and education? It's a time for learning priorities. Now in the lesson here, it turns us to Jeremiah 17, verse 20, and I'm going to read through verse 27. "And he said to them, 'Hear the Word of the Lord, you kings of Judah, and all Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem who enter by these gates.'" Jeremiah is prophesying by the gates. "Thus says the Lord, 'Take heed to yourselves and bear no burden on the Sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem, nor carry a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath day, nor do any work, but hallow the Sabbath day as I commanded your fathers.' But they did not obey or incline their ear, but they made their neck stiff, that they might not hear or receive instruction. 'And it shall be if you heed Me carefully,' says the Lord--" He gives a promise first. He's being positive. "'If you heed Me carefully,' says the Lord, 'to bring no burden through the gates of the city on the Sabbath day but hallow the Sabbath day and do no work in it, then shall enter the gates of the city kings and princes sitting on the throne of David.'"

A wonderful promise that once again they'd have the heirs of David sitting on the throne, meaning they'd be reigning in prosperity, they'd have their independence again. "Riding in chariots and on horses and their princes, accompanied them by the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the city shall remain forever." What a wonderful promise if they had been faithful. God said the city would remain forever.

Now when He's telling them this, keep in mind the Babylonians are camped outside Jerusalem and it looks like judgment is looming. But if they had obeyed God--and what was one of the things He said that would make the difference on whether or not they survived? Keeping the Sabbath. How do you think--does this matter to God? He said, "Look, I've got the enemies at the gates, but I promise to send them away. I will protect you, I will preserve the city, but you can't be ignoring My commandments." Says, "Honor me."

Now, why did He say that? He said, "Look, I just--I'm making your life difficult. I don't want you to work." Or was God saying, "You will not know Me if you don't spend time with Me. You will not love Me if you do not spend time with Me. If you keep neglecting the Sabbath and doing your own thing, your love for Me will diminish. You will not be able to obey Me, you will not know Me, you'll not serve Me, and judgment will come." And so one of the keys in loving the Lord is knowing the Lord.

One of the keys in knowing the Lord is time with the Lord. That's why the Sabbath is so important. That's why He commands it. And let me continue on here. I'm still in Jeremiah chapter 17, reading in verse 26. He says, "The city will remain forever, and then shall come from the cities of Judah and from its places around Jerusalem and from the land of Benjamin and from the lowland and the mountains and from the south." They'll come bringing burnt offerings and sacrifices and grain offerings and incense, bringing sacrifices of praise to the house of God. Look at all that Saul promise. "But," verse 27, "if you will not heed Me to hallow the Sabbath day, such as not carrying a

burden when entering the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, I will kindle a fire in its gate and it will devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it will not be quenched."

By the way, sometimes people talk about unquenchable fire. What is unquenchable fire? Just means fire that is not extinguished. When they didn't obey God, it turns out that they did not humble themselves, they did not keep the Sabbath, the gates of Jerusalem were burned. No firemen came to quench the fire. It completely burnt up the gates. Later, Nehemiah talking to the king, he says the gates of Jerusalem are burned. And so the very thing that Jeremiah said was going to happen if they ignored the Sabbath is what happened. The palaces were burned. They were carried away. They did not get to abide in the city, and the son of David was put in prison--the king, who is a son of David was put in prison. Jehoiachin in Babylon.

And so we learn here about priorities. Is the Sabbath something that is optional for the Christian, or is it a commandment? Yeah. God says, "And I'm commanding it to make our lives difficult or for our blessing." Of course, it's always going to be because He wants to bless us. Isaiah 56, still talking about that same principle of priorities, verse 2, "Blessed is the man who does this, and the son of man who lays hold on it, who keeps from defiling the Sabbath and keeps his hand from doing any evil." Isn't that interesting? If He said, "Blessed is the man that keeps his hand from doing evil," you'd say okay. But He also says, "Blessed is the man who keeps from defiling the Sabbath." Why is that so important?

You know, it's easier sometimes for people to give God their money than their time. God said, "If there's a people that will give Me their time, they will probably keep the other commandments." Every now and then I'll meet someone, they'll learn the Sabbath truth and they'll say, "Oh, Pastor Doug, my job requires me to work on Sabbath. If I tell my boss that I can't work Saturdays anymore, I'm probably going to lose my job."

And I've often said, you know, try it. You might be surprised. Because there are so many employers I know that if they've got an employee--everyone wants honest employees. You want--don't you want employees with integrity? You know, that they--you don't have to watch them all the time because they watch themselves because they've got--that's what integrity is. You're the same person when no one's watching as you are when they are watching. That means you're honest. You don't have to worry. As soon as the boss leaves, they stop working. That's a loss of integrity. Or if the boss isn't looking, they start pilfering things. That's a lack of integrity.

If you've got employees with a conscience, they are the most valuable employees you can have. And so if I'm a boss and someone says, you know, "Because of my religious beliefs, I'm willing to lose my job rather than break the Sabbath day. I'll work for you Sunday, I'll work long hours the other days, but I cannot work during God's holy time." If I'm an employer, I'm going to say, "I don't want to lose that employee."

I'd rather have an honest employee 5 days a week or 4 days a week than have a dishonest one 7 days a week. Right? And so I say try it, write a nice letter. Be sweet about it. Talk to your boss, tell him, "I'm willing to work. I'll work hard, I'll--" Say, "But I believe in the Ten Commandments and I can't break this commandment." And yeah, from time to time the boss says, "Well, we can't use you then" But I think more times than not--I've even seen the boss threaten them and say, "Okay, we're going to fire you." And they put them to the test. And they say, "Okay, well, I sure enjoyed working here. Thank you. Sorry, I got to go." Boss calls them the next day and says, "I think we want to keep you," and brings them back in. I've seen that happen so often because it shows that they're honest.

Isaiah 58, verse 13, "If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on My holy day and call the Sabbath a delight--" Notice the words blessing. Blessed is the man--delight. "Call the Sabbath a delight, the holy day of the Lord honorable and you'll honor Him not doing your own ways or finding your own pleasure or speaking your own words--"

You know, sometimes we even need to watch our words. It's so easy to think about the week and the work and everything else. This morning I was getting dressed and I took my shirt--I get my--I actually hang up what I'm going to wear the next day. I say, "Oh, this is my last white shirt." So I called out to Karen. I said, "When you think about ironing again, I'm out of white shirts." And then as soon as I said that, I thought, "Oh, it's Sabbath. I shouldn't even be telling her something like that." And--you know, but that's part of Sabbath-keeping, speaking the right words, yeah. So often--come on, fess up. People are out in the foyer of the church, and here it is Sabbath. We just got out of church and you heard a spiritual sermon, and we're talking about our new garage

addition and all the work we're doing and you think, "Is that holy conversation?" I think sometimes we need to say, "Let's direct our words on the Sabbath day so that it's special."

You know, spirit of prophecy says the meal you eat on Sabbath should be even special, something that you don't have every other day. We try to put on clothes that are special for the presence of God, and our words should be special, the way we spend our time is special, and God says it is a blessing when you do that. Now you notice he says, "Delight yourself in the Lord, calling the Sabbath honorable." The Sabbath is a delight, and it is an honor, amen. And it's a time for finding balance. Matthew chapter 5, verse 17, Jesus said, "Do not think that I came to destroy the law or the prophets. I did not come to destroy, but to," fill full or, "fulfill. For assuredly I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle while by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled."

And Matthew 12, verse 1 through 13, "At that time Jesus went through the grain fields on the Sabbath, and his disciples were hungry--" This is where we get our memory verse. "And they begin to pluck heads of grain and to eat. And when the Pharisees saw that, they said, 'Look, your disciples are doing that which is unlawful to do on the Sabbath.' But Jesus said, 'Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, and those who were with him; how he entered the house of God and he ate the showbread which was not lawful for him to eat or for those who are with him, but only the priests? Or have you not read in the law that the Sabbath day--on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and they're blameless?'"

They used to--you know, they used to keep the fire going on Sabbath, they used to offer sacrifices, which was labor-intensive. "Yet I say to you that in this place is one greater than the temple. But if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless."

So Jesus is saying the disciples were guiltless for picking. If you're walking around on the Sabbath day and you glean a piece of corn from the field or an apple from a tree, that is not harvesting. I mean, you know, that's an exaggeration. By the time of Christ--keep in mind, before the Babylonian captivity, the Jews were very sloppy about the Sabbath, and that's one reason they were judged.

When they came back from Babylon and they went to the other extreme, the Pharisees developed a sect that were so careful about Sabbath keeping. They went to the other extreme and they became legalistic. They actually said, you know, you're not supposed to bury--bear a burden on the Sabbath day. If you are carrying a handkerchief in your hand, it is a burden. That's what they said, but they said--there's a loophole. If you sew it to your collar, you still have it accessible. You can blow your nose, and it's part of your garment. So they had all these crazy laws that they had made. They were obviously extremes.

Some people say, you know, Jesus had all these disputes with the religious leaders because he didn't think the Sabbath mattered. That is biblically dishonest. Every single dispute that Jesus had regarding the Sabbath, it was never about, do you keep the Sabbath day? It was always about, how do you keep the Sabbath day? So all of the disputes, Jesus was endorsing the importance of the Sabbath. He said it is better to do good on the Sabbath day. He didn't say it's better to not keep the Sabbath day. He was always talking about how to keep it, not whether or not that it should be kept, amen? So there were several disputes about that on the Sabbath day.

Then there's another situation here, and you can read in Matthew chapter 12 if you jump down to verse 10--or verse 9. "Now when he departed from there, he went into the synagogue. And behold, there was a man who had a withered--" I guess a man's hand was all twisted up and maybe atrophied or arthritic. "A withered hand. And they asked him, saying, 'Is it lawful for you to heal on the Sabbath day?' That they might accuse him." They're trying to set him up. "And he said, 'What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit--it's your only sheep on the Sabbath day. Will you not lay hold of it and lift it out? Of how much more value is a man than a sheep? If therefore it is good,'" He says, "Therefore, it is good to do--it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath day. And he said to the man," it really incensed them, "Stretch out your hand." And he was probably happy to do it. "He stretched out his hand and it was restored whole as the other." He said, "And I'm going to show you how this is done." And he healed on the Sabbath day.

And there was another woman in the sanctuary. She had been bent over. Terrible osteoporosis or something, but she was all hunched over and had gone on for 18 years. He said, "Woman, you are loosed of your infirmity." He healed her, and he laid his hands on her. Immediately she was made straight. How nice that must have felt to

suddenly stand up straight after being hunched over. And she glorified God. But the ruler of the synagogue instead of saying praising God, he was mad that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath day. "And he said to the crowd, 'There are six days--'" He said, "Don't anyone else come for healing. This is terrible." "'There are six days in which men ought to work. Therefore, come and be healed on them and not on the Sabbath day.' And Jesus answered him and said, 'Hypocrite, does not each one of you on the Sabbath day loose his ox or his donkey from the stall and lead it away to water it? Ought not this water--this woman being a daughter of Abraham whom Satan is bound, think of it for 18 years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?' And when he said these things, his adversaries were put to shame by his logic. And all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him."

So the disputes that Jesus had connected with the Sabbath day--we learn a lot on the Sabbath day about how to keep it, and they were to keep it holy, keep it practically. He doesn't want us to fall off into legalism. But, you know, there's that other extreme where people say, "Well, since it's better to do good on the Sabbath day and my neighbor's windows are dirty, I'm going to show off my neighbor and wash his windows." Now, I've heard of a couple of cases where people that are professed Sabbath keepers say, "We're going to go do acts of mercy for our neighbors on Sabbath." And they take the youth out and they rake their lawns and they wash their windows and they say, "This is the ox in the ditch." No, that's going--that's not what Jesus is talking about. Don't go out looking for work. If you run into somebody who's broke down on the side of the road and their battery needs a jump, by all means jump their car. But he's not saying we ought to be--then start violating the Sabbath by doing things that could easily be done another day of the week. Can I get a little amen on that? Okay, thank you. All right.

And then Sabbath, I've just got a couple of minutes left, is a time for community. Acts 13, verse 14, "But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and they went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and they sat down. And after reading the law and the prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent to them, saying, 'Men and brethren, have you any word of exhortation for the people? Please say on.'"

I was visiting a Methodist Church one day, and just so happened that they were studying the sanctuary. This is years ago. I was going to church 2 days a week back then, Saturday and Sunday. And I made a couple of comments on the sanctuary, and the Sabbath School teacher--Sunday school teacher said, "Brother, you got anything else you can share with us?" He says, "We don't understand this lesson at all." I said, "Well, I am so glad you asked." I ended up teaching that class for several weeks until the pastor found out I was an Adventist.

So they said, "Do you have any Word for us?" And he preached to them about Christ. So they would gather together on the Sabbath. Acts 16:13 it says, "On the Sabbath we went out of the city to the river where prayer was customarily made and we sat down and spoke to the women who met there." So they not only gathered in the church, but they gathered outside. And is the Sabbath just to play--a day for us to rest, or is it a day for us to come together? Doesn't it say, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is?" I know that's a real struggle during the pandemic for a lot of people, but I think God still wants His people to come together safely and to worship Him. Also, the Sabbath in Leviticus 23 is called a holy convocation. That means an assembly. And in heaven--Isaiah 66, "All flesh shall come together to worship before Me." Something happens when two or three gather together in His name, amen.

So let's see what else I can read here for you. Yeah, Acts 18, verse 4, "And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath and persuaded--" Not just Jews, but Jews and Greeks. And again, I'll close with this verse in Hebrews 10, verse 24. "Let us consider one another to stir up love and good works not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another and all the more as we see the day approaching."

Well, friends, we are out of time. I want to thank those who've been joining us online, remind you that we have a special offer that's dealing with is Sunday holy. And if you'd like that study guide, "Is Sunday Really Sacred?" we'll be happy to send that to you. Ask for offer number 150, and we'll send it to you. God bless until we study together again next week.

Announcer: Don't forget to request today's life-changing free resource. Not only can you receive this free gift in the mail, you can download a digital copy straight to your computer or mobile device. To get your digital copy of today's free gift, simply text the keyword on your screen to 40544 or visit the web address shown on your screen,

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Announcer: Amazing Facts, changed lives.

Jason: We were going to church every other week. About 19 years old, things really start to make sense for me. I started to go to church for myself. And the pastor wanted to study with me, but we came to the study of baptism and I kind of just shrugged, looked at my head down and said, "I'm not ready." He looked me in the eye and said, "Jason, you'll never make yourself ready. This is something you have to do." Put a lot of things behind me. Drinking and smoking and all that stuff stopped. All throughout the time we had been learning about God, it was just me and God.

Comes around up to about August and I meet this girl. About 2 years in the relationship, we're talking about marriage and everything. We didn't pray. We didn't study together. We were arguing a lot, but we were engaged. I started drinking again. That was a slow downward spiral in the different things, and my devotional life started really weaseling away. We broke up in 2008. It was heavy for me because, again, being with somebody for that long, it's almost like a divorce. I started to fall back away even more.

I remember looking in the mirror, just looking at myself and say, "What are you doing? How can you do this to God? He brought you so far." And, you know, God really heard my cry. There was a testimony telling at my church, and there's a call and kids start getting up. Bunch of high school kids start getting up for calls of baptism. I'm back doing the PA system at this time and I feel just, like, this urge, just my heart just ripping out of my chest, and I just had this feeling just to go up. I get up to the front and I just meet the pastor in open arms. I realized that there's so much more to life than just living life for myself. And, you know, falling away, it's not a necessity. But God can work through anything in the bad to make it the good. It's a promise He makes.

Announcer: Together, we have spread the gospel much farther than ever before. Thank you for your support.

Doug: Have you ever worried that you don't have enough time in your days, or you can add another day to your life? Well, perhaps there is a way for you to add a whole 'nother day to your existence. Watch how easy it is. I just stepped into yesterday. No, I'm not talking about going back to the future or back in history. I happen to be standing here in Taveuni, Fiji, one of the only places in the world where the international meridian dateline runs through a piece of land.

People have not always been able to play with time this way. Back in 1878, Sir Sandford Fleming, a Canadian, he recommended to the science community of the world that the globe be divided in 24 even segments, each separated by 15 degrees of longitude that would establish the international time system. In 1884, there was a prime meridian conference held in Washington, D.C. to standardize time and select the point for the prime meridian, which would be zero degrees on the globe. It ended up being Greenwich, England, but that's not where we are. We are on the polar opposite side of the planet right now, but we're going to step into the future. You want to come? And look at that. The Lord is still with us even here. He'll continue to take care of you, friends, wherever you go.

Friends, you sometimes worry about the future. What will you eat? Will you have a home? Are you going to still have your job? What will you wear? Jesus tells us in Matthew chapter 6, verse 25 through 34, "Don't take thought for tomorrow, for tomorrow will take thought for the things of itself." He tells us that he feeds the birds and he clothes the flowers, He'll take care of us. We know that God will watch over us. He forgives the past, He promises to be with us in the present, and He will continue to lead us in the future, but you've just got to give yourself to Him. I invite you to do that right now.

Announcer: Amazing Facts, changed lives.

Male: I come from a Hindu background. My mom is a preacher for Shiva; was a Hindu god. My father is agnostic kind. So me myself, I grew like--as an atheist. In the year 2007, I had an experience of being in south India. That was the first time I experienced Christian people, you know. The majorities were Christians there. There were

some Adventist youth who invited me to be a part of one of their mid-week service. They were presenting a video of Pastor Doug Batchelor, "The Richest Caveman." I was moved, you know. I do understand good and bad, and I pictured myself into the bad category than the good one.

I started experiencing several dreams and--which started troubling me. You know, I kept the website in my mind. I went to the Internet cafe and started browsing the website of Amazing Facts, and then I saw the Bible study guide there. Every day I started taking one of the lesson and--I was baptized 2007. After my conversion, I straightly came to Spica to do my studies. During the summer vacation, I decided to go back home and give my mom and my father a visit. By that time, they knew that I had converted to Christianity. I was thrown out of the house. We are not in good terms even today; but it's sad but for them, not for me.

During 2015, I was diagnosed with leukemia. I had only one professor and one friend who was coming along with me to the hospital every day. When I asked this assistant doctor, "What do you think is the lifespan of a person like me?" She said, "You will be losing weight and you will get sick slowly, slowly if you don't go for a treatment. So a year plus." One night I decided--it was January 2015. I said, "I am not going for any treatment anymore." I said, "Lord, You gave me one year. So what I'll do is I'll just do Your ministry, and that's okay."

And I never went for any treatment after that. I just left everything right over there. I didn't take even one tablet, one medicine. I'm standing in front of you strong in 2018. Nothing happened. I don't know what happened. I don't know if it's still there in my body or what. I don't know. I'm not dead yet. I want to serve in India. Amazing Facts team, especially Pastor Doug, has really played a very important element in my life to give me an identity.