

## **“Sabbath Rest”**

### **Fixing Our Eyes On Jesus, Our High Priest**

Hebrews 4:1-11

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**Jeff:** Heavenly Father, we give You thanks for this day, for the time You’ve given us to be together and for the love that You’ve expressed toward us in so many ways. We are thankful. And Father, we’re reminded even in this way that even this small body works together, and works together with one another. And we’re reminded of how the church is or ought to be, how it works together, and if one part isn’t working with the rest of the body that it doesn’t seem to work well as it once did. So Father, make us appreciate one another not just here, but in the life of our congregations of which we are a part. We also thank You for the Lord Jesus Christ. We’re thankful that He is the Head and He supplies leadership to the body. We’re thankful that He loves us in the way that He did, bringing us into unity with Himself.

Father, as we come before You now, we think about Rick Coss. And we pray that You will bless him and strengthen him. Father, we pray for Tom Smith and for his work in Croatia. Father, we pray for Doug Lauffer and ask that Your hand would be upon him as well. Father, we pray for Bob Caldwell, and ask that as he has this procedure this morning that You would be tending to him and making him well. And Father, we certainly pray for Doug and ask that You will bless him as he works through these complications that he has. And Father, we pray that You’ll give the doctors wisdom as they come alongside of him.

And Father, we commit ourselves to You today, asking that You will bless us as we open Your word and as we study it. We need Your help, and so we pray that You will, by Your Spirit, minister to us. And we pray these things in the precious name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Men:** Amen.

**Jeff:** Well let me read our text today. Our text is, as you know, Hebrews chapter 4, verses 1-11. Let me read to you the word of God.

*“Therefore, while the promise of entering His rest stands, let us fear, lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. For good news came to us just as to them. But the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened. For we who have believed enter that rest, as He has said:*

*‘As I swore in My wrath, they shall never enter My rest,’*

*“although His works were finished from the foundation of the world. For He has somewhere spoken of the seventh day this way: ‘And God rested on the seventh day from all His works.’ And again in this passage He says, ‘They shall not enter My rest.’*

*“Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter it because of disobedience, again He appoints a certain day, today, saying through David, so long afterward, in the words already quoted, ‘Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.’ For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. So then, there remains a Sabbath-rest for*

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*the people of God. For whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from His. Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.”*

**Participant:** The word of the Lord.

**Men:** Thanks be to God.

**Jeff:** All right. Well let me give you the outline. You have it before you even though we don't have it up here today. And there are a couple of things that I have by way of comparison. But I'll try to do my best, and you can look in your Scriptures to see the comparisons that I'm going to make.

I'm going to make a couple of introductory points today, and fortunately I only have two points after that. (*Laughter*) First of all, *we have an obligation to exercise*. And we'll see what that obligation is. And then we have *a rest to enjoy*. So let's get started and look at the introduction that I have for you.

I want you to notice that this particular text starts with something of a startling opener. And by that I mean that if you think about what we've looked at in the past, we looked at the text in Hebrews that is somewhat encouraging. Not somewhat; it is encouraging. It's hortatory. The author has in mind that he is going to call people to himself. He's going to call his hearers alongside of him. And I've talked to you some about what that means in the past, and how important that is. And I even talked to you about what it means to call someone alongside of you. It's that word *paracoleo*, and that's exactly what it means. It's put together from the word *coleo*, meaning *call*, and *para*, meaning *to call alongside*. And so you're calling someone alongside of yourself.

But you're not calling them alongside of you because you're so good. You're calling them alongside of you because of where you stand. You stand in Jesus Christ. And so you're calling them alongside of you because you stand in Christ.

And so we've noticed that this particular text, the book of Hebrews, has admonitions to it. And you read things like *“See to it,”* or *“take care.”* But now we have a particular admonition that I think is a little bit startling when you think about it. He begins by saying, *“Let us fear.”*

Now that's a little different than we've noticed in the past. *“Let us fear.”* And then he winds up in verse 11 with these words. *“Let us therefore strive.”* *“Let us fear,”* and *“let us strive.”* That seems to me to be a little more intense than *“see to it”* and *“take care, brethren.”* Now we are to fear, lest any one of us miss the rest.

The question that we need to ask ourselves, however, is what does he mean when he says *“seem?”* Let me read it to you. *“Lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it.”* What is he talking about when he says, *“lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it?”*

Well let me talk to you about that for just a minute. And it's a curiosity, I think. It's a curiosity, because when you think about that whole idea of seeming to miss the rest, the question that I have when I look at that text is how do I seem to presently miss that rest which is future? Doesn't that seem like a curiosity? He's talking about eschatological rest, a rest that's in the future. And yet he says that there are some who seem to have

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missed it. So there’s a present missing of that which is future. That’s a curiosity in my mind. What does he mean by that?

Well, I’ll tell you what he means. He means this. We’re going to talk about this and develop it more as we go along. But he means that our life in Christ rests, is situated firmly upon rest, a rest that is found in Jesus Christ. And that life that is founded upon Christ evidences itself in obedience in the present.

Think about that. A life lacking in obedience is a life that appears to miss the eschatological rest in the future.

Now I just want to pause at this point and say something to you that you ought to know by now. And I say that because I’ve mentioned it a number of times. And I think it’s worth mentioning every time that it comes up. And that is this. When we are saved, we’re not just justified. When we are saved in Jesus Christ, we are brought into union with Him. And by virtue of that union every blessing that we receive in Christ is ours.

And Calvin talked about it as a twofold grace. He talked about it as the *duplex gratia Dei*, the twofold grace of God. In other words, what Calvin said was that you have forensic benefits—justification. You are declared not guilty. But you also have renovative benefits, in other words, sanctification leading to glorification. Those are yours in Jesus Christ.

You don’t have one without the other. You don’t say, “Well, I’m saved. I’m just not anywhere near sanctified. Sanctification isn’t a gift I’ve received yet. So, you know, I’m just saved.” You know, there’s no talking like that in the Scriptures. There is no such thing as that kind of person in the Bible.

So when we talk about union with Christ, we talk about a union that involves both justification and renovation. So a life lacking in obedience appears to miss the rest that is eschatological. In other words, he’s saying that some of you need to fear because some of you are lacking the evidence of a life that is in Christ.

Now let’s pause just for a minute. I don’t think we’ve ever talked about this before. And though it doesn’t come up in the text specifically, it is certainly there in the text. And it’s *the Law*, because when we think about the life of obedience, one of the things that we ought to think about is the Law itself. We think about the uses of the Law. And in the past, Reformed theologians have typically talked about three uses of the Law. They’ve talked about the Law being a restrainer of sin. They’ve talked about the Law being a convicter of men. And that’s where you think about the Law as a schoolteacher driving people to Jesus Christ.

But thirdly, the Law is a guide, the guide for the Christian, a light unto my feet. In other words, this gives shape and form to my obedience. I don’t just say, “Lord, let me obey. But I have no idea what it is that I’m to obey.” No. The Law is there.

Now we also talk about the Law in terms of *the threefold division of the Law*. We talk about the Law in terms of its civil aspects. We talk about it in terms of its ceremonial aspects. And we talk about it in terms of its moral aspects.

The *civil* aspects were those pertaining to ancient Israel. And if you follow the Westminster Confession, the Westminster Confession says that those applications of the Law are past.

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When you talk about the *ceremonial* aspects of the Law, you’re talking about the sacrifices. You’re talking about the incense and the priestly model. And those have been fulfilled in Christ.

And so when we talk about the Law as our restrainer, as a convicter and as a guide, we’re talking about the moral Law. We’re talking about the Decalogue, the Ten commandments. That’s what we have in view when we think of the Law. So there are these three uses of the Law.

Now the reason I bring this up is because I want us to get our minds around the fact that if we have faith in Jesus Christ, then we will obey. And there is something that we will obey, and it is the law of God.

Now here’s the problem. The problem is that our culture, even our evangelical culture, doesn’t like the idea of obedience, right? And so what happens is that anybody who talks about the need to obey is described as a legalist.

Now typically in the past, you know what a legalist is. A legalist is somebody who attributes some sort of merit to their obedience, even if that obedience is not asked for by God in the Word. So they create things to obey. You know what I mean. For instance, the haircuts that can’t touch my collar, or, you know, I’m a sinner, right? If my cuffs go too far down, then I’m a sinner, those kinds of things. Those kinds of things are added. But the point is that anything, whether it’s in God’s law or it’s not in God’s law that says that I merit something before God, that’s typically a legalist.

But that’s not the way we think of a legalist today. We think of a legalist today as anybody who has any sort of inclination to talk about the law of God.

**Participant:** Amen.

**Jeff:** When somebody talks about the law of God, people say, “Whoa, whoa, whoa! Doesn’t it say in the Bible that I’m free in Christ and that I’m free from the Law? I’m a Christian who lives by grace! You legalist!” You know, that’s what they talk about. That’s the kind of thing they say.

And I don’t have time to talk to you in this session about how important it is in the Scriptures that we understand that a grace-driven life that brings conformity to the image of Christ is an obedient life. It’s as simple as that.

And so what I’m saying to you this morning is this. I’m saying that a life that seems to have missed that eschatological rest, that rest in the future, is a life lacking in obedience. And so this is a warning to us. And the question is this. Is it a warning to you?

I have to ask that. I’m a pastor at heart. You know what I mean? And as a pastor I have to ask these nettling questions. I ask them of myself. And if I have to bear the burden, then I’m going to burden you, because if I have to be asked this as I study it, you will too as we study it together.

And so the question is this. *Is it a warning to you?* Are you a person who seems to have missed the rest because your life is lacking in obedience? That’s the question.

Now I know what you’re going to say. You’re going to say, “We all lack in obedience,” right?

**Participant:** Right.

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**Jeff:** We all lack in obedience. And I don't have time to develop this here. But here's the deal. I need to say this to you, because this is fundamental. Where's Sig? *(Laughter)* I said that for his benefit. Here's the thing I want to say to you that you need to remember. And I want you to feel free to ask questions. If we need to carry this over to the next time, we'll do it.

But let me say this to you. When we think about the Old Testament, we think about the Old Testament sacrificial system. When we think about believers in the Old Testament, we think about offerings and we think about their need for a substitute. In other words, they're looking forward to the Messiah to come by offering those sacrifices.

But if you study the book of Leviticus, one of the things that you're going to realize is that the sins that were covered by those regular sacrifices were sins that were, as they described them, unintentional sins. And the high-handed rebellious sins were forgiven, are forgiven. But there was one day a year in ancient Israel when those sins were forgiven. Do you remember what that day was?

**Participant:** The Day of Atonement.

**Second Participant:** Yom Kippur.

**Jeff:** The Day of Atonement. On the Day of Atonement rebellious, high-handed sins were forgiven. So that's not saying that high-handed, rebellious sins weren't forgiven in Israel, just like high-handed, rebellious sins are forgiven in Christ. What they're saying is that there is obedience and growth in grace and maturity even in the Old Testament, even though—and here's where we have to understand this—even though in our experience as Christians, as New Testament believers, our spiritual experience begins where the best Old Testament believer ends.

So what am I saying? I am saying that we will have our faults and our failures. But high-handed rebellious sins ought not to characterize us. You see, when you look at the pattern of the Old Testament by the pattern of the New Testament, do you see that? I'm going to move on, so if you don't see that, forever hold your peace. No. *(Laughter)*

So what I'm saying—and I'm just trying to build a context for your understanding—what I'm saying is what does it mean to seem to have missed the eschatological rest? It seems to mean not that the traditional run-of-the-mill believer is going to miss it. No. What's he's saying is that some of you have appeared to missed it because your lives are glaringly disobedient.

And in this case, what's the glaring disobedience? The glaring disobedience is that you are going to forsake Christ and go back to the shadows of the past. And the question that we have to ask ourselves is this. For what are we willing to forsake Christ? See, that's the question. We may not be heading back to Judaism. But what is it in our lives for which we are thinking about deserting Christ? That's the point of application.

So we have *an obligation to exercise*. Now I want you to think about this. There is a similarity here between the Old Testament believer and the New Testament believer. And that similarity is that both had the gospel preached to them. That's what he says. He says, “We had the gospel, the good news, preached to us in the same way they had it preached to them.”

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And the interesting thing is that when you go back to the person of Abraham, the person of Abraham had the gospel preached to him. And Galatians 3:8 says that. Let me read this to you. “*And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham.*” Galatians 3:8.

And so what we find in our text in chapter 4 is nothing different than what we find in Galatians 3:8, for instance. And then in our text in Hebrews 4:2 he says, “*For good news came to us just as to them.*” And that’s the gospel.

What’s the difference? The difference is obedience. No! (*Laughter*) That’s where you would expect him to go, isn’t it? The difference is obedience. No, no, not yet. The difference, says the Preacher, is that “*they did not unite what they heard*”—the good news that they heard—“*with faith.*” Yes!

So you say, “What? Wait a minute! My head’s spinning.” Hold on. We’ll get back to obedience in just a second. But right now we have to ask this question. What is faith? Because we know this, right?

Faith saves? No it doesn’t. What is faith?

**Participant:** The instrument.

**Jeff:** The instrument by which Christ saves. That’s what faith is. But what is faith? Well, there’s a *knowledge* aspect to it. There’s an *assent* aspect to it. It’s the *t* that’s always a little bit difficult, isn’t it, because here’s the way it’s explained.

The way it’s explained is this. And I’ve used this. And I think it’s a good illustration. But there’s a nuance you have to catch.

You say, “What is this?”

I say, “It’s a chair”, right? And I have enough knowledge about chairs, even if I’m from another country, to look at this and say, “That’s a chair.” Or at least it looks like a chair, some kind of a chair. It’s got four legs. This one has a back in particular, but it has a platform I can sit on. And somebody says to me, “Do you think that’s a chair?”

And I say, “You know, according to the best knowledge I have I think that’s a chair. Do you agree that this is a chair?”

“Yes, I agree that it’s a chair.”

And then we say this. We say, “And then try to visualize me sitting down in the chair.” And what do we do when we do that? What we do is we bring obedience and faith together in such a way that we mix the two.

But the question is this. Why is it then that we say that we are saved by faith and not obedience? I’ll tell you why. It’s because the Westminster Confession teaches what the Bible says. It says that faith manifests itself in love. But that’s not what we ought to think of when we think of the idea of trust. That’s not what we ought to think of when we think of the knowledge, the assent and then the trust.

What is the trust then? The trust is a change in my affections. That’s what the *fiducia*, however you pronounce the Latin, that’s what *fiducia* is. It is a wholehearted trust that arises from my affections, which manifests itself in my obedience. But the *fiducia* is the change in my affections, my wholehearted longing to trust in the Lord. That’s what faith is when we think about faith.

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So it's not my faith that saves me. It's Christ who saves me through faith. That's why we get a little practical about this. When people see us, they see us acting. What do they see us acting out? They see us acting out our obedience. And they see this obedience and they say, “I wish I had your faith.”

And we say, “Yes, I wish you had it, too.” (*Laughter*)

We say, No, no, no! My faith is weak and it's strong at different points. You don't want my faith. You want my Christ!”

**Participant:** Amen.

**Jeff:** “You want my Savior who brought me to Himself, who enabled me to meet the conditions of the covenant by the exercise of faith.” What is faith? Faith is simply knowledge. It's assent to that knowledge and it's a wholehearted change of desire, making me want what I now know. Now that I agree with it, I want it.

And that faith, that response to the gospel, manifests itself in obedience.

So what was the Exodus generation lacking? The Exodus generation was lacking faith. And if you don't have faith, what else don't you have?

**Participant:** Obedience.

**Second Participant:** Christ.

**Jeff:** Yes. Well, if you don't have Christ, you don't have either, right?

**Participant:** Right.

**Jeff:** And so they did not unite what they heard with faith. And because they didn't have faith they didn't have obedience.

**Participant:** That's not to say that if you have obedience you have faith.

**Jeff:** Absolutely.

**Participant:** It's not a matter of will; it's a matter of faith.

**Jeff:** That's exactly right. All right. So let me just say this. I want to simply say to you that grace becomes a motivating factor in what we do.

Let me wrap this remaining section up and try to do it in just a few minutes. It's *the rest that we enjoy*. I want you to notice again the basic presupposition here. The basic presupposition is what I said to you before, that the believer is not below what he was when he was not a believer. There always remains in him that seed of faith, that hope, says the Scripture, says the Westminster Confession. So this Preacher maintains this basic posture toward these people when he addresses them, even when he says hard things to them. For instance, you know where he says, “You're sluggish.” Then he says, “But, beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you, things that accompany salvation, though we are speaking in this way.”

So he's got this basic presupposition toward them. But he's not afraid to say hard things to them. That's the same thing here. He says, “Let us fear, lest any of you seem to have missed it”, right? And then he says, “*For we who have believed enter that rest.*”

Now the question is this. What's that rest? Well first of all, he gives a description. He says this. He describes it as “*His rest*”—God's rest. But he doesn't stop there. He contrasts it. And he contrasts it in the Scripture text. It's contrasted with two statements—My wrath, My rest. Those who don't enter into His rest have His wrath. He's pitting them against one another: My wrath, My rest.

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But the description that he gives of this rest we would think comes from the Exodus generation, right? We’ve been talking about the Exodus generation. And that’s what we think of when we think of the Promised Land. In fact, rest becomes a technical term for the Promised Land in some instances in the Old Testament. We would think that he’s talking about Old Testament rest.

That’s not where he goes. He goes all the way back to Genesis chapter 2, to the creation mandate where God rested on the seventh day. And what is he saying? He is saying that the rest that is offered to you is bigger than Israel. That’s what he’s saying. The rest that is offered to you, the longevity that is offered to you, is for all of humanity. That’s what he’s saying. That’s the description.

Now he then goes on to say how it is that we share in this rest that he describes. Go back to 3:14 of Hebrews for just a minute. He says this. He says, *“For we have come to share in Christ if indeed we hold to our original confidence, firm to the end.”*

What is he talking about? What is it that we share. 4:10: we share in God’s rest revealed in Jesus Christ and His completed work. That’s what we share.

Now here’s the question we have to ask ourselves. What does this mean? What does it mean that I share in rest when I’m united to Jesus Christ by faith? What does that mean?

We say to ourselves, let’s puzzle this out. Let’s work this out theologically. Let’s really study the Scriptures. I want you to know that there’s a place for that. But I want you to know that if we do that at this point, we are doing the exact thing that the Preacher does not want us to do. He’s saying, “You’re missing the point! I’m not talking about following this out theologically. I’m giving you a warning! Have you entered this rest?” That’s what he’s asking them. He’s asking them. Have you experientially entered into this rest? Have you placed your faith in Jesus Christ? And now do you have this rest?

And so to puzzle it out would be to err on the side of saying, well, let’s see if we theologically have this. And if we theologically have this, then we must have this.

And he’s saying, “No, no, no. That’s not what I’m saying. I’m saying that the question that you have to ask yourself is, do you personally have this?” That’s why he says, “Today, if you hear His voice, don’t harden your hearts.”

What’s the rest? Verse 3. *“For we who have believed enter that rest.”* Verse 11: *“Let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall through following the same example of disobedience.”*

Now I want to close with what I posed earlier for just a minute. It seems to me, when you look at those two statements, there seems to be an eschatological rest in the future. But from those two statements inverse 3 and verse 11, it seems to me that there is a present entering into that rest that is in the future. And that’s why he can say to us, “Wait a second here. Some of you have appeared not to have entered that eschatological rest because of your present disobedience.

Now I want to show you something that’s really profound, especially when you think about it from this angle and from this aspect, okay? He uses two different words for *rest*. He uses the word *catapalsam*. That’s the word for *rest* that he uses. But one time in verse 9 he uses another word for *rest*, and it’s *sabbatismos*. And the word *sabbatismos* in verse 9 is the word *Sabbath*. It’s the word for what? That day of rest amongst the Jews.



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Now that was not just an Israelite thing. That was something where, if you go all the way back to the creation mandate, there was a giving of the Sabbath rest. Now it wasn't the day that was given at that moment. But it was the rest that was given at that moment.

But the day upon which it was given was given to tell something theological to Adam. I want you to think about this just for a minute. Adam was supposed to work on the first day of the week, which was Sunday, to work from Sunday all the way to Friday, and then rest. And that encapsulated the *do this and live* theology of the pre-Fall state. The week was laid out in the format of *do this and live*. Work, Adam, and then rest. Do this and then live.

Isn't it interesting that when Christ comes it's reconfigured so that we rest at the beginning of the week, and then we work? It's our theology, isn't it? We rest so that we might do.

Now I want you to think about this. Why does he give the word *sabbatismos* here? Why does He change the word at one point here? I'll tell you why. He changes the word because what He's saying is this. He is saying that there is a way that you can manifest your obedience—not just one way; there are many ways,—but there is a way that you can tangibly manifest your rest that is eschatological. And that is by resting on that appointed day of the Sabbath that comes around once a week that is now not Saturday but Sunday.

And this is why I think that he tells them later not to forsake the assembling together. Do not go back to Saturday with the Jews! Continue to enter into that rest now and manifest it by resting on that appointed day. And then on that appointed day look forward to the *catapalsam*. In other words, week by week *sabbatismos* that you might enter into *catapalsam* in the future. Faith is expressed then in this obedience, in an actual resting on the rest that God has appointed once a week. And I'm going to stop there and ask if there are any questions. That was a whirlwind. Yes, go ahead.

**Participant:** Some preachers say that Sunday is the Christian Sabbath. But that's not true, is it?

**Jeff:** Well I'd rather call it the Lord's Day, because that's the way the New Testament names it. I'd rather call it the Lord's Day. But Sabbath is just rest.

**Participant:** But there was no evening and no morning for the seventh day. We're still in it.

**Jeff:** But there was an end to that seventh day because the week started over again, right?

**Participant:** Not in Genesis. Time wise, yes.

**Jeff:** Yes, time wise.

**Participant:** It's still the Sabbath rest.

**Jeff:** Well, I have a little bit of a disagreement with that in the sense that only those who are in Christ are in that Sabbath rest. At the creation there was this model to work and then enter the rest. And he didn't; he fell. And so a Redeemer was appointed. And that's why I like the model better that there is now a rest for those who are by faith in Christ.

**Participant:** Available for everyone.

**Jeff:** Available for everyone who hears, yes. Don't

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**Don:** Westminster does use the language that the first day of the week is the Christian Sabbath in chapter 21.

**Jeff:** Yes. And I don't quibble about the language. That's what I say. Sabbath just means rest. So it's the Lord's Day. If somebody wants to call it the Christian Sabbath, I'm okay with that because that just means the Christian rest. And that's the *sabbatismos* that's here. But I frankly don't particularly use the word *Sabbath* but the Lord's Day, because when you use the word *Sabbath*, that creates connotations in the minds of people that quite frankly can be negative in our post-evangelical culture. Anybody else? Yes?

**Participant:** Pastor Jeff, your talk is very poignant for me today because I just had a debate with a good friend of mine who was supposed to be here today, but he's not. He's a believer. But he recently heard some very convincing arguments from Seventh Day Adventists stating that the church has it all wrong, that we should be worshiping on Saturday, and that it's the church of Rome's fault for instituting Sunday as the day of worship. Is that something you could touch on?

**Jeff:** Yes. So when you think about it, one of the points they would drive at is the immutability of God's law. And so they would say, look. Saturday was given as the day of rest, and that's an immutable ordinance given by God. And the fact of the matter is that the day is not the immutable ordinance. The rest is the immutable ordinance. And because the day is ancillary it can change without changing the immutable ordinance of rest. That's a fundamental piece in this. And so when you go to the New Testament you find that the rest remains, and yet the day changes. You have to parse out what it is then that is immutable.

For instance, God will use even the Lord's Day, or He'll use the Sabbath in the Old Testament not just as a creation ordinance. He'll actually pull that out as a covenant with Israel. But that covenant that He makes with Israel is made in time. It's a temporal application of the creation ordinance of the Sabbath. So there are these ways in which God will use even His own ordinances in different manners and in different respects. But the point is, what is it that's immutable about it? Is that which is immutable about it the day? Is that which is immutable about it the covenant He makes with Israel? No, what is immutable is that He has appointed a day of rest. And how that is applied by Him is obviously of His own choosing. The day of rest can change and the application of it can change in terms of the way He uses it.

**Participant:** I'm afraid I got hung up on high-handed and rebellious sins ought not to characterize us. I'm afraid I was thinking about that for the rest of the talk. *(Laughter)* So while high-handed and rebellious sins ought not to characterize us, can low-handed and reluctant sins continue with us? I mean, this almost sounds like mortal and venial sins. *(Laughter)* There are really bad sins, and as the Book of Common Prayer says, “*notorious and open sins.*” And the only reason I ask that is because it's interesting that you're talking about this, because I'm preaching on it this Sunday. And I'm talking about the fact that in God's eyes high-handed and rebellious sins don't really look any different from low-handed and reluctant sins.

**Jeff:** Yes, and you know, I think that's a good question. Several years ago I went through the book of Leviticus with my congregation in the evening. And one of the things

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that kept coming up in the book was that these sacrifices were for unintentional sins. Let me just see if I can lay eye to something I’m talking about here.

**Participant:** While you’re looking for that, the thought I had is brothers, I want you to think about this. In this letter to the Hebrews was read in a church congregation, and if Jeff’s analysis is correct, think how much deeper that analysis of that letter would have been in the first century compared to what we normally get at church. I mean, it’s pitiful what we get in church today compared to a deeper look at things. And we focus on the superficial and not on the deeper things, if indeed—or maybe Jeff is just making this up with this analysis. Nice work. *(Laughter)* But if it bears any semblance to reality, it says that we have to dig deeply and mine the meaning. And in most churches you do not get that.

**Jeff:** You know, I’ll tell you what. We’ll do like we did the last time. I’ll go back; it’s been several years. And I’m going to spend the rest of the time looking through the text. I’ll come back and I’ll deal with that next time in the beginning, and if you have a question you can ask that. So let me just put it off until next time and we’ll deal with it right at the beginning.

**Participant:** I was thinking that according to what Rich was saying, the way you explained that, about not going back to the Sabbath the way the Jews did, beginning with the rest . . .

**Jeff:** Yes.

**Participant:** I was thinking at that time that sort of answers the Seventh Day Adventist thing in the fact that they don’t get the message of what you preach.

**Jeff:** Yes, right. That’s right. Okay, let’s pray briefly and then we’ll adjourn. Father in heaven, thanks for the day and for the time You’ve given us. Thank You for the day of work that You’ve set before us. And as we anticipate the Lord’s Day and the day of rest, Lord we ask that You’ll help us to really anticipate that, that we might indeed give ourselves to rest and enjoy it, for we ask it in Christ’s name. Amen.

**Men:** Amen. *(Applause)*