

# The Sabbath a Delight!

*There is a need of a Sabbath reform among us, who profess to serve God's holy rest day." Evangelism, 245*

## How Should We Keep the Sabbath?

### Preparation for the Sabbath

#### **What preparations in our homes should be done before the Sabbath?**

"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... 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." Child Guidance, 528.

"All preparation should be made, every stitch taken, on the six working days; all cooking for the Sabbath should be done on the preparation day...The commandment is, 'Bake that which ye will bake today, and seethe that ye will seethe, for tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath.' That day is not to be given to the cooking of food." Lake Union Herald, April 14, 1909.

#### **When should all ordinary work be completed?**

"Before the setting of the sun let all secular work be laid aside and all secular papers be put out of sight." The Faith I Live By, 34.

"We should jealously guard the edges of the Sabbath. Remember that every moment is consecrated, holy time." Testimonies, vol. 6, 356.

#### **What are employers responsible to do for their employees on preparation day?**

"Whenever it is possible, employers should give their workers the hours from Friday noon until the beginning of the Sabbath. Give them time for preparation, that they may welcome the Lord's Day with quietness of mind. By such a course you will suffer no loss even in temporal things." Testimonies, vol. 6 356.

#### **What other type of work is needed before the Sabbath?**

"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.' " The Faith I Live By, 34.

#### **How should families spend the opening of the 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." Testimonies, vol. 6, 356, 357.

### **Behavior Upon the Sabbath**

#### **What should our attitude and behavior be when we are in the house of God?**

"Humility and reverence should characterize the deportment of all who come into the presence of God. In the name of Jesus we may come before Him with confidence, but we must not approach Him with the boldness of presumption, as though He were on a level with ourselves. There are those who address the great and all-powerful and holy God, who dwelleth in light unapproachable, as they would address an equal, or even an inferior. There are those who conduct themselves in His house as they would not presume to do in the audience chamber of an earthly ruler. These should remember that they are in His sight whom seraphim adore, before whom angels veil their faces. God is greatly to be revered; all who truly realize His presence will bow in humility before Him, and, like Jacob beholding the vision of God, they will cry out, 'How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.' " Patriarchs and Prophets, 252.

"When the worshipers enter the place of meeting, they should do so with decorum, passing quietly to their seats...Common talking, whispering, and laughing should not be permitted in the house of worship, either before or after the service. Ardent, active piety should characterize the worshipers." Testimonies, vol. 5, 492.

"When the word is spoken, you should remember, brethren, that you are listening to the voice of God through His delegated servant. Listen attentively. Sleep not for one instant, because by this slumber you may lose the very words that you need most—the very words which, if heeded, would save your feet from straying into wrong paths. Satan and his angels are busy creating a paralyzed condition of the senses so that cautions, warnings, and reproofs shall not be heard; or if heard, that they shall not take effect upon the heart and reform the life. Sometimes a little child may so attract the attention of the hearers that the precious seed does not fall into good ground and bring forth fruit." Testimonies, vol. 5, 493.

#### **Can God be dishonored by our children's behavior in the house of God?**

"The house of God is desecrated and the Sabbath violated by Sabbath believers' children. They run about the house, play, talk, and manifest their evil tempers in the very meetings where the saints have met together to glorify God and to worship Him in the beauty of holiness. The place that should be holy, where a holy stillness should reign, and where there should be perfect order, neatness, and humility, is made to be a perfect Babylon and a place where confusion, disorder, and untidiness reign. This is enough to shut out God from our assemblies and cause His wrath to be kindled, that He will not be pleased to go out with the armies of Israel to battle against our enemies." Selected Messages, Book 3, 257

#### **Does all of the Sabbath need to be spent in meetings?**

"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. 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. 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 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." Testimonies, vol. 2, 583.

### **Upon whom should our speech be focused on the Sabbath?**

"When you are speaking of your hope in God, of Jesus and of his soon coming, and of the beauties of the New Earth, you are not speaking your own words. Of these things you may freely speak on the Sabbath. On six days you may talk of business matters, and lay plans that are necessary; but the Sabbath is holy time, and all worldly thoughts must, on that day, be dismissed from the mind. The blessing of God will then rest upon you, and you will have the sweet consolations of his Spirit, and you will also have confidence when you approach the throne of grace." The Youth's Instructor, February 1, 1853.

### **Where should our thoughts be on the Sabbath?**

"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." Patriarchs and Prophets, 307, 308.

"The human agent cannot afford to lose these blessings by dishonoring God in their loose habits and practices. This is a day of meditation and of closely examining our own spiritual condition before God. 'Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith.' On that day have no loose, cheap, common talk." Manuscript Releases, vol. 21, 295.

"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." Gospel Workers, 207, 208.

### **Are we to leave all worldly occupations on the Sabbath?**

"The Sabbath is not intended to be a period of useless inactivity. The law forbids secular labor on the rest day of the Lord; the toil that gains a livelihood must cease; no labor for worldly pleasure or profit is lawful upon that day; but as God ceased His labor of creating, and rested upon the Sabbath and blessed it, so man is to leave the occupations of his daily life, and devote those sacred hours to healthful rest, to worship, and to holy deeds." The Desire of Ages, 207.

"God has given men six days wherein to labor, and He requires that their own work be done in the six working days. Acts of necessity and mercy are permitted on the Sabbath, the sick and suffering are at all times to be cared for; but unnecessary labor is to be strictly avoided." Patriarchs and Prophets, 307.

### **When is it necessary that some labor be done upon the Sabbath?**

"There are cases in which Christ has given permission to labor even on the Sabbath in saving the life of men or of animals. But if we violate the letter of the fourth commandment for our own advantage from a pecuniary point of view we become Sabbath breakers and are guilty of transgressing all the commandments, for if we offend in one point we are guilty of all." Testimonies, vol. 1, 531.

"Your neglect to attend the public worship of God is a serious error. The privileges of divine service will be as beneficial to you as to others and are fully as essential. You may be unable to avail yourself of these privileges as often as do many others. You will frequently be called, upon the Sabbath, to visit the sick, and may be obliged to make it a day of exhausting labor. Such labor to relieve the suffering was pronounced by our Saviour a work of mercy and no violation of the Sabbath. But when you regularly devote your Sabbaths to writing or labor, making no special change, you harm your own soul, give to others an example that is not worthy of imitation, and do not honor God." Counsels on Health, 368.

### **Is the Sabbath to be spent sleeping?**

"None should feel at liberty to spend sanctified time in an unprofitable manner. It is displeasing to God for Sabbath-keepers to sleep during much of the Sabbath. They dishonor their Creator in so doing, and, by their example, say that the six days are too precious for them to spend in resting. They must make money, although it be by robbing themselves of needed sleep, which they make up by sleeping away holy time. They then excuse themselves by saying, "The Sabbath was given for a day of rest. I will not deprive myself of rest to attend meeting; for I need rest." Such make a wrong use of the sanctified day." Gospel Workers, 208.

### **How should we be dressed when we come to worship God upon the Sabbath?**

"All should be taught to be neat, clean, and orderly in their dress, but not to indulge in that external adorning which is wholly inappropriate for the sanctuary. There should be no display of the apparel; for this encourages irreverence. The attention of the people is often called to this or that fine article of dress, and thus thoughts are intruded that should have no place in the hearts of the worshipers. God is to be the subject of thought, the object of worship; and anything that attracts the mind from the solemn, sacred service is an offense to Him. The parading of bows and ribbons, ruffles and feathers, and gold and silver ornaments is a species of idolatry and is wholly inappropriate for the sacred service of God, where the eye of every worshiper should be single to His glory." Testimonies, vol. 5, 499.

"The ten commandments spoken by Jehovah from Sinai cannot live in the hearts of persons of disorderly, filthy habits. If ancient Israel could not so much as listen to the proclamation of that holy law, unless they had obeyed the injunction of Jehovah, and had cleansed their clothing, how can that sacred law be written upon the hearts of persons who are not cleanly in person, in clothing, or in their houses? It is impossible. Their profession may be as high as Heaven, yet it is not worth a straw. Their influence disgusts unbelievers. Better if they had ever remained outside the ranks of God's loyal people. The house of God is dishonored by such professors. All who meet upon the Sabbath to worship God should, if possible, have a neat, well-fitting, comely suit to wear in the house of worship. It is a dishonor to the Sabbath, and to God and his house, for those who profess that the Sabbath is the holy of the Lord, and honorable, to wear the same clothing upon the Sabbath that they have worn through the week while laboring upon their farms, when they can obtain other. If there are worthy persons who, with their whole heart would honor the lord of the Sabbath, and the worship of God, and who cannot obtain a change of clothing, let those who are able, donate to such a Sabbath suit, that they may appear in the house of God with cleanly, fitting apparel. A greater uniformity in dress would be pleasing to God. Those who expend means on costly apparel and extra fixings, can by a little self-denial exemplify pure religion, by simplicity of clothing, and then use the means they have usually

expended needlessly in aiding some poor brother or sister, whom God loves, to obtain neat and modest apparel." Selected Messages, Book 2, 474, 475.

### **Should travel be avoided when possible?**

"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." Testimonies, vol. 6, 359.

### **What should Sabbath meals be like?**

"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." Testimonies, vol. 6, 357.

"Cooking on the Sabbath should be avoided; but it is not therefore necessary to eat cold food. In cold weather the food prepared the day before should be heated. And let the meals, however simple, be palatable and attractive. Especially in families where there are children, it is well, on the Sabbath, to provide something that will be regarded as a treat, something the family do not have every day." The Ministry of Healing, 307, 308.

## **Children and the Sabbath**

### **How should children be taught to regard the Sabbath?**

"All who love God should do what they can to make the Sabbath a delight, holy and honorable. They cannot do this by seeking their own pleasure in sinful, forbidden amusements. They can do much to exalt the Sabbath in their families, and make it the most interesting day of the week. We should devote time to interest our children. We can walk out with them in the open air. A change will have a happy influence upon them. We can sit with them in the groves, and in the bright sunshine, and give their restless minds something to feed upon by conversing with them upon the works of God, and inspire them with love and reverence by calling their attention to the beautiful objects in nature. The Sabbath should be made so interesting to our families that its weekly return will be hailed with joy. In no better way can parents exalt and honor the Sabbath than to devise means to impart proper instruction to their families, and to interest them in spiritual things, giving them correct views of the character of God, and what he requires of us, in order to perfect Christian characters and to attain to eternal life. Parents, make the Sabbath a delight, that your children shall look forward to it, and have a welcome in their hearts for it." Review and Herald, May 30, 1871.

### **How should parents keep the Sabbath with their children?**

"The parents may take their children outdoors to view God in nature. They can be pointed to the blooming flowers and the opening buds, the lofty trees and beautiful spires of grass, and

taught that God made all these in six days and rested on the seventh day and hallowed it. Thus the parents may bind up their lessons of instruction to their children, so that when these children look upon the things of nature, they will call to mind the great Creator of them all. Their thoughts will be carried up to nature's God— back to the creation of our world, when the foundation of the Sabbath was laid, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. Such are the lessons to be impressed on the minds of our children." Child Guidance, 533.

"Parents should not allow their children to be out with others in play or amusement. I have found that on the Sabbath-day many are indifferent, and do not know where their children are or what they are doing. Parents can and should give attention to their children, reading to them the most attractive portions of Bible history, educating them to reverence the Sabbath-day, keeping it according to the commandment. This cannot be done if the parents feel no burden to interest their children. But they can make the Sabbath a delight if they will take the proper course. The children can be interested in good reading or in conversation about the salvation of their souls. But they will have to be educated and trained. The natural heart does not love to think of God, of heaven, or of heavenly things. There must be a continual pressing back of the current of worldliness and inclination to evil, and a letting in of heavenly light. It takes line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little." Review and Herald, April 14, 1885.

### **What activities are Sabbath breaking?**

"Parents, above every thing, take care of your children upon the Sabbath. Do not suffer them to violate God's holy day by playing in the house or out of doors. You may just as well break the Sabbath yourselves as to let your children do it, and when you suffer your children to wander about, and suffer them to play upon the Sabbath, God looks upon you as Sabbath-breakers." Review and Herald, September 19, 1854.

### **Blessings for Sabbath-keepers**

#### **What is the promise for those who keep the Sabbath holy?**

"All heaven was represented to me as beholding and watching upon the Sabbath those who acknowledge the claims of the fourth commandment and are observing the Sabbath. Angels were marking their interest in, and high regard for, this divine institution. Those who sanctified the Lord God in their hearts by a strictly devotional frame of mind, and who sought to improve the sacred hours in keeping the Sabbath to the best of their ability, and to honor God by calling the Sabbath a delight --these the angels were specially blessing with light and health, and special strength was given them." The Faith I Live By, 35.

"Those who will honor the Lord in keeping His Sabbath holy will be blessed of the Lord. There is not more than one in one hundred who do honor to God in keeping His Sabbath from polluting it. The Word of God is not practiced by thousands who profess to be Christians. The looseness of the habits and practices in observing the Sabbath has become a customary thing. God help us to see that great blessings are enfolded in the observance of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment." Manuscript Releases, vol. 25, 295.

#### **Can God bless those who do not honor His Sabbath?**

"God is merciful. His requirements are reasonable, in accordance with the goodness and benevolence of his character. He claims the Sabbath as his own, and will not let his blessing rest upon those who disregard his holy day; yet the Sabbath institution was designed as a blessing to mankind. Man was not made to fit the Sabbath; the Sabbath was made after his creation, to meet the necessities of his nature. The Sabbath should stand before the people in its moral power, answering its original design—to keep in remembrance the living God, the Creator of the

heavens and the earth. But the Sabbath has been treated with great disrespect. Men have dared to detract from its dignity; they have ventured to remove the sanctity placed upon it by the Creator himself." The Signs of the Times, May 13, 1886.

"He will not pass by unnoticed those who crowd upon his Sabbath, and employ time for their own use which belongs to him. Some professed Sabbath-keepers will intrude upon the Sabbath in doing those things which should have been done previous to the Sabbath. Such may think they gain a little time; but instead of being advantaged by robbing God of holy time, which he has reserved to himself, they will lose. The Lord will afflict them for their transgression of the fourth commandment; and that time they thought to gain by intruding upon the Sabbath, will prove a curse to them. God's prospering hand withdrawn, will cause a decrease in all their possessions, instead of an increase. God will surely punish the transgressor." Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 1, 259.

**Delight your self also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass. He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him. Psalms 37:4-7.**

**If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:**

**Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it. Isaiah 58:13, 14**