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Teaching Notes

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The Ten Commandments: The Fourth Commandment, Part 3

Exodus 20:8-11

Exodus 20:1-17 And God spoke all these words:

2 "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

3 "You shall have no other gods before me.

4 "You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.

5 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me,

6 but showing love to a thousand *generations* of those who love me and keep my commandments.

7 "You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

8 "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.

9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates.

11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

12 "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

13 "You shall not murder.

14 "You shall not commit adultery.

15 "You shall not steal.

16 "You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

17 "You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

I. The Fourth Commandment: Remember the Sabbath

A. What the Commandment Says

vs. 8-11 "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. 11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy."

- 1) Remember the Sabbath 2) Keep it holy 3) Do all work in six days 4) Rest (do no work) on the seventh
- 5) The command is for everyone 6) The command is patterned after God's original creation

B. The "First Table of the Law": On Right Worship of God

Commandment #1: The Object of Worship—the only true God

Commandment #2: The Mode of Worship—not with physical representations

Commandment #3: The Manner of Worship—reverence for the holy Name of God

Commandment #4: The Time of Worship—the Sabbath day

C. The Question: Is this commandment still binding on Christians today?

II. Man's Sinful Response: Two Extremes

A. License: Ignoring the Sabbath as a thing of light consequence

The Jews collecting manna on the Sabbath day

The man collecting firewood

The Jews of Jerusalem in Jeremiah's day buying and selling

The merchants camping outside the walls all night in Nehemiah's day

B. Legalism: Making an abundance of laws to strangle it to death

The Pharisees again and again

Matthew 12:2 When the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, "Look! Your disciples are doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath."

John 9:16 Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath."

C. One other sinful response: grudging, irritable obedience

Malachi 1:13 And you say, 'What a burden!' and you sniff at it contemptuously," says the LORD Almighty.

III. Christ's Ministry: Restoration or Removal???

A. Constantly battling Pharisees on the Sabbath

B. BUT Did He Abolish the Sabbath?

Mark 2:27-28 Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

Mark 3:4 Then Jesus asked them, "Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?"

C. Christ's View on the Law Generally

Matthew 5:17-19 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. 19 Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

D. Future Prediction

Matthew 24:20 Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath.

E. Argument from Silence: No Clear Abolition Anywhere... Only Restoration

IV. Sabbath Verses in the New Testament Epistles

A. Paul's Exasperation with the Galatians... but is the Sabbath in view here?

Galatians 4:9-11 But now that you know God-- or rather are known by God-- how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable principles? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again? 10 You are observing special days and months and seasons and years! 11 I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you.

B. Paul's Statement on Christian Freedom in Romans 14... but is the Sabbath in view here?

Romans 14:1-13 *As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. 2 One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. 3 Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. 4 Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand. 5 One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. 6 The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. 7 For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. 8 If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. 9 For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living. 10 Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; 11 for it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." 12 So then each of us will give an account of himself to God. 13 Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother.*

Romans 14:23 *But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.*

C. Paul's Clearest Statement on this issue... but is the Sabbath itself abolished here?

Colossians 2:16-17 *Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. 17 These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.*

D. Puzzling Hebrews 4: the "Sabbath-rest" that "remains" for the people of God

Hebrews 4:9-11 There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; *10 for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. 11 Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.*

Two of God's "rests" in the Old Testament

1) Resting after creation 2) Resting after Promised Land conquest is completed with God entering the Temple

Solomon's prayer of dedication:

2 Chronicles 6:41 *"Now arise, O LORD God, and come to your resting place, you and the ark of your might. May your priests, O LORD God, be clothed with salvation, may your saints rejoice in your goodness.*

V. “Perpetuity and Change of the Sabbath”

A. Is the Sabbath a “Perpetual” Regulation? Edwards’s Argument

1. It is essential and reasonable for the people of God to have a specific day of consecrated corporate worship
2. Such is openly commanded in the New Testament

Hebrews 10:24-25 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.25 Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another-- and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

3. Such a day must be universally set and agreed upon

B. Change of the Sabbath: No Longer the Seventh Day, but now the First Day

1. Edwards’s observation: nothing in the fourth Commandment specified what day of the week the Sabbath should be... just a cycle of six work days followed by a seventh day of rest
2. Christian practice almost universally: worship on the first day of the week
3. New Testament practice
 - a. foundation: Christ’s resurrection

John 20:1 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance.

John 20:19 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

John 20:26 A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

- b. other statements

Acts 20:7 On the first day of the week we came together to break bread. Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2 Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. 2 On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

Revelation 1:10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet

C. The "New Creation"

1. Seventh-day Sabbath commemorates the completion of God's first creation
2. First-day Sabbath commemorates the beginning of God's new creation

Isaiah 65:17 "Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind."

Isaiah 66:22 "As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me," declares the LORD, "so will your name and descendants endure."

1 Corinthians 15:20 But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

1 Corinthians 15:49 And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven.

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

VI. Reasoning from the Sanctification Work of the Spirit

A. The Spirit's Work in Us: Fully Meet the Requirements of the Law

Romans 8:3-4 For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, 4 in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.

B. None of the Other Ten Commandments Have Been "Fully Met" in Our Behavior

C. Christian Desires Full Sanctification... in Each of these Ten Commandments

1. "God, be my only God... my true God, the center of my existence, my only treasure and pleasure."
2. "God, may I never worship an idol, either through false conceptions of you, or through materialistic desires."
3. "God, may I honor your holy name with every fiber of my being, trembling at your power and Name, living fully for the glory of your Name!"
4. "God, may I so desire to focus on you, to love you, to cherish you that I am delighted to set apart one day in seven as completely yours."

5. "God, enable me to honor my father and my mother as you honored them by setting them over me from my birth. May I honor them fully and gladly."
6. "God, may I never murder anyone, even through the anger of heart that comes so easily over me and which you condemn as moral filth."
7. "God, may I never commit adultery, neither with body or in my heart through lust."
8. "God, may I never steal, honoring the boundaries you have set around the possessions of others."
9. "God, may I so cherish the truth that I would never speak a single false word about my neighbor."
10. "God, remove all covetousness and greed from my heart and enable me to be completely content and satisfied with what you have given me."

VII. How To Keep the Christian Sabbath

A. Sacrifice for a Greater Pleasure

Isaiah 58:13-14 "If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight and the LORD's holy day honorable, and if you honor it by not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words, 14 then you will find your joy in the LORD, and I will cause you to ride on the heights of the land and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob." The mouth of the LORD has spoken.

1. Keep yourself from "doing as you please"
2. Learn a new and deeper pleasure: delighting in the Lord Himself

Psalm 73:25 Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you.

B. How to Keep the Sabbath

1. Personal holiness

Hate sin more, and keep more diligently from sin than usual

2. Corporate worship

Assemble gladly with the people of God for public worship and the hearing of the word

3. Family worship

Gather with your family (as you are able) for family worship and mutual edification

4. Be not passive, lazy, or listless... but SEEK THE LORD ENERGETICALLY

works of mercy

works of piety

works of necessity

C. Cases of Conscience

What about “lawful pleasures” that are not focused on Christ (i.e. secular pursuits)

Simple question: which would you rather do, and why????