

Deuteronomy 5:12-15
June, 2021
Good Shepherd, Beaver Dam

It has become the custom, before a special day occurs in someone's life, to send out "Save the Date" postcards. These cards are often used to announce a wedding, a graduation, or a birthday that will be celebrated later. Receiving a "Save the Date" postcard is a good thing because our lives can become busy. I know of people who are double and triple "booked" when it comes to family, children, grandchildren, and even great-grandchildren. Usually when we receive such an invitation, we put it in a special place until we know for sure that the date is "safe." That day is special, we want to "guard" it.

Sunday is our usual day to worship. Why is attendance down in many churches and denominations? Why is it that fewer people are finding it important to "save" or **Guard the Sabbath Day**?

Let's see what God says. Israel was camped on the east side of the Jordan River. Mt. Nebo was nearby and the Canaanite city of Jericho was across the Jordan due west of them. It was forty years and eleven months since God had led Israel out of Egypt. Moses was giving his farewell address to God's people on the east side of the Jordan because he could not enter the Promised Land.

Moses had given the 10 Commandments to Israel when they were camped at Mt. Sinai. At Sinai the command was to remember the Sabbath Day. At the Jordan River, the command was to observe the Sabbath Day. Why is the wording different?

The Hebrew word for "observe" is more intense. It means to "exercise great care with something." We could translate it, "Guard the Sabbath day."

The Children of Israel were about to enter and then conquer the land of Canaan. Their lives would change from wanderers to city

dwellers. Their lives were about to get very busy. So the Lord urged the people to guard the Sabbath Day so they would be rested both physically and spiritually on a regular basis.

The Lord urged Israel to set aside the Sabbath as a day for the Lord, to guard it as the most important day of their week. Why?

- *Because Israel would have an opportunity to hear God's Word.*
- *They would have an opportunity to worship their God.*
- *They would have opportunities to grow in their faith and find spiritual rest in the promises of a Savior who would come to free them from their sins.*
- *Observing the Sabbath Day was to be a priority.*

The Holy Spirit chose to use this word "observe" so that we would take great care in observing our Sabbath Day because it still belongs to the Lord! It is still a day set aside for God's Word, for worship, for praise and giving God thanks.

And the guarding of the Sabbath extended beyond Israel to those who were not Israelites. God's people could practice evangelism. God's people, by keeping the Sabbath Day, would show foreigners that God was special to them. God was a priority in their lives!

The worship of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is also to be a priority in our lives! God doesn't want us to merely remember this day, not merely to observe this day, He wants us to guard this day. God wants us to mark this day on our calendars and make it the most important day of our week.

Why?

- *Because we will have more opportunities to gather with other believers.*
- *We will have another opportunity to hear God's Word.*
- *We will have another opportunity to worship our Savior, sing His praises, and grow in our faith.*
- *We will also be strengthened in faith before we leave this House of God and enter the war-zone of this sin-filled world!*

We don't have to worship on Saturday. We can work on Sunday. The Bible clearly teaches that Jesus died on the cross to free us from our sins by His death and resurrection. The Bible also teaches that Jesus fulfilled God's Law for us.

The requirements to rest and worship on the Sabbath Day (Saturday) are no longer binding on Christians. Paul wrote, Do not let anyone judge you...with regard to...a Sabbath Day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality is found in Christ. Any day is a great day to worship God!

God wants us to guard our worship day and keep it holy so that we don't despise preaching and His Word, but regard it as holy and gladly hear and learn it.

How do we do that? We guard the Sabbath Day when -----

- *we make it the most important day of our week and plan on being in church to worship.*
- *we make it a priority to gather with other believers and worship in order to grow in our faith.*
- *we take time out of our busy schedules to sit down and read God's Word for ourselves (Bible, Meditations, Forward in Christ, or another devotional book).*
- *we teach our children the truths of salvation, and when we worship with them in church.*
- *we show our children that the worship of God is our priority.*

Does your worship life show the people around you that worshiping your Savior is a priority to you? Or does your church attendance show that God is not a priority in your life and you go to church only if you don't have anything else to do?

We worship God because we know that God loves us, has forgiven us, takes care of us, and is getting ready to take us to heaven. We want to praise God for His love, thank Him for our salvation, and willingly serve Him because He loves us in spite of who we are.

Jesus says, Come to Me all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. The rest Jesus speaks of is not physical rest, it is the spiritual rest Jesus won for us by keeping God's Law perfectly and giving up His life to pay for our sins.

When the Old Testament believers were in their homes on the Sabbath Day resting from their work, they remembered the goodness of their God and looked forward to their future glory because of what their Savior would do for them.

May the Lord of peace keep us in His spiritual rest! That rest is ours by faith. It will be ours to experience throughout eternity.

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