

“Sabbath Rest: What did Jesus Do?” Isaiah 58:13-14; Mark 2:23-3:5

Context: The concluding eleven chapters of Isaiah view the theme of salvation from a post-exilic perspective. The Remnant’s rebuilding of a devastated Jerusalem is symbolic of the coming of a New Jerusalem built by the hand of God and foreshadowed by the experiences of the Remnant in the Church age. The Sabbath became a pronounced symbol of rest experienced by the Remnant in Isaiah’s concluding chapters. Chapter 56 calls all who accept God’s invitation to salvation to avoid profaning the Sabbath by making it just another common day. Chapter 58 describes profaning the Sabbath as a day of self-centered gratification and promises delight for all who enter into the “Sabbath-rest” of God instead. Our study last week revealed the Sabbath as a sign of God’s covenant to rest in Him, to be liberated by Him, and to serve others for him. Our study left us with the question: “Did Jesus’ teaching nullify “making common/profaning” Sabbath-rest? Today, we seek to determine the answer. **Life Principle:** A weekly Sabbath-rest is an intentional time to acknowledge and rest in God’s will, a time turned away from the cares of self-centered gratification and toward an expectation of His provision of delight.

1. Jesus’ Sabbath-rest not Pharisaic – Mark: 2:22-26; cp Matthew 12:6

In the context of repentance, asserting His power to forgive and heal from sin, and rethinking the fast, Jesus rescued God’s call for Sabbath-rest from Pharisaic rules and formalities. He purposed to travel by wheat fields where His disciples gleaned grain to eat. The Pharisees considered their action harvesting and threshing. Jesus appealed to principles of holy mission, wellbeing, compassion, and His rule over the Sabbath for correction to petty manmade rules.

2. Jesus’ Sabbath-rest not antinomian – Mark 3:1-5

Jesus reiterates the principle of doing justice and being righteous before God as fulfilling God’s law of Sabbath-rest. These are “just actions” done by hearts softened to partake in the righteous nature of God. Healing as ministry typified a vision of completeness and the perfect rest as we enter into God’s new heaven and earth and are cured from human fallenness.

Study questions:

- Isaiah 56:2 and 58:13-14 are post-exilic prophecies with eschatological implications. As a **Bible study method**, relate the blessings of Sabbath-rest of Isaiah 58:13-14 to the New Creation of Isaiah 65:16-25 and Isaiah 66:23. How does rest in the New Jerusalem of Isaiah 65:16-25; 66:22-23 compare with the New Jerusalem of Revelation 21:2ff? How do these blessings relate to the two bases of “Sabbath Rest” in Exodus 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 5:12-15? What do these passages have to do with Matthew 5:18?
- Study Jesus’ use of David’s eating of the bread of the presence, loyal love, and knowledge of God as stories of correction of Sabbaterian legalism (cp. 1 Samuel 21:1-6; Hosea 6:6). What did the bread of the presence signify then, in Christ’s time, now, and in the future (cf. Leviticus 24:5-9; John 6:41; Matthew 26:26-30)? Who was allowed to eat the bread then and now (cf. 1 Peter 2:9)? What reason did David give the high priest for partaking of the bread? Who was the king that sent David on his mission? What does the bread of presence have to do with what we do for our Sabbath-rest?
- In Isaiah 56:2-7, the word Sabbath is used in the context of the salvation of the foreigner. Our doctrinal statement describes God’s part and our part in salvation (see footnotes 11-16 ‘**On Salvation**’ in our **doctrinal statement** under **what we believe** at www.gracepointfellowship.org). What do ‘keeping a Sabbath-rest holy’ and ‘making it a delight’ have to do with the four aspects of salvation in your life?

Transformation exercise:

Today, meditate on Isaiah 58:13-14 and study the questions from this sermon. Turn off distracting digital devices that make this day common to your world. Seek to adorn His day by taking a prayer walk with God before sunset and delight in His creation. Close your night in family or individual prayer.