

A Day of Rest

Adapted from a Family Talk by the Rt. Rev. Alfred Acton

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work.... For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it (Exodus 20:8-11).

Children, in our world we work or study for six days, and we rest the seventh day. The seventh day is the Sabbath, or Sunday for Christians. The reason Sunday is the Lord's day is that the Lord rose from the sepulcher on Sunday.

Sabbath is a word which means a day of rest. The Lord wants us to rest from our regular work one day a week, and to turn our minds and hearts to Him. He wants us to learn about Him and to worship in His house. We do these things when we go to church.

When the Lord gave the Ten Commandments to the Children of Israel, there were certain things that they could not understand then. He wanted them to keep the Sabbath day holy, so He told them not to do any work on the Sabbath. But when the Lord came on earth in person, He once went into the fields and picked corn or wheat on the Sabbath. He also healed people on the Sabbath day.

So we can see that the Lord does want us to do the work that we should do on Sunday. It is good for us to help with the dinner or with the dishes, or with brothers and sisters. Ministers work on Sunday, and nurses do also, and policemen.

What the Lord really means by telling us to keep the Sabbath day holy is for us to worship Him in church, to learn about the things that He teaches us, and then to try to follow Him and to have a feeling of good will toward others all day long. He also wants us to enjoy the day.

In the New Church we are told that when we are trying to be loving and kind to other people, then the Lord is at rest. And this is the real Sabbath. Because the angels in heaven are always loving, it is always like the Sabbath in heaven. This is what is meant by "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

Amen.