

September 3, 2023

This Week: 9:30 a.m. Reading Service
6:30 p.m. Catechism Reading Service (LD 15)

Next Week: 9:30 a.m. Reading Service
6:30 p.m. Catechism Reading Service (LD16Q40-42)
-All the Lord willing-

Collections: Today: 1st General Fund Next week: 1st General Fund
2nd Alpha Center 2nd Israel Mission

We Remember in Prayer:

- Mrs. Jennie Johnson, who was able to return home from the hospital on Tuesday and continues to heal and recover at home.
- Mr. Gary Magnuson, who continues to improve with therapy.
- Our widows and lonely ones, the unborn, our married couples, prodigal sons and daughters, and all those with hidden crosses.

MEDITATIONS

"This is the day which the Lord hath made."

I want to look at the use which is to be made of this day. The very phrase "the Lord's Day" signifies it is not only the day He has made, but the day which belongs to Him, it is His property, He Himself is associated with the day. Sometimes special days in the nation are associated with some particular person, it may be the birth, marriage or death of a king. Now if we keep those days at all we should naturally have something in our minds in relation to the person after whose name the day is called. When you come to the Lord's Day surely it behooves us to have some regard to Him with whom the day is connected.

So we have to do not with men's opinions, but with God's Divine authority and speech, and what does He say? "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." We find the remembrance of that Sabbath day to keep it holy is in the negative, and positive. First the negative "Thou shalt do no work;" no servile labor is to be entered into on that day of rest. God gave six days for man to labor for the bread that perisheth, and for profit to himself and his family. God gave man six days and God said on the seventh day thou shalt rest from these labors. When God spoke and said "Thou shalt not," that is God's command. He forbids on the day of rest menial labor to be done by man to whom he has given this day for rest.

In the next place, if we turn to the prophet Isaiah, we find man was not to do his own pleasure on that day. There are plenty of

people these days who say, "I do not believe in working, I do not believe in following my usual occupation but I believe in enjoying myself. I believe after a week of toil in the business I need fresh air and enjoyment to recuperate my mental and physical powers," and so they make the day of rest a day of pleasure seeking. One need only look around to see the vast multitudes who spend the day seeking their own pleasure. Where do they stand? What will be the end at the solemn day of reckoning, which is coming, when the Great Jehovah who spake with authority from His holy throne concerning the keeping of His day, shall bring men into judgment for thus despising and turning the day which belongs to God to their own pleasure-seeking ends and purposes.

Then there are those who say, well, I never labor on the Sabbath. I do not spend my time in my business, I put my business away on Saturday night, and I do not go pleasure-seeking. I spend the biggest part of the day in bed and I believe it is necessary to keep fit for the next week's labor. Do you know that man is as much a Sabbath breaker as the other? He is profaning the Sabbath day in the sight of God. He is doing his own pleasure, seeking his own ease, following his own will and doing that which ministers to his selfish ends and purposes.

"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." That shuts out all unnecessary travelling. That shuts out all seeking after ones carnal pleasure, and that shuts out every act and even conversation which is of a worldly character and is not honoring to the Lord God of the Sabbath, and I am afraid when you come to this point you will have to admit that we are in a very sad state with regard to keeping the Sabbath day.

Some may say, well, after all these sweeping things you have said is there nothing that is permitted to be done on the day of rest? Yes! Works of necessity and mercy. Can you bring your life and the way you spend the day of rest under those two headings? If so, your conscience is clear. When I say that, I want to remember some men's consciences, so seared they are, so accustomed to evil, that they no longer condemn them. Of course, one knows well enough the ox must be led to the water, the animals must be fed, and if a beast falls into a pit it must be lifted out. The Lord also permitted works of healing and mercy., These were necessary and lawful on the Sabbath day.

There is no law against eating, but there is a law against the purchasing and unnecessary preparing of food. I think a good many so-called Christian homes come under the ban of this law in preparing their food. Some good people think they cannot possibly do without a large hot dinner on the Lord's Day, and say, it is a custom, I must have something more on the Lord's Day. Must you? Is that so essential? Is it so important? Do you think your health would suffer very much if you did not have that little luxury? Depend upon it, if

the love of God was in exercise in your hearts you would say, let us have as little labor as possible on the Lord's Day. Let us have nothing that shall hinder in regard to Divine worship or even prevent from getting punctually to the house of God.

Though there are things forbidden on the day of rest, there are some things enjoined upon us. First, the Lord's Day is a day for worship, and when does worship begin, does it begin at half past ten or quarter to eleven? One of the Lord's people in the Bible says, "Early in the morning will I call upon Thy name." Many people think the Sabbath morning is the time to spend an extra hour in bed. They just get up, have their breakfast and get to the Lord's house a quarter of an hour late, but I question whether they are guiltless before God, whether there is not attaching to them some blame. Why should we be later in getting up on the Lord's Day morning than if we were attending to business. When I was a boy we used to sing a hymn like this:—

"This is the day when Christ arose,
So early from the dead,
Why should I keep my eyelids closed,
And waste my hours in bed."

So it is a day of worship and the place of worship particularly, of course, is the house of God. Ever since the world began people have congregated together for worship and there have been hearts which have said: "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go up to the house of the Lord." Let us be there with the people so that we may join with them in praising and worshipping God. Dr. Watts wrote: "Lord, how delightful it is to see a whole assembly worship Thee."

Do not forget the Lord's Day! Do not forget that the place appointed for the worship of God is with His saints in His house, among His people. Yet even this is not enough for real spiritual worshippers, to be just present in God's House.

As I said before, may we seek by all possible means in our power to cling to this day which the Lord hath made. Some of you have read the history of the Pilgrim Fathers. They almost reached the end of their journey very late one Saturday night, faint, weary and hungry, but such was their reverence for the day of rest, that they stayed where they were rather than spend half an hour on the Sabbath morning in getting to land where they would have shelter, rest and food. They were the men that made history, the men that honored God, put God first, served Him even at the sacrifice of their lives. They waited until the Lord's Day was over before they found their final resting place upon the main land. The Lord give us the same love for the Lord's day. May we not forget the Lord Jesus Christ who we profess to love and serve, has said this :—"The zeal of Thine House hath eaten Me up." ~Banner of Truth

NETHERLANDS REFORMED CONGREGATION

Sioux Falls, SD



*My mouth shall speak the praise of the
LORD: and let all flesh bless his holy
name for ever and ever. '*

Psalm 145:21

Church Times: 9:30 a.m. and 2:30 or 6:30 p.m.