

The Sabbath, FAQ's, By James Moriello, Pastor,

Firm Foundation Christian Church, Woonsocket, RI, 2024

“The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath” (Mark 2:27-28).

***Have your Bible open and look up every one of these references to get the most from this study.

1. Must we observe the sabbath today in this church age? What if I feel convinced I should do so?

The Sabbath is the seventh day, beginning at sundown Friday night and ending at sundown Saturday night, instituted by God through Moses under the OT based on creation days. You have liberty to honor the sabbath if you choose to, that's up to you. If that is your conviction, then do so, but also observe every other of the 613 OT Commandments perfectly, or else recognize you do this to honor God, but not because He requires it of all believers. Leave me liberty to gather to worship Sunday as the early church did (Acts 20:7) and I will give you liberty to worship Friday after sundown, or Saturday morning/afternoon. I have Jewish friends who believe in Jesus as Messiah who choose to observe the sabbath, but recognize that this is not a NT requirement. We are not under the Law of Moses, which is not 10 commandments, but all 613. You must keep them all, and since nobody can, Christ came. Don't put yourself under such bondage, John 8:32,36. The best Scriptures here are Galatians 3:19-25 and James 2:10. What Paul is saying in Romans 14:5-6 and Colossians 2:16 is that this command to keep the sabbath is not a New Testament requirement, this cannot be argued. Jesus fulfilled the ceremonial righteous requirements of the Law of Moses already. Some miss the context of Matthew 24:20, which is written specifically to Jews who are choosing to maintain observing the Sabbath. To flee from judgment of the sabbath or the winter (the rainy season) would present challenges. Matthew 5:19 is to be taken in context of Matthew 5:17, and see Romans 10:4 and Hebrews 7:12. The Sabbath is the only of the 10 Commandments not to be reiterated in the NT, all the others were, but this one was not. Generally speaking, civil and ceremonial commands are not reiterated as commands to the church age (although they were still in

effect when Jesus was on earth prior to Him dying and rising again). While many moral commands in the OT are repeated in the NT, not as a way of salvation, but as a way of pleasing God. Therefore Jesus says, "If you love Me, keep My commandments." Not to be saved, but out of thanksgiving for what Jesus has done, gave us a way already of salvation by grace. See Ephesians 2:8-10.

2. What about Exodus 31:16-17? Doesn't this teach that the sabbath must be observed continually? Is it not our moral obligation?

It's a good question, concerning which I have had occasion to be privy to the debate amongst Jewish believers in Jesus. This is exactly the specific reason my Jewish friends choose to worship on the sabbath rather than on Sunday, as is the Gentile church's custom. The passage is concerning specifically "The people of Israel." Not the church. Not the Gentiles. There is a distinction between the two peoples. Some present what is commonly taught by Covenant Theologians, which suggests that the church is the "successor" of the nation of Israel--that is not true. There is a distinction between Jew and Gentile in Romans Chapter 11 in reference to the grafting in. The grafting in is not to the Jewish nation but rather God's plan of the ages for salvation. Galatians 6:16 makes a distinction between "as many as" (Gentile believers) and "the Israel of God" (Jewish believers in Yeshua [Jesus] their Messiah). The church age has both kinds, but God still recognizes a distinct nation of Israel. The origin of this passage Exodus 31:16-17 is actually originating from another covenant than Mosaic, the Abrahamic Covenant. Established generally in Genesis 12:1-3. But specifically to the Jewish nation in Genesis 17:19-21. Ezekiel 40-48 talks about future (post-church age and post-tribulation age) Millennial Kingdom worship, in which the sabbath will be observed, and the Jewish priesthood of Zadok will be re-instituted not as a means of salvation, but for memorial sacrifices to the finished works of God. In this sense is this true. The two schools of thought are those who see the covenant obligation as being suspended in the church age on the basis of Romans 14:5-6 and Colossians 2:16 to be continued in the Messianic Kingdom, and those who see this as a ceremonial remembrance through the church age also--although those that do will not follow all the other Bible statutes concerning the Sabbath, so therefore they will tell you that they observe the day only on the basis of this text and a couple others

not for salvation but for honor of God. To be clear, No, the Sabbath is not a moral command--it is a ceremonial one (upon which the religious observances of the Old Covenant were surrounded), and a civil one required for the Theocracy of Israel (which was then, is not now, and will be in the Messianic Kingdom future). James 2:10 says you have to do all 613 if you will live by the Law of Moses. You don't get to pick some and not others, that is inconsistent thinking. But if you see the ceremonial laws as fulfilled by Christ and an area of liberty, you can choose to observe some and not others, but that has nothing at all to do with salvation--understand that point, it is essential. So in summary, You must choose, Will you live under the curse of the Law, "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23), or will you live "by faith" alone. Back to the Abrahamic Covenant, read Galatians 3:10-14. That settles it.