



METRO NEW YORK WORLD MINISTRY
ADULT SABBATH SCHOOL CONTRIBUTING NOTES
For the week of Apr 30 – May 6, 2016
Lesson #6: **The Book of Matthew**

Resting in Christ

Sabbath Afternoon

Memory Text: “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28

The Jewish people groaned under the heavy weight of Rabbinical laws. It was a religion of works. Life had enough burdens of its own without having more burdens.

But the greatest burden that men and women bare is the burden of sin. Christ came to free men from the burden of sin—from both the penalty of sin and the power of sin. All the Rabbinical laws, if men even had the time to study them all, could not help one overcome either the penalty or power of sin.

This is why we are to come to Christ. He knows the Father. He knows the way. In fact, Jesus is the way to the Father. In Him we can find sweet rest from both the penalty and burden of sin. We are better equipped to face life’s challenges. It all begins, each day, by coming unto Christ.

Sunday’s Lesson

Topic: The Light Yoke of Christ

Scripture: Matthew 11:28-30

The figure of a yoke is often in reference to that of an ox—it was a yoke for labor and service. The yoke placed upon the ox was to make his work easier not harder.

The yoke of Christ is the life of Christ, a life that is not burdened down by sin or by useless Rabbinical laws.

Inherent in the word “yoke,” is the idea of restraint. The life of Christ is a life of restraint from evil. It is freedom to do that which is good. A life of righteousness that has been freed from sin.

Think of all the burdens that sin brings into our life. It brings disease, broken relationships, evil feelings, and unsanctified thoughts.

By coming to Christ, you are no longer held by the restraint of Rabbinical laws, pagan rites, Papal rules and regulations, and those worldly standards of fashion, sensuality, money-making, and popularity.



Sabbath School Lesson Notes – May 7, 2016

We can be free from all these restraints in Christ Jesus. As Jesus said, “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” John 8:36

To receive the yoke of Christ’s life, we need the meekness and humility of Christ. We need to be teachable—eager to learn from the Savior. But if we are Christians in name only, we will find life very burdensome. We will try to serve two masters. We will try to have one foot in the world and one foot in Christ’s kingdom. We will try to hold on to both error and truth. We will try to follow our own will and the will of God. We would, in fact, be seeking the impossible. What a burden!

By going all the way with Jesus, with the His meekness and humility, we will find that His life is what life is all about. It is life more abundant. A life that is at peace with God.

By going all the way with Jesus, we have the assurance of salvation according to His Word. We know that Jesus can save all that come to Him by faith.

We see in the life of Christ, the beautiful life. It is a life that healed all who were sick. It was a life that inspired the roughest of men with hope. It was a life of the tenderest courtesies—a life full of compassion. A life of mercy. A life that remained steadfast to principle. A life that would not compromise the truth. It is the life that is offered to all.

Monday’s Lesson

Topic: Unrest Over a Rest Day

Scriptures: Matthew 12:1-8; Mark 2:23-28

It was the Sabbath, and as the disciples walked through the cornfield, they plucked some corn and ate it. The Pharisees saw this as a violation of the Sabbath. They had hoped to find fault with Jesus by disclosing this event.

To vindicate His disciples, Jesus pointed them to the case of David and his men. The law commanded that there be twelve loaves of bread in two separate piles on the table of showbread. That bread was to remain in the holy place until the next Sabbath. Then it would be eaten by the priests only and replaced with fresh loaves.

David was at the time fleeing from king Saul. David and his men were weary and hungry. They had come to Ahimelech the priest. There was only the bread to eat. They ate the bread which was contrary to the letter of the law. Why was this act not condemned? It showed that in the case of necessity the men of David did no wrong.

But Jesus took the argument even further. Do not the priests perform work on the Sabbath? Do they not kindle the fire for the sacrifice? Do they not take the life of the two lambs on the Sabbath? Do they not also eat the bread? Yet, they are blameless.



Sabbath School Lesson Notes – May 7, 2016

He presses His accusers even further. Jesus now points to Himself as One greater than the temple. If Jesus allowed His disciples to pluck a few ears of corn to meet their physical needs, then He is even greater than the Levitical law. In fact, He is Lord even of the Sabbath day.

The laws of God, were not designed to place a burden on men, but to set them at liberty. His law is the law of liberty, but men have made them burdensome laws. All the laws of God are designed for the happiness of man and to protect him from evil. In fact, man was created on the sixth day, and the Sabbath on the seventh day. Hence, the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.

This does not authorize man to do anything he wants on the Sabbath. But real necessities can be met on the Sabbath day. The clearest example of this would be the work that continues to go forth via health-care providers and pastors.

Tuesday's Lesson

Topic: Jesus' Response

Scriptures: Matthew 12:3-8

See the notes on Monday's Lesson

Wednesday's Lesson

Topic: Healing on the Sabbath

Scriptures: Matthew 12:9-14

The Pharisees asked Jesus, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath days?" Why did they ask Him that question? That "they might accuse Him."

They would find fault with Jesus if He failed to help someone that He could help. But they would find fault with Him if He broke the Sabbath.

So Jesus would argue, "If you were to show kindness to a sheep that falls into a pit, would you not pull this poor beast from the pit? How much more important is a man who is created in the image of God!"

Jesus answered their question by sharing a principle of life. It is always lawful to do that which is merciful in saving a life and in healing the body.



Sabbath School Lesson Notes – May 7, 2016

The man with a withered hand could have refused to be healed on the Sabbath, but he chose to be healed. In fact, he chose to obey the words of Jesus, which were in fact, a command. Jesus said, “Stretch forth thine hand.”

The man with the withered hand had to make a choice. Does he obey Jesus or follow the strict rules of the Pharisees? It is the duty of all to obey what God commands.

But note this bit of caution. The Lord is not giving us license to do anything we want on the Sabbath. In the first account, it is permissible to pluck ears of corn from the field in the case of an emergency. In the second, it is lawful to show mercy on the Sabbath. But this is not a license to do things on the Sabbath that can be easily done on other days. For example, we may do good by mowing someone’s lawn, but this is not a necessity or an emergency. You can help your neighbor with his lawn on another day other than the Sabbath.

In the first account, Jesus claimed to be the Lord of the Sabbath. In the second account, Jesus demonstrated His authority and power in healing the man with the withered hand.

The Pharisees would now seek to destroy Jesus for breaking the Sabbath. To protect their arbitrary power, they would rather destroy the world’s Redeemer than to receive the truth.

Thursday’s Lesson

Topic: Keeping the Sabbath

Scriptures: Matthew 12:12; Isaiah 58:7-13

The Sabbath commandment begins with the command to “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.” Exodus 20:8. In all situations, we react in accordance with what we remember or forget. Imagine what it would be like to be driving down the road and you could not remember which pedal was the accelerator and which one was the brake. That would be frightening! Imagine what it would be like if you never forgot all the nasty things people have ever said or did to you. That would be even more frightening! Imagine if a man forgot God. That is the most frightening thought of all.

So what are we to remember about the Sabbath? To identify those elements that we should be remembering, let us read the fourth commandment:

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.” Exodus 20:8-11.



Sabbath School Lesson Notes – May 7, 2016

The fourth commandment asks us to “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.” These first few words suggest that we may forget to keep God’s holy day in a holy way. But why? Is it because our human memory is so undependable when it comes to keeping the Sabbath? Is it easier to forget a duty like keeping the Sabbath holy than it is to break the sixth commandment, “Thou shalt not kill”? Is the command to do what’s right more difficult to remember than the command to refrain from wrong?

But wait! Can we honestly say that we break the Sabbath because of a poor memory? Certainly not. We profane the Sabbath because we have forgotten to be His holy people during the week. Any man or woman that forgets to walk with God during the week will not keep the Sabbath holy.

Therefore, remembering to keep the Sabbath holy truly depends upon whether we believe God is calling us to be His holy people. Let us consider just three Bible verse (out of say thousands of them), that call us to be His holy people. First of all, from the very beginning, God has chosen us to be His holy people. The Bible says, “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.” Ephesians 1:4.

Secondly, Jesus came in our flesh and blood and gave Himself up as our Sin-bearer, that we would be holy. The Bible says, “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” Ephesians 5:25-27.

And lastly, the apostle Paul teaches us that God will have such a holy people in this present sinful world, saying, “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” Titus 2:11-14.

To be His holy people, we should realize that the Sabbath is not only a memorial of God creating our world, it is a sign to us that God can re-create us by that same Almighty power. In fact, the Bible declares the Sabbath to be the sign of God’s ability to sanctify [literally: to make holy] His people. “Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.” Ezekiel 20:12.

The Sabbath is the memorial for the birth of our world and also a sign of the new birth experience in accepting and following Jesus Christ. Therefore, keeping the Sabbath holy depends upon whether I know Jesus. I am not talking about facts and figures, but do I love Jesus?

How do I know if I love Jesus? Let us ask a few more questions: Who has my highest thoughts? To whom do I love to converse? Do I hunger and thirst to know Him better? Is it my decision to follow Him in loving obedience. Do I



Sabbath School Lesson Notes – May 7, 2016

enjoy telling others of His matchless love? Jesus simply answered this question by saying, “If ye love me, keep my commandments.” John 14:15.

In our loving obedience to keep His Sabbath holy, have you noticed that the Sabbath commandment does not deal with just resting on the seventh day. It embraces the whole week and includes the necessity of six days of activity or work. In God’s fourth commandment the command to work is just as imperative as the command to rest.

From a physical standpoint, there is less appreciation of rest when it has not been preceded by labor. It is also true, that in the spiritual realm, there is less appreciation for Sabbath rest and worship, when very little spiritual growth and activity has taken place during the week.

We know that soil that has not been worked and cultivated will be filled with thorns and briars. But it is also true, that soil which is not allowed time of periodic rest will become depleted and barren. In the same way, the man that refuses to stop working will use up his life forces before his time. So we need both work and rest for our physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.

While our secular work may be habit forming because of a strict work schedule, we may be falling short of the habit of communing with God. In our busy world, many allow themselves to be too busy to be saved, too busy to read God’s Word, too busy to pray, too busy to witness for the Master, too busy for family worship, and perhaps, too busy to even attend prayer meeting and church.

What we need to do is to get our priorities in order. We know that it is important to work, but it is also important to rest on God’s holy Sabbath day. Perhaps there are other things in our life that make obedience to God’s two commands, to work and to rest, impossible to keep. For example, worldly television programming has done more to destroy man spiritually than we will ever understand this side of heaven. But think about what it is robbing you. It steals time away from family worship, personal devotions, witnessing activities, family activities, time in nature, gardening, etc. When we miss out on the above activities, how can we be prepared to keep the Sabbath holy?

Intemperance in its myriad forms, destroys our possibilities of being His holy people and consequently making it impossibility for us to keep the Sabbath holy. For example, too little rest make us overly tired; too little exercise makes our blood sluggish; not enough sunshine leaves us depressed; inadequate amounts of pure water places a tremendous burden on the whole system; not enough fresh air leaves our mind deprived of needed oxygen; the absence of spiritual activities deprives man of his potential nobility; and a lack of good nutrition renders us weak and more susceptible to disease. In addition, too much refined sugar, caffeinated products, and other injurious agents causes a terrible breakdown in our body’s defenses and in our capacity to make the best moral and spiritual decisions.

So what should we do?



Sabbath School Lesson Notes – May 7, 2016

Remember God, and consecrate yourself to Him as your first work in the morning. Thank Him for this gift of life and the promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Lay all your plans at His feet to be carried out as His providence will indicate. Choose to be temperate in all things that you may glorify God in your body. Fill your mind with His Word that your thoughts may be holy. Reestablish the family altar with morning and evening worship. Ask God to open up doors or opportunities to share His love with others. Be much in prayer. Turn to Him immediately when you are tempted to do wrong. Claim His promises and trust in His power to save. Memorize one Bible promise each day. Get rid of the television if you cannot control it. Certainly, your families' eternal destiny is more important than the movie channel. If you remember to do these things, you will not forget to keep the Sabbath holy. After working six days and walking with God for six days, you will greatly welcome the Sabbath.

Imagine a day with no secular discussions and business dealings! Imagine a day of worship where we can rest in His divine presence on His holy Sabbath day! Imagine a day designed to appreciate His creative works in nature. Imagine a day that beckons us to do good unto others. Well, you don't have to merely imagine it, you can experience it. Remember, remember, remember!

Sabbath School notes prepared by Pastor Jeff Wehr