

Matthew 12:1–8  
True Sabbath and Its True Lord

**Saturday, October 5, 2024 ▫ Read Matthew 12:1–8**

*Questions from the Scripture text: When does v1 occur? Where was Jesus going? On what day? Who were with him? What was their condition? What did they begin to do? Who saw it (v2)? To Whom did they speak? What did they say? To whom did He speak (v3)? What does He ask if they have done? About whom did He ask them? And what other people? Where did he enter (v4)? What did he eat? Who else ate with him? For whom was it unlawful or lawful to eat? What else does He ask if they have done (v5)? What does Jesus now add to what they have read (v6)? About which place does He talk? Who/what does He say is there? About what third Scripture does He now ask them (v7, cf. Hos 6:6)? What have they done, which could have been prevented by understanding this? What does He call Himself (v8)? And what does this make Him? Even of what?*

**Who is the point of the Sabbath?** Matthew 12:1–8 looks forward to the morning sermon in public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these eight verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **Jesus, and resting in Him, is the point of the Sabbath.**

Israel had been misunderstanding and abusing the divine rest and covenantal rest of the Sabbath for hundreds of years (cf. Isa 58). So, it is no wonder that the Pharisees would be so twisted in their understanding of the Lord of Rest and the rest that He gives (v2). Being with Jesus didn't matter to them because they didn't understand how David (v3–4) and the temple (v5–6) both looked forward to Him. They treated God as if He was indebted to them for sacrifices, rather than sinners being indebted to God for drawing us near to Himself in forgiveness and working mercy in us by His grace (v7a). So, they judge the guiltless (v2, 7b), because they are ignorant of the Forever-King, the LORD, in Whom rest was always to be found, and unto Whom rest was always to be enjoyed (v8).

**Who is Jesus? How do you draw near to God? When, especially? How does your resting in Him need to improve?**

*Sample prayer: Lord, thank You for giving Yourself to be our rest, especially in Your Son. Grant to us that we would treasure being with Him, drawing near to You through Him, and knowing You Yourself in Him, we ask in His Name, AMEN!*

**Suggested songs: ARP92 "It's Good to Thank the Lord" or TPH153 "O Day of Rest and Gladness"**

**(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via [hopewellarp.org](http://hopewellarp.org))**

Matthew chapter 12 verses 1-8. These are God's words. The time Jesus went through the grain fields on the Sabbath. And his disciples were hungry and began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him. Look Your disciples are doing, what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.

But he said to them, have you not read what David did when he was hungry? He and those who were with him, How he entered the house of God and ate the show bread, which was not lawful for him to eat. Nor for those who were with him, But only for the priests.

Or. Have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath? The breast in the temple, profane the Sabbath and are blameless. And I say to you that in this place, There's one greater than the temple. But if you had known what this means, I desire. Mercy, And not sacrifice.

You would not have condemned the Guiltless. For the son of man is Lord. Even of the Sabbath. And then I said it's this reading of God's inspired. And there it worked.

At that time. Our passage begins. Verse 1. It's connecting Chapter 12 to what has immediately come before. Jesus inviting us to come To him for rest. And of course, the first great idea of rest in the Bible comes with God's creating and ordaining the Sabbath day on the seventh day.

Rested from all his works, which he had done. Not because God needed, rest. But because he had created us. Himself created us to find our purpose and our pleasure, our identity. Our joy in him and therefore to have our rest in him and he created us. To work. Yes.

In His image. Take dominion, Etc. But especially to rest from that work, even that work that we do as his image bearers. To take rests from it. To refresh ourselves in him. And to Delight ourselves in him for. We were not created for the work. The work is a way in which we image in.

We are created. For him. And so, the holy spirit, as he carries Matthew along, to write this account to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, he connects this invitation. To rest in the Lord, Jesus Christ. With. This particular incident on the Sabbath which we'll have this week, this Lord's day and the next Lord's day after it Lord willing.

By saying at that time, Now, there are three things that Jesus refers to the Pharisees 2 3. Things that are in the Old Testament. That if they understood it, they would not have condemned the Guiltless. But of course, they hadn't understood it. Because by the time we get to, at that time in verse 1, The Jews have been misunderstanding and abusing the Sabbath for hundreds of years.

One of the most important passages on the Sabbath and the entire Bible. Isaiah 58 actually begins with the Jewish abuse. Of that religion, which the Lord had commanded. With them doing it as a way of striking heaven with a wicked fist thinking that they are indebted. God and saying, why have we fasted and you see it not?

And of course, that passage concludes with the Lord. That passage concludes with the Lord confronting them with the fact that the Sabbath was supposed to be a delight and that this was the pattern for all of the religion that God Had commanded them. And so it's no wonder that following on hundreds of years of misunderstanding and abuse.

That the Pharisees would misunderstand. The Sabbath would misunderstand the rest and joy of the Sabbath would misunderstand. The Lord as the point of the Sabbath, and of course, They were failing to identify the Jesus as the Lord. And so that just combined. With the rest of their misunderstandings. And so, They see the disciples who are with the Lord Jesus on the Sabbath and who are hungry.

And who are hungry, plucking heads of grain. And eating. Not reaping, even according to the law. This is what the law would have called gleaning not reaping, which was permissible to do not just on the Lord's day, but even permissible to do in your neighbor's field and would not be considered stealing.

But the Pharisees, see them doing it. And they condemn them. Actually condemn Christ. The idea in verse 2 is, if you were a true Prophet, a true teacher, a better teacher than your disciples wouldn't be doing this. Look, your disciples are doing, what is not lawful. To do on the Sabbath.

And of course they were even incorrect. About that. And so Jesus gives them a. Have you not read in verse 3? And or have you not read in verse 5 and then, and if you had known what, this means quoting from Hosea, and something else, That they should have read.

And he is exposing to. That they have not understood the Bible at all. Because if they had understood the Bible,

Because if they had understood the Bible, they would have known that. The Sabbath was about finding rest in the Lord and if they had understood the Bible by the ministry of the spirit to them, They would have known that Jesus is the Lord. In whom we are to find our rest.

And so these three things, they have misunderstood these three references to the Old Testament, the Lord Jesus highlights for us. And we do want to know, The Lord Jesus, as the Lord, we do want to find our rest in the Lord himself. And so we want to understand these three passages rightly the way that Jesus teaches them.

And so the first is with reference to G David when he was hungry. Entering the house of God needing the show Breton in that context. By the house of God, he means the Tabernacle and he was on the run from Saul. And he came. To where the Tabernacle was, and they recognized David as the Lord's anointed the one who Was appointed to the kingship.

The one who in the context of scripture as a whole is for us, the Forerunner of Christ, the picture of Christ himself. And it is, especially for the Lord Jesus that all things are. And therefore, not only does David eat, but notice, The main thing in verse 3 and then again, in verse 4 is those who were with him.

But Jesus is pointing out is that Sabbath is kept, especially un Great, David's greater son, Sabbath has kept, especially unto the Lord Jesus Christ. The main thing on the Lord's day is to be with him in the house of God. And therefore it is because the disciples were with him that they were as it were hungry.

And whatever was necessary to attend to their needs in order to be with him, this would go under Deeds of necessity. Whatever is necessary according to their needs, according to God's design of us and our needs in order to be with him. It was necessary and permissible Because the primary thing is to be with the Lord Jesus.

And especially to be with him in his house. And so I wonder for you, if you think of the Lord's day or when you think of the Lord's day, do you think of the main thing as being with the Lord Jesus in his house? And when you think of Deeds of necessity, Do you not?

Redefine anything that you feel like doing as quote unquote. My ox is in the ditch. Or are you thinking of those things that are necessary? As those particular things that are necessary unto being act and participating in the public work, Coming to God through the Lord Jesus Christ.

You cannot bark during family worship. Come on. How many teachers?

The second thing about which you says, have you not read, is in verse 5. On the Sabbath, the priests in the tempo profane the Sabbath and are blameless. Which is to say the priests in the temple on the Sabap, had to offer the sacrifices, had to do that through which the people came near to God or Drew near to God.

Now, at the time that Jesus is saying this, there is a temple in use and there are priests at the temple and they are offering sacrifices at the temple. And so it is actually a humongous thing where Jesus when Jesus says, in verse 6, I say to you that in this place, there is one greater Than the temple.

What he's saying is, Sabbath is not kept Drawing Near to God does not happen especially through what is happening in Jerusalem on this particular day. But Sabbath is kept and Drawing Near to God occurs especially through what is happening, probably in Capernaum. Where it is that Jesus is on this day in Galilee.

That the people who are With Jesus in the grain field, he's not even in the synagogue yet. They're gonna get to synagogue and next week's passage in verse nine. But with Jesus, in the grain field is actually nearer to God. Then in the temple with the sacrifices. And so Jesus is showing the purpose and the character and the nature of the ceremonial law, the temple, and the sacrifices in the priesthood, Etc.

That was permissible to do on the Sabbath day. Because It was towards the Lord, Jesus the temple. Looked forward to Jesus. The priesthood looked forward to Jesus. The sacrifices looked forward to Jesus. It was all about him. That's why those things were permissible on the Sabbath. And Jesus comes now and he says, Being with me is more permissible.

Than anything that happens in the temple. Because there is one here.

That is greater. Than the temple. And everything in it. And so not only do you think then that the Lord's day is the day for being with Jesus? But do you not see? That when you are with Jesus, on the Lord's day, You are entering Glory. You are drawing near to God.

You are drawing near to God. More closely more really more greatly Than ever any Old Testament? Believer ever did. In the temple worship. Or with the priesthood. Or with the sacrifices. These Pharisees should not have dared opened their mouths. Against the Lord Jesus, or his disciples. If they had heard someone, Opening his mouth against the temple or the priesthood, or the sacrifices, the way that they were opening their mouths against Jesus.

They would have cried out blasphemy Indeed, that was one of the great charges that they made against Jesus, for which he was crucified. That was one of the great charges that was made against Stephen for which he was stoned. That was one of the great charges that was made against Paul for which he would have been executed.

If the Romans did not intervene, They have no idea. How great a thing? It is. To come to God in the Lord Jesus Christ. And the question for us is, Do we have any idea? How great a thing. It is that we do on the Lord's day. If we did, we wouldn't begrudge it.

We wouldn't worry about. Who else is there or what they are thinking of us. We wouldn't let ourselves be weighed down by how tired we are, or how warm it is in the room or anything else. We would think one greater than the temple is here. And so, that was the second thing that they were ignorant of.

The first, the Sabbath is all about being near to Jesus. The second how great And glorious. A reality is to come to God through Jesus. And then the That it is Jesus, who makes the difference in us. Not we Who make the difference for God? This we find in verse 7, But if you had known what this means, I desire.

Mercy, And not sacrifice. You would not have condemned. The guilt was for seven. He's quoting. From the book of Hosea. The point being We do not in debt God, by the sacrifices that we offer. He does not need our sacrifices, he's not particularly pleased with sacrifice in and of itself.

God has not impressed with slaughtered animals. And blood and smoke and burning. God is impressed with his son. That is the value of the sacrifice. That is a way that God had commanded instituted given to his people. For coming near to him through a picture of what his son would be.

But Mercy is even greater because the only way. That a sinner. Couldn't come to be someone. In whom there is mercy, and from whom comes Mercy. Is from the life and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. And if there is a picture of Jesus in the sacrifices, there is much more the reality of Jesus.

In the center, who is saved. And who walks by Mercy, who walks by Covenant love. Unto God. And even to fellow men and brother. And so he says, if you had known what this means I desire Mercy and not sacrifice if you understood Though, I sacrifice relates to Christ as a picture of him.

And therefore God is pleased with. For the sake of his commanding. It as a picture of Christ. If you understood. That Mercy. Cannot actually come from the heart of an unconverted, man. They thought that they were good. They were wrong. They judged according to what man sees they did things for the eyes of men.

The condition of the heart was not important to them. But real Mercy in the heart is much more impressive than any sacrifice. Because it requires the living reality of Jesus changing someone. Which, We experience as a grief because sometimes there is not coming from us. The mercy that ought to be and we cry out and realize that we do not have it in ourselves to produce Mercy.

But we also experience it as a hope. Because we know that it doesn't come from any mere, man. It comes only from the Lord. And so when we don't have love for God and love for neighbor and love for brother like we should, when we're breaking his law, we can actually cry out to him to apply Christ to us by his spirit.

And that's a real work that God does, and that's something that when God does it. And when the fruit of it is evident God Delights in it because it is the fruit of the life of his son.

And so he opens up these three passages. And he shows us. That a Sabbath is, especially about being with Jesus, When we come to God through Jesus, it is greater even than the temple and the priesthood and all of the sacrifices of the entire Mosaic and davidic administrations. And That what is more impressive?

Being a temple or being gathered for public worship is when the fruit of the life of Jesus comes out in the heart. Of someone whom the Lord has saved. And so all three of those could be summarized as it under the Statement. It's all about Jesus and that's what he says in verse 8.

For the son of man. And this is the one, like the son of man. And Daniel's Daniel, Daniel chapter 7 where the Lord gives him Kingdom and glory and all rule over all the nations. It is a Messianic passage that is so high and so great. It says this is the one whose kingdom is forever.

It identifies him as the forever king of second Samuel 7.

But it does. So in a way that says he's more than a mere man. He's not just the greatest of men. He is God, and man. So, for the son of son of man is Lord, His Lord kurios but kurios also translates Yahweh in the Greek translation of the of the Old Testament.

Lord also of the Sabbath or even of the Sabbath. It's the word that is normally translated and but it's got some flexibility. It can be used for. Also, it can be used for even but the point here is that, this is lowered lowercase. This is Lord. Yahweh Jehovah, the Creator.

The one who created all things in six days and on the seventh day he rested because all of creation is about him and his glory, and man being made in His image is about him and his glory. And the Sabbath is about our finding Our rest in him. And so, When he refers to himself as Lord of the Sabbath, he's saying I am The Lord.

Who established the Sabbath the beginning of Genesis 2? And he's saying, I am the Lord. Who welcomes you to himself? That the hope of having our rest, In God. Did not perish. When we send an atom and fell in him. But the hope that was there. At the beginning of Genesis 2 is still there.

At the end of Genesis 3. It's just that that hope is very specifically in the As the Redeemer. God who had become man to save us and crutch the Serpent's head. And so complete the salvation that we still might have in him that rest and refreshment and purpose and pleasure in God.

That the Sabbath was originally. Intended ordained to communicate to us. And that it is still kept. But it is especially kept to Jesus. And if we're not keeping it to Jesus, We're not keeping it at all. And that's what he was saying to the Pharisees. You think these disciples have broken the Sabbath?

You are the ones who are breaking the Sabbath. Because the son of man whom you have just accused on the basis of these disciples, Is the Lord unto whom sabbaths kept? And they were violating the fourth Commandment with every resentful or judgmental. Or hostile thought they had towards Jesus Christ.

Because the Sabbath. The Lord's Day. Was always especially about him. And so it must be for us. Lord, Jesus Grant to us. To find our rest in him to answer. His command his welcome, his invitation. To come to him and find rest. And may he bless to A true understanding of the Sabbath a true understanding of the Lord's day.

So that we'll make good use of it week by week. Taking that day that he's set apart for that purpose. Of finding our rest. In him. Let's pray that his Spirit would help us to do, so, Our Father in Heaven. We thank you for giving us to rest in you and especially to rest in your son.

Our Lord Jesus. We pray that your Holy Spirit would bless to us all of your word. These three places in your word, which Christ referred here. Particular place. That we have been considering this evening as a household as a family. Grant that we would find our rest, our joy, our purpose, our pleasure.

And your son. Our Lord Jesus. And in him who is God with you and with the spirit from all eternity. That we would find our rest and refreshment, our purpose, our pleasure in. You yourself, our God. Which are we ask in the name of your son. Our Lord Jesus.

Amen.