

Theology Simply Explained — WSC59 “The Christian Sabbath”

Pastor walks his children through Westminster Shorter Catechism question 59—especially explaining **how the nature and role of the Sabbath has progressed through the history of redemption.**

Q59. Which day of the seven hath God appointed to be the weekly sabbath? ***From the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, God appointed the seventh day of the week to be the weekly sabbath; and the first day of the week ever since, to continue to the end of the world, which is the Christian sabbath.***

(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)

Now the shorter, catechism question and answer for next week is 59. The question is which day of the seventh hath? God appointed to be the weekly Sabbath? And the answer is from the beginning of the world, to the resurrection of Christ God appointed the seventh day of the week to be the weekly Sabbath.

And the first day of the week ever since, To continue to the end of the world, which is the Christian Sabbath. Now, this catechism answer recognizes. That there has been a significant change that has come with Christ. And, There's actually a change. Although the day of the week is not changed.

at Sinai when the Lord constitutes Israel, a church. unto himself. The nature of their keeping Sabbath. Is slightly changed and Altered Sinai. So when we think about this, which state are the seven have God appointed to be the weekly Sabbath, there's actually kind of three phases. There's first the phase from creation until Sinai.

In which it's the seventh day of the week, but the question then becomes Seventh Day of Who's Week. Because, Adam and Mrs. Adam were created late on day six. And the Sabbath actually turns out to be the first day of Their week. And so this reminds us As we ought to know from the very opening words of scripture that all of existence, all of reality is not about us and what we perceive and what we experience, and how we feel and what we do.

All of reality is about God in the beginning. God, And it's the seventh day of his week. The first week that was and He is by himself when it begins. And he creates in six days and then he rests on the seventh day because he has created, Both for fellowship with himself and so he gives the seventh day of That first week his week or the first full day of Adam and Mrs.

Adams week for fellowship with him, but also he gives That's not just to have fellowship with him as those made in His image, but to imitate him. That we would follow the same pattern, although he gives the fellowship up front and then six more days. And then the Holy Sabbath to, which he does two things, he both blesses and consecrates it and those are the same thing because He when he consecrates something to himself, it becomes blessed for he is the ever blessed God.

And while there is blessing and imitating him, and depending upon him, in all of our work, the six days of the week, When we act upon the creation it, infinitely greater blessing to act upon God himself. And so when he consecrates, That day. On. Those actions unto worship.

He makes the Sabbath, of course, a blessed day. Now, when we get to Sinai, it continues to be the seventh day of the week. But at Sinai, when he constitutes Israel as a church to himself. He starts calling the Sabbath a holy convocation. Okay, there's Root. That means calling con is together a convocation is an assembly or a congregating aggregating to It's actually kind of a sheep word to going to be gathered as a flock gathered together.

but in this Particular word convocation which is imitating. Of course, the Hebrew word that is behind it. It is a holy calling together. That God summons his church in Assembly. So he constitutes the church. at Sinai, in a formal Covenantal way. And, Adds then to the weekly Sabbath, which is already consecrated and already blessed.

But he adds to it this. Identity as a holy convocation. A consecrated summoning of God, of his people to gather, so that if you don't Assemble with God's people as he has summoned us. He has called, as he has commanded his people to do on the Sabbath, beginning with Sinai and there were other holy convocations.

They had we just have the one About to get to. but if you If you don't. the holy convocation the weekly, holy convocation and the other ones that were given in the Jewish calendar, you'll be sinning against God, you'd be sinning against the Covenant. It would be a way of denying that part of your primary identity.

Is that of a member of his church? And so, Very strongly emphasized to them as the seventh day of the week for them. They are constituted as a church, and they are told six days, shall you work and do all your labor? So, when At the creation, God constituted the Sabbath on his seventh day it really was Adam and Mrs.

Adams first full day, But when the Sabbath is being Identified. Now enhanced. when it becomes a, holy convocation, at Sinai in Exodus, 20, He emphasizes to them. that in six days. God, created the heavens, the Earth. The sea and all that is in them. The seventh day he rested.

So also they in six days are to do all of their labor and rest the seventh day. So they are covenanted with God. It's a holy assembly and the Holy assembly now is Imitating the God to whom they are covenanted. It's interesting that when he's constituting them, a church for the first time at the beginning of The Wilderness period at Sinai that's the emphasis.

But then when he comes to Deuteronomy 5 and it's at the end of the Wilderness wanderings in Moses's, final, farewell, sermon the logic given in the fourth, Commandment is for you were slaves in Egypt. And so, it's six days to do all your work but the seventh is the Sabbath of your God but now it's not so much imitating.

God that is emphasized, as it was in Exodus 20 but in Deuteronomy 5. What's emphasized is this gift? Of the Sabbath. That. The Covenant Community has You know, there are various other duties for six days, but on the seventh day, their Covenant duty is to enjoy in God, their Liberty.

To enjoy something that they did not have when they were slaves in Egypt. To enjoy something that they have now in God, not just in the way that they don't have to make Bricks. And And serve as slaves. On the Sabbath day but that they are enjoying that.

They are the freed people of the Lord so it receives a Redemption. Already as they enter into the land as they enter into the land and begin to possess the land there to have this Deuteronomy 5 mindset. So it's not that the Sabbath has a creation Focus from Genesis 1 to the End of Malachi and it has a Redemption Focus

when you get to Jesus.

The Sabbath has a creation focus from Genesis 1 to Exodus, 20 and in Exodus, 20 and Deuteronomy 5. You see, it has both a creation focus and a Redemption focus as a covenantal day. But that's the, that's the second phase. The nature of the Sabbath. To God's people in the world.

And of course, the third is when God who had previously revealed himself, first and foremost, in the creation and then revealed himself. First and foremost as The God, Who would be crushing the Serpent's head by giving the the seed of the woman and then revealed himself, most of all as the god of Sinai, The God Who had covenanted Israel to himself at the church in the church.

When the Lord Jesus comes. The scripture says things like the word became flesh and World Among Us and we beheld his glory. As of the only begotten of the father, no one has seen God at any time. But the only begotten who's, in the bosom of the father, he has fully revealed him.

He has exegeted him to The law came through Moses, which is a wonderful thing, not a bad thing. Sometimes people mistakenly quote that, as if, as if the law came through Moses, no, it's the law. God. Covenanting with his people. teaching them making them. giving Israel, the the whole ceremonial law by which they would be able to draw near to God with these things that preached and proclaimed Christ to them the law.

Came through Moses Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. A near. Knowing of God unknowing of God that in saying Grace and Truth came through, Jesus Christ and it quotes you know full of grace and truth it's using the the same Language as Exodus 34 in the Greek translation?

Of the Old Testament there in John chapter 1. saying. It's presenting. That we know God in Jesus in a way that is like unto or the greatness of which is hinted at. By the way, God revealed himself to Moses on the mountain. That it's Jesus. Who passed by?

On the mountain. in Exodus 34 and that we now know Christ by faith. And this is what the spirit does in the preaching of the Gospel. When he makes the light of the knowledge of the glory of God to shine in our hearts, in the face of Jesus Christ.

And so one of the one of the changes then that comes in this new chapter, this new Administration in God's redeeming, his people in the Covenant of Grace and when he constitutes now a church not at Sinai in Moses but he constitutes a church in glory in his son is that Jesus reveals himself as Yahweh of the Sabbath and in this climax of how God makes himself known to us in this climax of how God gives us fellowship with himself in his son and makes us to know him.

Of the week. It's the day of the week on which Christ raised from the dead, but it's not Resurrection Day. It's also the day of the week in which Christ poured out his spirit and And gives his Church the green flag as it were remember he had said, you have to wait until you receive power from on high.

The Lord Jesus having Ascended and taken his seat. and pouring out his spirit on what we now, call the Lord's day. The first day's Sabbath which is how the New Testament? Says, it doesn't use the the Greek word for seven when it's saying weak. The way that In most Greek literature at the time in all, Greek literature at the time you would use the the Greek word seven from the word from the root hept.

But you only see. first day of the week. First day, Sabbath after Jesus Rises again from the dead. And, that's recognizing. That the day on which Jesus gathers, his church to himself. That is the Sabbath. So the ultimate way in which the Lord has given himself to his people is in his son and the day continues to be a holy convocation, a holy calling together.

So that in the Sabbath keeping that remains Hebrews chapter 4, we are not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together. Hebrews chapter 10, But these things now are especially in Christ, you say well, who changed the day? Well, Jesus changed the day. Because Jesus is God, and he is the one in whom God calls us together makes a holy convocation.

And so they were entirely dependent upon the Lord Jesus. So if Jesus appears in your midst or if Jesus walks through the wall, or if Jesus pours out his holy spirit, or if the spirit whom Jesus has poured out is inspiring in. In real time, like First Corinthians 14 implies, what?

Passages to preach, what Psalms to sing? In prayers Etc, until the New Testament is. Completed in its writing. then that's the Sabbath. That's the Lord's day. He? He is the Lord, he is Yahweh of the Sabbath. And that's why by the time you get to the Book of Revelation being written.

Everyone knows. The Apostle John means when he says he was in the spirit on the Lord's day.

So that's what we are recognizing from scripture. When we say the first day of the week, ever since to continue to the end of the world, Because Jesus is seated there. Now there can never be any greater Revelation. Of God to us. Then there has been in God, the son, and the next event in Redemptive history is when he returns and so the answer to the question which day of the seven hath, God appointed to be the weekly Sabbath is From the beginning of the world, to the resurrection of Christ, God appointed the seventh day of the week.

To be the weekly Sabbath. And the first day of the week ever since, To continue to the end of the world, which is the Christian Sabbath.