

No.4: A Family Day

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[0 : 00] But if we could, with the Lord's help this morning, if we could turn to the book of Exodus, Exodus chapter 20. Exodus chapter 20.

It's on page 73 if you're using the Pew Bible. Exodus chapter 20.

And we're reading at verse 8. Exodus 20 at verse 8. For the Lord says, Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male servant or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates.

For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

[1 : 23] As you know, throughout our study of the Ten Commandments, we have regarded the Ten Commandments as house rules. Not house rules that will teach us and tell us how to be a good person with good morals and good values, but house rules that show us that we're all sinners.

We're all sinners in need of a Savior. And they show us also that God is not some distant and detached deity who demands our obedience.

But as we pray each week in the Lord's Prayer, He is our Father, which art in heaven. He's our heavenly Father. Therefore, as His children, we need house rules.

Because as we said before, without rules there's recklessness. Without laws there's lawlessness. And without commandments there's chaos. And our heavenly Father, He has given us these house rules in order to parent us and also to protect us.

And we can see that because, as you know, it's not good for a child to get their own way all the time. It's good for a child, as you know, to be told no.

[2 : 37] But when an adult says no, it's not ever to spoil their fun, but to parent them, to protect them from hurt or harm. They're told no out of love for them and to look after them.

And that's what we've seen with these house rules. We see it in all of these house rules. Our heavenly Father, He loves us. He looks after us. He wants to parent us and protect us. And we see that because eight out of the ten house rules are no's.

They begin with a familiar phrase, thou shalt not, or you shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. They all begin with eight out of ten of them are no's.

But as you can see, two of these house rules, they don't begin with a familiar phrase, thou shalt not. Instead, house rule number five, which we're considering next Lord's Day, God willing, it begins with the word honor.

Honor your father and your mother. And house rule number four, which we're looking at this morning, it begins with the word remember. Remember, which is also a very personal and a very parental word.

[3 : 46] Because we often say to children, don't we? We say, remember. Kainich. Kainich. Remember. Remember who you are. Remember where you are.

Remember your manners. Remember to behave. Remember to listen. I feel I'm speaking to my children saying this. Remember. Kainich. Remember. And so what our loving heavenly father advises us in house rule number four is verse eight.

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. And the thing is, we can keep the Sabbath day holy if we remember two things.

Remember to rest and remember to rejoice. Remember to rest and remember to rejoice. There are two headings this morning. So first of all, remember to rest.

Remember to rest. Look again at verse eight. The Lord says, Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God.

[4 : 53] On it you shall not do any work. You or your son, your daughter, or your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates.

Now it's safe to say that out of all the commandments, the fourth commandment is probably the most controversial commandment, especially within our own island context.

Because when it comes to the subject of the Sabbath, some people often sit at opposite extremes of the Sabbath spectrum, where on the one hand you have those who believe that the Sabbath has no real relevance anymore.

And they claim that the Sabbath was an Old Testament ritual that Jesus did away with in the New Testament. And so they say that you're free to do what you like on the Lord's day.

You don't even have to go to church. You can have worship in your own house and in your own home. Because the Sabbath day, it's a day that has been redeemed and rescued from the power of the law.

[5 : 59] And many people, they seek to substantiate this claim of a carefree Sabbath by saying that in the Sermon on the Mount, when you read through the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5 to 7, you see that Jesus, He addresses and He affirms every one of the Ten Commandments except for the Fourth Commandment.

Therefore, they conclude that the Fourth Commandment is no longer relevant because Jesus didn't mention it in the Sermon on the Mount. Of course, their claim it doesn't carry because when it came to the subject of the Sabbath, as we saw there in Matthew chapter 12, Jesus repeatedly reaffirms that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath.

Why? Because the Son of Man, He is Lord of the Sabbath. And so you have one extreme that says the Sabbath is no longer really relevant. But then you have the other extreme of the Sabbath spectrum where there are those who are ultra-sabbatarians and their whole religion revolves around revering the Fourth Commandment and raising it above every other commandment to the point that they make keeping the Sabbath number one instead of making God number one.

Because as we said from the beginning, number one is number one because God needs to be number one. And sadly, because of the attitudes and actions of many ultra-sabbatarians, when it comes to the Sabbath, our island is often remembered for all the wrong reasons.

Because it's remembered for its padlocks and its protests. It's remembered for its legalism about the Lord's Day. It's remembered for Christians condemning their communities for hanging their washing out or mowing the lawn on the Lord's Day.

[7 : 51] Now, don't misunderstand me as I begin. Don't misunderstand me. I love the Lord's Day. I love the Lord's Day. I think it's the best day of the week, although I have to work on it.

It's the best day of the week, but I hate, and I hate seeing the erosion and the eradication of the Lord's Day. But, you know, the fact remains, we cannot expect anyone to adhere to the Sabbath if they do not, first of all, know Jesus as the Lord of the Sabbath.

We cannot expect anyone to adhere to the Sabbath if they don't, first of all, know Jesus as Lord of the Sabbath. And guess what? That's our priority.

As a church in this community, that's our priority. Our priority is not to be legalistic about the Lord's Day. Our priority is to make Jesus known. Our priority is to preach and proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord over all, Lord over life, and Lord over the Sabbath.

Our priority is to speak to and to share with people about Jesus Christ. Our priority is to work and witness to the fact that Jesus Christ is the only Savior of sinners.

[9 : 09] Because, you know, as much as we might want to, and we really do want it, but we cannot, we cannot expect anyone to adhere to the Sabbath if they don't, first of all, know Jesus as Lord of the Sabbath.

Therefore, with many things in the Christian life, when it comes to the extremes of the Sabbath spectrum, we need to find a balance. We need to find some middle ground.

And we need to listen. We need to listen not to the opinions of men, but we need to listen to the order and the organization of our Heavenly Father.

which is why our loving Heavenly Father, He says here in House Rule number 4, He says, Kine, remember children. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work. You or your son or your daughter, your male servant, your female servant, your livestock or the sojourner who is within your gates.

[10:21] For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Now the reason this House Rule begins with the word remember is because it's calling us, it's commanding us to go back in your Bible to the creation.

It's calling us and commanding us to consider the creation because as we read there in verse 11, in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day.

Therefore the Sabbath isn't something that was enforced by Moses in the wilderness to the Israelites. Neither was it erased by Jesus in the New Testament. No, the Sabbath was established. It was established by our Heavenly Father right at the beginning, right at the creation. And the amazing thing is as we read there in Genesis 1 and Genesis 2, the Lord not only established the Sabbath at creation, He also exemplified the Sabbath at creation.

[11:28] Because after creating the world in the space of six days and all very good, even though He didn't need to rest because He's God, our Heavenly Father, our Creator, we read there in Genesis 2.

He rested on the seventh day. And He rested as an example to us as His creation. So we're to follow in His footsteps.

As children, we're to follow in the footsteps of our Heavenly Father. And you know, this is why the Sabbath is often described as a creation ordinance. We call it a creation ordinance.

There's three creation ordinances. There's the Sabbath, work, and marriage. But creation, the creation ordinance, it's because the creation, at creation, our Heavenly Father, He ordered and ordained the Sabbath.

He sanctified the seventh day. He set it apart from all the other six days of the week. And He called it the Sabbath day because the word Sabbath means rest.

[12:39] The word Sabbath simply means rest. Therefore, the Sabbath is to be a day of, as we're saying to the children, thumb is resting. It's a day of rest. Which is what this house rule is calling us and commanding us to remember.

Remember to rest. Remember to rest. You know, we shouldn't come to the fourth commandment and see that it's an obstacle.

You should actually see this fourth commandment as an opportunity. Our Sabbath rest is not an obstacle. It's an opportunity. An opportunity to rest. Your Creator has given you a day to rest because we need rest.

We need rest. We all know with children that rest and sleep is good for them. So we're always telling the kids to go to bed early. It helps them grow.

It helps them develop. That's what we were singing in Psalm 103. Our Heavenly Father, He remembers what? That we are dust. He knows our feeble frame.

[13:42] He knows that we need rest. He knows that we're weak because He's the one who fearfully and wonderfully made and shaped us. And so as a parent looking after His children, He wants to protect us.

He wants to provide for us. And He's provided for us a day of rest. A day to rest our bodies. He wants to protect us.

And so we should see the Sabbath as a gift, not a grudge. It's a benefit, not a bind. It's a blessing, not a burden.

It's a delight. This is the best day of the week. I always remember Professor McLeod saying to us in college, the Lord's Day is a high day. It's the best day of the week.

So it's to be a delight, not a dread. It's a day of rest, not a day of restraint. And even when you look at scientists, scientists tell us it's scientifically proven that our bodies work in a seven-day cycle.

[14:43] They need rest. We need a Sabbath rest. We need to remember, as the commandment says, remember to rest. Which means that we shouldn't feel guilty about going for a snooze on a Sunday afternoon.

We shouldn't feel guilty about listening to our bodies and resting. Because our doctors will tell us that rest reduces stress, it enables us to be more active, and it boosts our immune system.

Every sports coach, every personal trainer will tell you that after exercise you need a rest day in order for your body to recover. But if we refuse to remember to rest, doctors also tell us it leads to problems.

problems of stress, anxiety, depression, obesity, diabetes, exhaustion, and burnout. You know, my friend, in such a busy world, with everything and everyone going at 100 miles an hour, and everything demanding our attention at all times of the day and the night, our Heavenly Father is reminding us we need to remember to rest.

Jesus said to His disciples, come aside and rest a while. We need to remember to rest. We need to take holidays.

[16:04] Because as we said to the children, holidays are holy days. They're days that are separate, set apart, they're different, they're distinct, but these holidays are for our bodies to rest, relax, recharge, and recover.

And of course, there are exceptions to the Sabbath. We saw that in Matthew 12. Jesus asked, which is of more value, a sheep or your own life?

The Sabbath, you know, it should never become a stumbling block when showing care, compassion, and concern. Therefore, as you know, you can't withdraw the health care of doctors and nurses and paramedics on Sunday.

We need the provision of the police. We need the protection of the military. We need the safety of the fire brigade. Equally so, you can't shut down an oil rig on the Lord's Day. You can't stop a supply boat on the Sabbath.

They're works of necessity. They're works of mercy. But for the most part, our Sabbath is to be a day of rest. We're to remember to rest.

[17:11] And you know, our Heavenly Father, you know, He's teaching us that it would do us good. It would do us good to take a Sabbath rest from screens and social media.

It would do us good to leave off Facebook and football on the Sabbath. It would do us good just to stay at home and not travel on the Lord's Day.

It would do us good not to spend money in shops, but instead spend time together with our family on the Sabbath. It would do us good. This is the advice from our Heavenly Father.

It would do us good to remember to rest and remember to rejoice on the Sabbath. That's what we see secondly. Remember to rejoice.

So our Heavenly Father says, remember to rest. And then He says, remember to rejoice.

Remember to rejoice. Look again at verse 8. He says, remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

[18:14] Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. And so on. Now as we said, in this fourth house rule, the word remember, kaini, it's important.

Because it not only calls us and commands us to remember and think back to the creation account and the creation ordinance ordinance of the Sabbath. This word remember also calls us to attention as children.

This word remember, it commands action from us as children. So it calls us to attention and it commands action. It wants a response. Because this word remember, it's used throughout the Bible.

It's a fascinating word. And when it's used, it calls us and commands us not just to use our head but also our heart and our hands. remember, kaini, it's a word that's personal to us but it's also a word that's practical.

You know, we see that even with Noah. When Noah came out of the ark, the Lord said, every time you see the rainbow in the sky, remember my covenant.

[19:26] Remember to worship me for my covenant. So remember my covenant. When the Israelites were struggling to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, Nehemiah came along and encouraged and enabled them to keep going and he did so by saying to them, remember the Lord.

Remember the Lord. When Solomon addressed the younger generation of his day and our day, he addressed the importance of following the Lord.

What did he say? Remember now your creator in the days of your youth before the evil days come. We were, that was discussed at the YF last Sunday evening.

You know, when Jesus warned about not taking God's judgment seriously, that there will be a day of judgment, there will be a day when we all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

And what did he say? Remember Lot's wife. Remember Lot's wife. When the thief on the cross was seeking salvation from Jesus, only a few feet from him, what did he say?

[20 : 27] Lord, remember me. Remember me when you come into your kingdom. And even Paul himself when he encouraged people to profess their faith in Jesus Christ and come to the Lord's table, he said, remember Jesus Christ.

Remember Jesus Christ. Remember. Kaini. It's a word that calls us and commands us to use our head, our heart, and our hands. It's a holistic response that it needs from us because it's personal and it's also practical.

We're not only to remember to rest on the Sabbath, we're to remember to rejoice. We're to remember to rejoice.

And you know, the thing is, we have good reason to rejoice on the Sabbath. The Christian Sabbath is the day of resurrection. So we're saying to the children, it's the day of resurrection.

And I'll be honest with you, I do like referring to Sunday as the Sabbath. I prefer to call it the Lord's Day because it is the Lord's Day.

[21 : 35] And I say that because, as you know, the word Sabbath, as we said, it means rest. But the Sabbath is much more than just a day of rest. It's a day of resurrection.

It's a day of redemption. It's a day of renewal. It's a day of restoration. It's a day of rejoicing. It's a day that reminds us that we do not worship a Savior who is dead.

He is no longer in the grave. The angel said, He is not here, for He is risen. So He's one who is risen. And He rose triumphant over the grave on the first day of the week.

And in doing so, the Bible assures us He destroyed the power of sin. He defeated death. He conquered the grave. He brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

And through His resurrection, this is what I love about Paul where he writes in Philippians 2. He says, Jesus has been highly exalted and given a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus, every knee will bow one day.

[22 : 38] They will bow in heaven. They will bow on earth, he says. They'll bow under the earth in hell and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

My friend, this day is a day of resurrection. And it should remind us that Jesus is Lord over all. And He's Lord of the Lord's day.

Jesus is Lord over all. And He's Lord of the Lord's day. And you know, when you read the Bible, there are only three things in the Bible that the Lord claims as His own.

The Lord's people, the Lord's supper, and the Lord's day. They are His. And therefore, the Lord's day is not my day.

It's not your day. It's the Lord's day. The Lord has graciously given us six days of the week to do all that's needed, all that's necessary.

[23 : 40] But our Heavenly Father says to us, don't be greedy. Let's give the Lord's day to the Lord. Because the Lord's day is a family day.

It's a family day where we come together as families. We come together as a church family. And we come together to rejoice in the Lord of the Lord's day.

And you know, what better way to begin a new week than to begin it in the Lord's house on the Lord's day? That's what we're singing about earlier in Psalm 92.

We began this morning by singing the Sabbath Psalm. Psalm 92 is the Sabbath Psalm. It's a psalm that calls us to come together.

It calls us to congregate together to worship the Lord in the Lord's house on the Lord's day. The psalmist said, you remember, verse 1, to render thanks unto the Lord.

[24 : 40] Why have we come this morning? Why are we here? To render thanks unto the Lord. It is a comely thing. And to thy name, O thou most high, do you praise aloud to sing.

We're to remember to rejoice in the Lord of the Lord's day. But more than that, the psalmist went on in verse 2. He went on in verse 2 to emphasize and explain the importance of gathering.

And gathering both ends on the Lord's day, morning and evening. And it's interesting he makes that emphasis.

He says, give the Lord the whole day, not half the day, the whole day. He says, thy loving kindness to show forth when shines the morning light and to declare thy faithfulness with pleasure every night.

When we gather together for worship, says the psalmist, we are there to declare the loving kindness of God and the faithfulness of God. Thy loving kindness to show forth when shines the morning light and to declare thy faithfulness with pleasure every night.

[25 : 53] He emphasizes and he explains the importance of gathering together morning and evening on the Lord's day. And you know, and with this, I'll conclude this morning.

But I think it's important to mention, you know, when it comes to the fourth commandment, I think it's always good to be reminded of the importance of gathering together on the Lord's day. It addresses why we have the Lord's day, a day of rest and a day of rejoicing. It addresses our church attendance that we are to gather together on the Lord's day in the Lord's house. church attendance. And because it addresses church attendance or the attended gathering, it reminds us that across the nation, church attendance is at an all-time low.

In the past decade, the national census has repeatedly indicated that church attendance is in decline. But that census was taken before the pandemic.

[26 : 58] Since the pandemic, church attendance has often been replaced by church apathy, where attendance at the morning service has reduced, evening service has almost become non-existent, and the midweek meeting often doesn't get a look in.

And this is generally speaking across the nation. Even talking to other ministers, it's the same story. And that's because there are so many people, as you know, so many people who are watching online.

They're not worshipping in public, but they're watching online. To the point that there are more watchers than worshippers. And if you're a watcher this morning, you're probably watching online right now.

And of course, for some, their situation and their circumstances prevent them from coming to church. And the thing is, I could say to the live stream, we know who you are, and we miss you. It's one thing I often think. There are people who used to be able to come that can no longer come, and we miss them. We really do miss them. We're thankful that you can continue to watch online, be part of the congregation, be part of the church family, know what's going on through the provision of the live stream.

[28 : 18] But there are others. And you know, the thing about live stream, the live stream was never to keep people away. The live stream was for those who couldn't come. And that's the way it is.

It's always for those who cannot come. But there are others in the congregation, as you know, and we miss you too. But I'd hope and pray that you would come because you're everywhere else during the week.

And I often wonder, well, is it our casual, consumerist commitment to Christianity that's now invaded? And there are so many. And those watching online this morning, they know who I'm talking about because I've spoken to them personally, personally, asking them to come.

Many of you could and should be here. And yet, sadly, we're too comfortable on our couch. Which is why, you know, our Heavenly Father, He's reminding us here.

In this commandment, this house rule, He says that sitting at home when you could and should be singing in church, it breaks the fourth commandment.

[29 : 34] The fourth commandment calls us and commands us to rest but also to rejoice, to gather together, to render thanks unto the Lord for it is a comely thing and to thy name, O thou most high, do you praise aloud to sing.

So our Heavenly Father says to us this morning, Kaini, remember. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Remember to rest on the Lord's day.

So use this day wisely. Use this day because it's a gift for you. But also remember to rejoice on the Lord's day. Remember to gather together for worship.

To worship a risen and exalted Savior. A Savior who has done in us and for us exceedingly, abundantly, above all, more than we could ask or even think.

Is that not reason for us to rejoice on the Lord's day and to remember to Kaini that it's not our day? It's not our day.

[30 : 45] No, Jesus. Jesus is Lord and Jesus is Lord of the Lord's day. He is Lord of the Lord's day. But may the Lord bless these thoughts to us.

Let us pray. O Lord, our gracious God, we give thanks to Thee for the Lord's day, a day that calls us to rest, to rest in Thy presence, to rest from our labors during the week, but also to rejoice.

And we have great reason to rejoice this morning because we have a wonderful Savior that how the hymn writer could say, what a friend, what a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear, what a privilege it is to carry everything to God in prayer, what a privilege it is for us to meet together in this way.

Lord, remember us then, we pray, uphold us, we ask, and help us to use this day wisely, a day that has been gifted to us, to use it for Thy glory, for the furtherance of Thy kingdom, and that we, as Thy children, that we would be blessed and built up.

Encourage us then, we pray, go before us, take away our iniquity, receive us graciously, for Jesus' sake. Amen. Amen. Well, we're going to bring our service to a conclusion this morning.

[32 : 14] We're going to sing again in Psalm 92. Psalm 92, as we said, it's the Sabbath Psalm. Psalm 92, page 353 in the Blue Psalm book.

We're singing the last four verses of the Psalm from verse 12 down to verse 15. But like the palm tree flourishing shall be the righteous one, he shall like to the cedar grow that is in Lebanon.

So when we gather together on the Lord's day, we're like the palm tree flourishing. We're like the tall cedar trees in Lebanon because we're growing. This is the place where we grow.

We grow around God's Word. Then it says, verse 13, those that within the house of God are planted by His grace, they shall grow up and flourish all in our God's holy place.

So down to the end of the Psalm of Psalm 92 from verse 12. We'll stand to sing if you're able to God's praise. But like the palm tree flourishing shall be the righteous one, He shall like to the cedar grow that is in Lebanon.

[33 : 57] those that within the house of God are planted by His grace.

they shall grow up and flourish all in our God's holy place.

and in old age when others fade, they fruit still forth shall bring.

they shall be fat and full of stuff, and they be flourishing.

to show that all right is the Lord.

[35 : 24] He is a rock to me, and He from all unrighteousness is altogether free.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all, now and forevermore.

Amen.