



Jesus: Lord of the Sabbath

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Hello all, this subject was asked me by a long-time brother, and quite randomly a different long-time sister. So I thought I'd update it from my studies over the last several years and thought I'd share for everyone. Yes, everything on my wall is available for gracious and/or even warm boisterous conversation... as long as gentleness is included. ... I know this post might irritate a few of my Sabbath-keeping friends... I hope it doesn't, but a Biblical post on it is not an attack, but a gracious Biblical discussion - amen? I do hope that's how it's taken... ~ your growing bro, SH :)

So, let's start at the beginning. When God created everything, in Genesis 1 (and reviewed in Genesis 2), God made everything in 6 literal days, and then rested on the seventh day. It was the pattern that God set for all creation and all time here on earth. God set the 7th day as implied day of rest, which God then made official for the descendants of Abraham, His chosen people that He calls: Israel. But, God never set it as a command for the Gentiles. With that said, let's look at Romans 14 in the New Testament. Romans 14 is one of key passages for Jews and Gentiles on the subject of the Sabbath. But let's look at two from Jesus before we look at Romans 14.

“At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. And His disciples were hungry, and began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. 2 And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to Him, “Look, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!” 3 But He said to them, “Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: 4 how he entered the house of God and ate the showbread which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? 5 Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? 6 Yet I say to you that in this place there is One greater than the temple. 7 But if you had known what this means, ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice,’ you would not have condemned the guiltless. 8 For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.” (Matthew 12:1-8)

This conversation is typical of how Jesus handled the subject. Yes, He did fulfill the law and customs, and yes He did follow most things that the Scribes and Pharisees had set... but He also did things that they thought were unacceptable to do on the Sabbath, because they had added onto His law to confuse it and to use it as a control tool, instead of a teaching tool.

In Mark 2, Jesus added this explanation detail: **“27 And He said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, and**

not man for the Sabbath. 28 Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.” (Mark 2:27)

So, God did not intend for the law to be kept, but to be a tool to point us back to Him and seeking to please Him in thought, word, deed/action, and motive. This is further explained in Jesus’ teaching on the first and second greatest commandments.

“29 Jesus answered him, “The first of all the commandments is: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment. 31 And the second, like it, is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” (Mark 12:29-31)

And in Matthew 22, Jesus added this explanation detail: **“40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”** (Matthew 22:40)

And we find one more very key teaching on this topic in Galatians 3:

“24 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.” (Galatians 3:24)

Now back to Romans 14. **“One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind.”** (Romans 14:5) ~ Now, I've been studying this for several years now and talking with people and hearing out their perspectives and what verses they are quoting, etc. And sadly, almost inevitably some people want to insert things into texts that don't say what they want it to. They can add words and/or definitions that are not in the text... and it seems to make sense to them, except that their theories fall apart when you study the text deeper. Romans chapter 14 is just one of these examples. Here in Romans 14, there are not just two subjects in this verse - Sabbath *or* every day... Those who insert that, that way, miss something. If the subject was Sabbath versus everyday, then Paul would have said that. Meaning? There are a number of other verses that show that some were worshipping on the Sabbath (I think my friend Maureen noted about 85 in the book of Acts, thank you for that!). So, in the context of what Romans 14 is directly talking about, some people in this discussion were worshipping on either *both* the Sabbath and the first day of the week (aka 'The Lord's Day') which got a pagan name 'Sunday' now... ~ and some were celebrating everyday - how? by breaking bread and fellowshiping from house to house. So, the argument that Paul was trying to teach Christians to be gracious about was not - A)Sabbath or B)everyday, but 1)Sabbath, 2)1st day of the week, 3)Sabbath *and* 1st day, or 4) every day alike (and possibly a 5th option too from what I can see in the clues of other texts). ~ Just an fyi (for your info), the pagan Vatican 'church of Rome' did *not* start this discussion, they just pretended to co-opt it.

Okay, now to prove my point from Scripture, check these verses out:

“Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.” (1st Corinthians 16:1-2) ~ notice the first day... why were some/many celebrating on the first day, because Jesus didn't show Himself to His disciples on the Sabbath, but on the 1st day of the week - so... you could say that Jesus set the new precedent, though you don't have to follow it that way, just realize and remember that Jesus did it.

Another passage: **“Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.”** (Acts 20:7) What were they doing gathering and breaking bread on the 1st day of the week? The Jewish idiom/phrase that translates to our phrase 'breaking bread' here means they had gathered to have a small meal as a body of Christ and discuss the Bible, etc - this was a typical Biblical gathering in those days. And *that* is Biblical fellowship indeed! I believe the order went: prayer, teaching, prayer, a small meal and fellowship on the Word over dinner - that's the best picture I can put together from Scripture ~ anyway, you see here are 2 clear passages that talk about the 1st day, and Paul even teaching some to worship regularly on that day. Was he wrong? I don't think so. Let's go back to Romans 14 to see why.

"One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe it. He who eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks; and he who does not eat, to the Lord he does not eat, and gives God thanks." (Romans 14:5-6) ~ 2 key phrases to note: 1> **"let each be fully convinced in his own mind"** from Scripture ~ the call is yours, just make sure you are doing what God wants you to do: 1)Sabbath, 2)1st day of the week, 3)Sabbath *and* 1st day, or 4) every day alike

Second phrase to note: **"He who observes the day, observes it to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe it. He who eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks; and he who does not eat, to the Lord he does not eat, and gives God thanks."** ~ If you're doing whatever you choose to do to please Christ and it fits with God's Word, know that He is not offended. Just remember that we must not use it as a cloak for sin - the hypocritical 'I do this, so I don't have to worry about the other sins I do' attitude is wrong for all of us... so, let's also keep growing in making sure that we don't do that. "15 For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men— 16 as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God." (1st Peter 2:15-16)

And, another key passage to study into as well on this is found in Colossians 2.

"16 So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths [Sabbath + festival days], 17 which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ. 18 Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, 19 and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God." (Colossians 2:16-19)

And, my final note for this comment is to remind of the only 3 things that God led the apostles' council to teach were imperative for the gentile believers to follow: **"... For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell."** (Acts 15:28-29) ~ God Himself teaches all who seek Him, so if He convicts you to change something - great. Do it - you're accountable to the covenant God has with you and you have with Him, and your obedience to what God is teaching you. For me personally and all who will hear me (and I believe myself to be a long-time faithful Bible student and Bible teacher, teaching against false teaching as well as various forms of idolatry, yet not condemning, just teaching.) ~ I suggest to my friends to grow in understanding of what pleases God - deeper than the actions, but the motivations - the **why** are we doing what we're doing. For when we do what we're doing because we love Christ, then we are fulfilling the law (Romans 13:10) ~

I'm sure this convo will probably keep going and that's okay by me. I just wanted to share the study notes that I've been working on for a few years in case they help others or initiate other good and healthy and helpful Biblical convos :)

So, that's my study notes and that's what I follow. And, btw, I personally do the celebrate everyday alike ~ many days a week, myself and some other person and/or myself and my family will open the Bible and have great conversations ~ what you choose is your choice. ~ Be careful to follow your conscience which needs to be clearly educated in the Word. ~ ... I just realized the other subject that I didn't mention here is Old and New Covenant... and Jewish covenants versus Gentile covenants... If enough of you ask, I can plan to write a post on that. ~ have a blessed day everyone. ~ Let's keep growing in hunger and thirst for God's Word, humble obedience to Jesus out of our growing love for Him (including removing idols from our lives), and sharing His Word and the gospel with whomever He sends across our way. Have a blessed day! :)

~ Watching, Preaching, Praying, your growing bro, SH