

2nd Sunday after Pentecost
“The Lord of the Sabbath Mark 2:27-28
June 2, 2024
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Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, our text for the Second Sunday after Pentecost is from our Gospel reading, Mark 2:27-28.

“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.”

Rest. God rested on the seventh day from His work of creating the universe with all living plants, animals and the crown of His creation - mankind. God in His infinite wisdom gave to mankind the 3rd commandment that we read in our Old Testament reading from Deuteronomy 5.

“Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the Lord your God commanded you. 13 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 14 but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God.”

On the Sabbath, God commanded His people whom He had delivered out of Egypt, out of slavery to rest on the 7th day. Everyone, including animals and servants should rest as we heard God tell them.

“that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you.”

Physical rest is good for the body. Jesus, true God and true Man also rested when He got tired. He was asleep in the boat when a huge storm came. The disciples were fearful and had no rest in their souls so they awakened Jesus.

“26 But He said to them, “Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?” Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.” (Matthew 8:26)

Where there is faith in God, there is no fear but rest for the soul. For the One who created the world, continues to control the world in every storm of life. Jesus showed His power over the wind and the waves. There was a great calm. The sea rested and the disciples marvelled.

In God’s great wisdom, He gives man a day to rest, recover, recuperate and above all to remember the mighty works of God and find rest in God through faith in Him!

So our Old Testament reading from Deuteronomy continues: **“15 And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.”**

What were the Israelites to remember? That they were slaves and that God stretched out His mighty hand and freed them! This is the God, the I Am, who made walls of water in the Red Sea so that the people could escape. He caused water to flow from a rock in the desert, sent mana from above and birds for food.

Did all the Israelites remember God’s works, believe in Him and enter the land of Canaan? Hebrews 4 tells us that some did but some didn’t.

“2 For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it. 3 For we who have believed do enter that rest, as He has said:

**“So I swore in My wrath,
‘They shall not enter My rest,’ ”**

The Sabbath gave the Israelites rest for their bodies but also provided time to give rest for the soul by strengthening faith through the preached gospel! Yes, the Israelites had the Gospel – the Good News of the coming Messiah who be the end of all sacrifices. For the Messiah would end the tyranny of spiritual slavery because of sin and give spiritual freedom. That is the God’s rest! “My rest”. But if one rejects God then there is no rest for the soul, but only His wrath.

Those Israelites, who did not believe in God, did not enter the land of Canaan that God promised them. There was no rest from their wandering in the desert. But even more sadly they did not receive rest for their souls as Hebrews 4 concludes.

“8 For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. 9 There remains therefore a rest for the people of God.”

But there is a “rest” for the people of God. It is a spiritual rest that the Lord of the Sabbath gives. So Jesus told the Jews of His day that their ancestry did not give them rest and freedom for their souls.

33 They answered Him, “We are Abraham’s descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, ‘You will be made free’?”

34 Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. 35 And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. 36 Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.”

To be a son in God’s house, to be part of the people of God is not a matter of physical DNA but of spiritual DNA. Listen to Colossians 2 how the Lord of the Sabbath, Christ Himself, established the truth that sets the soul free!!

11 In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, 14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. 15 Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

16 So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, 17 which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.”

The substance is of Christ. The Gospel is Christ crucified and risen! Without Christ we are dead in our sins, unable to save ourselves by trying to keep the requirements of the Law. But Jesus kept them for all people. He wiped out the requirements that were against us! He fulfilled the Law with His perfect obedience and His perfect sacrifice put an end to all sacrifice. The shadow was replaced with the real substance – Christ.

So, what does this mean for you and me and all who are hearing our livestream right now? Simply this – there is rest in Christ for your soul.

**“28 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”
(Matthew 11:28)**

Jesus invites you to come to Him and believe in Him.

“Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts.” Hebrews 4:7

Instead receive the truth that sets you free – the Gospel message. The resurrected Jesus holds out His hands and says “Peace to you”. Peace, rest and calm for your souls that Jesus has won the victory over your sin and death and the devil.

Receive this truth by faith and receive it through the water of baptism which raises you from the deadness of your soul by the resurrection of Jesus. Yes, we heard last week in John 3 how Jesus told Nicodemus these words.

“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’”

So, God instituted baptism to give you rest for your soul and commanded that all nations be baptized. So we will dedicate and light the new Paschal candle which is a symbol of the resurrection of Jesus... of the Light of the World which the darkness could not overpower. And we light the Paschal candle especially on Easter, during Eastertide and when a person is baptized. For the light of Jesus is given in baptism and rest is given to the soul.

And receive the truth of the Gospel through the special means of grace of Jesus body and blood in the Lord’s supper, given and shed for the forgiveness of your sins. Given and shed for rest for your souls. So the pastor says after the words of institution. “Peace of the Lord be with you.” And the believers in Christ respond. “Amen” It is true. I have rest for my soul.

And finally, at the moment that God calls His son or daughter from this world. He gives eternal rest to His people. Rest in peace. We light the Paschal candle at one’s funeral to show that the light of Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath, is Lord over death and the believer’s soul lives eternally.

Revelation 14:13

“Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, ‘Write: ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’ ” “Yes,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.”

So, we also proclaim with David with the words of Psalm 62, our Psalm for today.

**“Truly my soul silently waits for God;
From Him comes my salvation.
2 He only is my rock and my salvation;
He is my defense;
I shall not be greatly moved.”**

Amen.

“And this peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Amen. (Philippians 4:7)