

Westminster Larger Catechism

Question 116 b

The First Day Sabbath Replaces the Seventh Day Sabbath

Halifax, 21 November 2010

Introduction

Last week in our study of the fourth commandment, we saw that Jesus appointed a New Sabbath for the New Covenant.

- We focused especially on Psalm 22 where Jesus promises from the cross that He will gather the whole church together to praise God for accepting His sacrifice for the remission of our sins.
 - He promises that He will declare the good news to us of sins forgiven.
 - And He promises that He will lead us in praise to God.
- And we saw that Jesus was not speaking of a single meeting with His disciples.
 - He said that He would declare what God had done in *the great assembly*—the *ecclesia* or the church.
 - He anticipated that this great message would become primary matter for the praise and thanksgiving of God's assembly in all generations to come.
 - He declared that people from all over the world would be brought into the assembly to join in praise to God for His finished work.

But if there is to be an assembly that meets like this, there needs to be an appointed time for it to meet.

- And we saw that Jesus appointed the first day of the week for us to meet.
 - He established a pattern for these meetings by meeting with His disciples on the day He rose from the dead which was Sunday,
 - and then waiting to meet with them again until the following Sunday.
 - We also saw that He poured out the Holy Spirit on Sunday.
- We saw that as soon as the churches of the New Testament got into a normal routine, they followed the pattern that Jesus began of meeting on the first day of the week.
 - In Acts 20:7, we saw that the first day was the day the disciples customarily gathered to break bread.
 - In 1 Cor 16, we saw that Paul instructed the Galatian and the Corinthian churches to take up a collection on the first day (the day of their assembly) for the poor in Jerusalem.

- We noted that there was virtually no opposition among Christians to meeting on the first day of the week.
 - This should not be surprising because the Jews were very much accustomed to having special days instituted to remember God’s mighty acts.
 - The resurrection of Christ was the completion of the greatest work that the Lord had yet done for them—there was no greater work that could be done!
 - And they would fully expect that just as the Lord had instituted a weekly Sabbath when He completed His work of creation,
 - he would also institute a day each week to remember the work that He had now completed in Christ for eternal salvation!
 - The Lord’s Day was universally observed in the church from the very beginning and pretty much has been until the present day.
- But there was a difficulty that some of the Jewish Christians struggled with.
 - The difficulty came with accepting that this new day would *replace* the Sabbath of the seventh day.
 - And that is what we want to look at today.
 - It is not that we do not keep the Sabbath instituted at creation,
 - it is only that the day has been changed from the seventh day to the first day...
 - because on the first day, God completed an even greater work than the work of creation!
 - Eusebius, who is perhaps the greatest historian of the early church, summarises this quite nicely for us:
 - “The Word, (Christ), by the new covenant, translated and transferred the feast of the Sabbath to the morning light, and gave us the symbol of true rest, the saving Lord’s day, the first (day) of light, in which the Saviour gained the victory over death. On this day, which is the first of the Light and the true Sun, we assemble after the interval of six days, and celebrate a holy and spiritual Sabbath; even all nations redeemed by Him throughout the world assemble, and do those things according to the spiritual law, which were decreed for the priests to do on the Sabbath. All things which it was our duty to do on the Sabbath, these we have transferred to the Lord’s day as more appropriately belonging to it, because it has the precedence, and is first in rank, and more honourable than the Jewish Sabbath. It is delivered to us that we should meet together on this day...”

This idea that God changed the weekly Sabbath from the seventh day to the first day after Christ was raised is also the teaching of the Larger Catechism in Q. 116:

Q. 116: What is required in the fourth commandment?

A. The fourth commandment requires of all men the sanctifying or keeping holy to God such set times as he has appointed in his Word, expressly one whole day in

seven; which was the seventh from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, and the first day of the week ever since, and so to continue to the end of the world; which is the Christian Sabbath, and in the New Testament called the Lord's day.

Now before we get into our study today, I want you to know that I do not have time to prove to you all over again that Jesus instituted the first day of the week as the Christian Sabbath.

- We did that last week and all I can do is the brief review that I have already done.
 - If you are unsure about that, I would ask you to listen to that sermon from last week.

- I also want to say that we have not yet looked into the matter of what we may or may not do on the Lord's Day.
 - That will come in future weeks.
 - All we have seen so far is that Jesus has instituted Christian worship on the first day of the week.

- Today our focus will be on the fact that by instituting the Lord's Day for Christian worship, Christ did away with the former Sabbaths that God had appointed...
 - or perhaps I should say that they are all brought together in Christ so that we keep them all when we observe the Lord's Day each week.
 - Everything comes together in Christ who is the fullness of all things!

We will begin by looking at the fact that:

I. In the New Covenant, the Lord no longer requires anyone to keep the Sabbaths of the Old Covenant.

- Please turn to Colossians 2 for our Scripture reading.
 - READ> Colossians 2:1-23.

- A. As you can see, this chapter speaks about how we have received everything that God has to give to us in Jesus Christ!
 1. For example, in verse 3, Paul says that in Christ are "hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge!"
 - And in verse 9-10, He says that we are complete in Him...
 - Col 2:9-10: For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.

 - There is an absolute completeness in Christ so that when we have life in Him, nothing is lacking for us.

2. From the time of the fall, man's great need was for redemption because of his sin and guilt.
 - a. God promised to the patriarchs that He would provide redemption.
 - And in the Old Covenant, He gave them all sorts of ceremonies that showed them how much they needed Christ.
 - These ceremonies taught them that God was holy and that they were not holy.
 - They could not come near to God without doing a bunch of rituals of purifications.
 - They had to perform washings, to have priests, to observe dietary laws, clothing laws, observe holy days, and many other such things.
 - b. In Col 2:14, these things are called "the handwriting of requirements that was against us and contrary to us."
 - When Paul says they were "against us and contrary to us,"
 - he does not mean that God made a mistake by giving rules and ordinances to His people, or that they were bad for them...
 - He means that these rules and regulations were "against them" because they *testified* against them.
 - They constantly reminded them that they were not holy.
 - They constantly showed them that they were in need of a Saviour.
3. In the fullness of time God provided that Saviour, Jesus Christ!
 - a. And Jesus made the one great offering for all time that takes away our sin!
 - Once we have trusted in Him and His finished work, we are fully justified, fully forgiven of all our sins.
 - There is a perfection and a completeness in Him!
 - We are given eternal life with Him!
 - b. And then we no longer need ceremonies that tell us that we are not holy.
 - Because we *are* holy by the blood of Jesus Christ!
 - We are complete in Him and all those old ceremonies that testified against us are, as it says in verse 14,
 - "taken out of the way and nailed to the cross!"
 - We are complete in Jesus crucified!

B. Therefore, Paul declares that we are no longer obligated to keep the Old Testament ordinances and regulations.

1. So here in Colossians, Paul is telling the Colossians, who were mostly Greeks, that they do not need to be circumcised in the flesh.

a. Look at verses 11-14

- Col 2:11-14: 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, 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. 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, 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.
- The Gentile believers have a circumcision made without hands through baptism into Jesus Christ.
 - They have been brought into union with Christ by faith so that their sins are washed away by His crucifixion and they are raised to life with Him.
 - He has made them alive and He has brought forgiveness.

b. If you have read very much in the New Testament, you know that this was one of the biggest issues that is dealt with.

1) The Jews who believed in Christ had a terrible time letting go of the ordinances that God had given them before Christ came.

- Even Peter, when he was first sent to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, had to be shown a special vision to let him know that he could now eat foods that had been prohibited under the Old Testament,
 - and that it was okay for him to eat with Gentiles now.
- And even though the Gentiles were clearly converted and gave clear evidence that they had received the Holy Spirit,
 - there were a lot of Jewish believers who insisted that these Gentiles could not really be Christians unless they were first circumcised and agreed to keep the law of Moses!
 - They thought the gentiles had to observe all the holy days and the food laws and the clothing laws...

2) This was such a huge problem that a General Assembly or Synod of the whole church was called to discuss the matter in 50 AD.

- The decision of the Synod is recorded for us in Acts 15:24-27:

- It read (Acts 15:24-29): “Since we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying, “*You must* be circumcised and keep the law” —to whom we gave no *such* commandment—it seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who will also report the same things by word of mouth. 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.

 - But even after this, there was tremendous opposition!
 - Galatians was written about five years after this decree (in 55 or 56 AD) and in Galatians, Paul declared that he had even had to rebuke Peter himself for refusing to eat with Gentiles...
 - Peter—the man who had been shown the vision that all foods were clean and who had first carried the gospel to the Gentiles!
 - This struggle did not go away, but continued on for some time.
 - Colossians was written in 60 AD and this was still a problem.
 - It was with regard to this struggle that Paul told the Colossians that they do not need to be circumcised in Col 2:11-14.
 - They are complete without keeping the Law of Moses.
 - The regulations under Moses are not binding on them.
2. Because this is so, Paul declares that no one is to be judged with regard to whether or not he keeps the Old Testament Ceremonies.
- a. In Colossians 2:16-17, he says:
- Col 2:16-17: So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.
 - The idea that no one is to judge regarding these things means that the matter is left up to the individual.
 - Everyone had to recognise that there was no longer any obligation to keep the holy days of the Old Covenant—or the food laws.
 - But for those Jews whose conscience was bound in the observance of these things,
 - there was allowance for them to continue observing them.
- b. Paul spells this out in greater detail in Romans 14 where he says:

- Rom 14:1-6: Receive one who is weak in the faith, but not to disputes over doubtful things. For one believes he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats only vegetables. Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him. Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand. 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.
- The Jews could still keep the seventh day and the Passover and could abstain from certain foods if their conscience so compelled them.
 - But under no circumstances were they permitted to enforce these ordinances upon the Gentiles!
 - It was a matter of individual liberty, not of church policy!

3. Now of course our focus today is on the Sabbaths.

- and you can see that Paul mentions them here.
 - a. But what does he mean when he says a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths?
 - The fact that he speaks of Sabbaths rather than the Sabbath shows that he has in mind all the holy days of the Old Testament...
 - But does he include among them the weekly Sabbath?
 - Does the weekly Sabbath also go out with the Jewish ordinances.
 - I am inclined to say that he does because many of the Jews who believed continued to keep the seventh day.
 - They kept the first day and the seventh day!
 - b. But make no mistake!
 - When Paul speaks of no longer observing days, he is definitely *not* talking about observing the Lord's Day.
 - There is no question about that.
 - He says that the things he is excluding are those which were mere shadows of things to come!
 - Jesus Himself instituted the Lord's Day and Baptism and the Lord's Supper—
 - These are not shadows of things to come!
 - They are ordinances that Christ has given to us in the New Covenant to be kept by us until He returns!

- I have actually heard people say that Paul includes the Lord's Day when he says that we no longer are to observe days.
- But that is absurd!
- We are the ecclesia—the assembly that meets in Jesus' name by His command—
 - We are commanded in the New Testament not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together!

TRANS> But we need to see more about the moving of the Sabbath from the seventh day of the week to the first day of the week.

- Could it be that we are supposed to keep both the First and the Seventh Day?

II. How could the day be changed from the seventh day to the first day since it is part of the moral law, instituted at creation and contained in the Ten Commandments?

A. Did we not see before that it is a creation ordinance?

1. Indeed we did, and because it is a creation ordinance, it is to continue.
 - Like marriage, it was instituted at creation and is enforced in the Ten Commandments.
 - As such, it is not part of the ceremonial Law of Moses any more than marriage is.
 - Both of these institutions go back to the very beginning.
 - They were not instituted by Moses, but by God at creation.
2. The Sabbath that was instituted at Creation cannot really be done away with, but the question is, can it be changed?
 - a. It is ordinarily understood that the Sabbath, while a moral obligation, also has a positive (or non-moral) aspect to it.
 - A positive law is a term that is used to refer to a law that is imposed on us by an authority. It is a law that is not moral.
 - For example, we are morally obligated to drive at speeds that do not unnecessarily endanger our lives or the lives of others.
 - But instead of leaving this up to our discretion, the authorities that God has placed over us have posted speed limits.
 - The posted speed limit is a positive aspect of the law that can be changed.
 - The moral requirement to drive at a safe speed remains, but if the authorities decide to change the speed limit from 50 to 60,
 - it is not immoral as it would be if someone decided that they did not need to drive at a safe speed.

TRANS> Like the speed limit, the Sabbath has a moral and a positive aspect to it.

b. The Sabbath is a moral obligation for us inasmuch as we are God's creatures and it is only right that we set aside time to call upon His name.

- But there is a positive aspect to the institution of the Sabbath in that God commanded us to worship Him on the seventh day because that is the day that He finished creating the world.
 - The moral aspect to the fourth commandment cannot change, but the positive aspect can be changed.
 - That we set should set aside time cannot be changed, what particular time (or day) we set aside can be changed.
- Now that God has accomplished an even greater work through Christ,
 - we are, of course, morally obligated to consider this work and to praise Him for it even more than we remember His work of creation!
 - And because this is so, it is no breach of morality for the Lord to change the Day that He has set apart for us to worship Him with reference to the day that this greater work was accomplished!
 - This does not mean that we no longer remember Him as our Creator on the new day that He has given us,
 - but it means that our greater focus is now upon Him as our redeemer.
 - Inasmuch as the fourth commandment is moral,
 - it remains,
 - Inasmuch as it is positive, the day is changed to reflect the greater work that God has done.

B. According to Hebrews 4, the Sabbath-rest remains for the people of God under the New Covenant—but on a different day.

- Let's take a look at Hebrews.

1. Hebrews is all about the changes from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant.

a. It begins in chapter 1 with a discussion about Jesus Christ and how God's speaking to us from the beginning reaches its climax in Him!

- He is God's final and complete revelation to us about redemption!
- He finished the work of purging us from our sins and sat down at God's right hand, having been given the name that is above every name!

b. In Hebrews 2:10-13, we are told how Jesus has been perfected as the One who sanctifies us.

- For this reason, He calls us His brothers and He gathers us together to worship God under the New Covenant.
 - You can see how Psalm 22 is quoted in Hebrews 2:12!
 - This is the worship of the great assembly (the church) on the first day of the week that Jesus began after He had purged us from our sins.
 - Are you tracking with me?
 - He had finished this great work and sat down at God’s right hand.
 - We are complete in Him, so He gathers us together under the New Covenant to praise God in His name.
- c. And the whole Epistle of Hebrews goes on to talk about what this New Covenant worship with Christ as our priest looks like!
- It talks about how it is changed from the worship under the Old Covenant that had to do with types and shadows and the temple that could not really take away our sins the way Jesus has.
 - Everything is different now because we have this “great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God.” (Heb 4:14).
 - Hebrews 7:12 tells us that as there is a change in the priesthood, there is also a change in the law.
 - Now that Jesus is our priest, the way we worship God completely changes.
 - In Hebrews 9:11-12, the change is stated like this:
 - “But Christ came *as* High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.” (Heb 9:11-12 NKJV)
 - This is just what we saw in Colossians—
 - We are complete in Christ so we no longer keep the old regulations that involved the blood of bulls and goats.
 - We are repeatedly exhorted in Hebrews to hold on to Christ in whom we have this eternal redemption.
 - In Hebrews 10:19, we are exhorted to come before God in the New Covenant Assembly with confidence in Christ’s finished work...
 - Heb 10:19-25: Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and *having*

a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for He who promised *is* faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.” (Heb 10:19-25 NKJV)

- We are to be faithful in New Covenant worship!
- We are to approach God in the name of Jesus in the assembly!

TRANS> And having seen this overview of what Hebrews is all about, let’s take a look at Hebrews 4.

2. In Hebrews 4, we are told that the Sabbath-rest *continues* for us, but now for a new reason!
 - a. Here, the author is warning believers to be sure that they hold on to Christ.
 - He began talking about that in chapter 3...
 - He talks about how many of the people under the Old Covenant did not enter into the rest (the work that God had completed for them) when He brought them into the Promised Land under Joshua.
 - They could not enter into the rest (the Sabbath rest of completed work) because of unbelief...
 - See Hebrews 3:19?
 - Heb 3:19: They could not enter in because of unbelief.
 - b. But now we have a promised rest from God that is even greater than the rest that Joshua gave them.
 - There is a new work that God has completed—a greater work!
 - The work that the author has been speaking about all along—Christ has purged us from our sins!
 - He is our eternal high priest who is over the house of God and who gathers us together to worship God in His name on account of His finished work on the cross!
 - And in 4:1, we are exhorted:
 - Heb 4:1: Since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it!
 - In Heb 4:4, he compares this promised rest to the rest that God entered into after He had finished creating the world...

- And He insists that the new rest that He is exhorting us to enter into is not the rest that Joshua gave the people in the Old Covenant when he brought them into the Promised Land.
 - Hebrew 4:8-9 says:
 - Heb 4:8-9: “For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. There remains therefore a rest [the word here is *sabbatismos*—a Sabbath rest] for the people of God.”
 - There is a much greater *sabbatismos* for the people of God than ever before—but it is a *remaining* rest!
 - We continue to rest in the Lord and what He has done,
 - but now we rest not merely in His finished work of creation
 - or in His finished work of bringing His people into the Promised Land.
 - We now rest in the finished work of Jesus Christ.
- In verse 10, the rest of Jesus as our Redeemer is compared to the rest of God at creation.
 - Verse 10 says:
 - Heb 4:10: “For he (Jesus) who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God *did* from His.”
 - Just as God rested when he finished creation, so Jesus rested when He finished redemption.
 - He has purged us from our sins and has sat down at God’s right hand until all His enemies are made His footstool!
- We are admonished to enter into *this* rest in verse 11.
 - We are to come boldly to God in His name, trusting in His finished work.
 - And you see, with that rest in Jesus, comes New Covenant Worship with New Covenant ordinances and a New Covenant Sabbath...
 - The Sabbath-rest remains, but now it is no longer defined by what God did at creation or in delivering His people from Egypt.
 - Now that Sabbath-rest is defined by the finished work of Jesus Christ which occurred not on the seventh day, but on the first day.
 - Therefore, we are not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some us...
 - We are to gather to praise God for the completion of eternal redemption in Jesus Christ!

TRANS> So you see how the original Sabbath-rest is subsumed into the new Sabbath-rest of redemption.

- Everything is made new in Christ.
- And now there is one more thing I want you to consider that speaks to the idea of a change of day...

C. I want to show you that in order to redeem us, God had to break His original Sabbath-rest and so has entered into a new Sabbath-rest.

- It follows from this that we do not keep the Sabbath that He broke, but the new Sabbath that He has entered into that will never be broken.
 - God Himself broke the old Sabbath and entered into a new Sabbath, so we enter into the new with Him.
 - Let me explain...

1. We saw before that God's rest at creation was the kind of rest that comes when you finish a job.

- You rest because there is no more work to be done—you have finished.
 - God is not creating new things—we don't have trees or creatures that suddenly appear.
 - He did all that He was going to do in six days and rested because He was done.
 - Or at least that is how it was at creation when all things were very good.
 - All God had to do is govern what He had made.

2. But in John 5, Jesus shows us that both He and the Father broke the Sabbath

- Turn to John 5 and you can see this for yourself.
 - a. In this chapter, Jesus heals a man, and the Jews come to Him and complain that He has done this work on the Sabbath.
 - Look at John 5:16:
 - John 5:16: "For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus and sought to kill Him because He had done these things on the Sabbath."
 - Jesus is being charged with a capital offence!
 - But now look at Jesus' legal defence of what He had done in verse 17.
 - v. 17: "But Jesus answered [this is a legal term] them, 'My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.'"
 - This is remarkable!

- Jesus does not say that He had not broken the Sabbath!
 - The commandment says, “you shall do not work” and Jesus had done work—a very great work!
 - Jesus does not deny that He has worked!
 - Instead He emphasises that He has been working *and that the Father has also!*
 - Do you see what Jesus is doing?
 - He is showing that the Father had to work after He had finished creating because creation was ruined by sin.
 - Redemption is a work that only had to be done because of sin.
 - God had to break His rest and work, and Jesus claims that He has been working right alongside of God the Father.
- b. The Jews totally understood what Jesus was saying!
- 1) They got it!
 - They understood that He was making Himself to be equal with God as one who was working alongside the Father to redeem us!
 - John 5:18 says: Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God!”
 - 2) Rather than drawing back from this charge, Jesus emphasises all the more that He and the Father are working as co-equals.
 - John 5:19-20: Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does;
 - He wants to make sure that everyone knows that the work He is doing on earth is nothing but the work of the Father!
 - Together they are breaking the Sabbath-rest they entered into at creation to carry out the work of redemption!
- c. Jesus explains the work that He and the Father are doing in their Sabbath is nothing less than a new creation...
- John 5:20-21: and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel. For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to *them*, even so the Son gives life to whom He will.
 - He and the Father are creating life from the dead.

- 1) The raising up of the lame man, and all the other healings that Jesus did, were part of the work of redemption...
 - By doing these miracles,
 - Jesus was showing everyone that He had come to make a new creation where there would be no more sickness—where the curse would be abolished.
 - He and His Father were both working to bring life to fallen sinners in a fallen world!
 - They broke their Sabbath to do a work of necessity and mercy!
 - It is because of the fall, that works of necessity and mercy are permitted on the Sabbath.

- 2) Jesus goes on in John 5 to speak further about the new creation that He and the Father are making....
 - He speaks about spiritual resurrection as well as physical resurrection.
 - In verse 24-27 Jesus speaks about the giving of spiritual life which He was doing right then...spiritual resurrection:
 - John 5:24-27: “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.
 - This speaks of the new birth that comes only to those who hear and believe.
 - We are given eternal life as soon as we believe.
 - Jesus was already doing this work.
 - And in verse 28-29 He speaks about the final resurrection (at the last day) when the new creation will be brought to perfection.
 - John 5:28-29: "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

- 3) Now you see why Jesus made a point of breaking the Sabbath—of healing on the Sabbath...
 - It was to illustrate that He and the Father were breaking their Sabbath rest to redeem the world.

- a) This work of redemption was a greater work than the work of initial creation...
 - This work required the Son to come to the earth in human flesh and go to the cross for us!
 - He had to undo the damage and then re-create His elect.
 - b) This work is called a new creation in scripture.
 - For example, in Isaiah 65:17-19, it says:
 - Isa 65:17-19: "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem *as* a rejoicing, And her people a joy. I will rejoice in Jerusalem, And joy in My people; The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, Nor the voice of crying.
 - It is the City of God as a place where there is no more curse.
 - c) But remember that this new creation is done in two great phases that are both mentioned in John 5...
 - The first phase was begun when Christ was raised from the dead—He is the firstfruits of the new creation.
 - This is what we have now...
 - 2Co 5:17 says that anyone who has come to Christ is a new creation of God:
 - 2 Cor 5:17: Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.
 - The second phase will occur at the resurrection on the last day when God brings His new creation to perfection.
3. How grateful we ought to be to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit for breaking His rest in order to re-create what we had ruined!
- God broke His own Sabbath in order to rescue us.
 - And now that the first stage of that glorious two-stage work is complete, God has entered into His rest again.
 - He has brought forth a new creation and so there is a new rest for us to enter into through faith in Jesus Christ.
 - See that none of you come short of it!
 - I close with these words from Ignatius, written about 100 AD

- If those who were brought up in the ancient order of things (the Jews) have come to the possession of a new hope, no longer observing the Sabbath, but living in the observance of the Lord's Day... how shall we be able to live apart from Him, whose disciples the prophets themselves in the Spirit did wait for Him as their Teacher?
- Christian, this is your rest!