

**LESSON 114**

**Egermeier's Story:**

Page 392 – Jesus Heals a Withered Hand

**Memory Verse:** John 5:17 “But He answered them, “My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working.” NASB

**Scripture:** Matthew 12:1-15, Mark 2:23-3:6, Luke 6:1-11

**Teaching Resource:**

Bible Study Guide for All Ages Lesson 36

**Object Lesson:**

Ask the students if any of them have ever stayed up all night. Or, if the students are very young, you might want to use naptime for the example. The idea is to get the students to thinking about how much we need to have sleep on a regular basis and in sufficient amounts. Apparently, God has made us this way. In a like manner, it seems that God has made us to need some “downtime” from our routine labors.

**Doctrinal Emphasis:** The Christian's View of the Sabbath

**Key Theme:** *The Sabbath was clearly an important concept for the Jewish people. The Christian's relationship to the Sabbath is not the same.*

The concept of the Sabbath was more than just taking one day off work every week. There was more to the Sabbath than just the 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment, “Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy.” Exodus 20:8-11—“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 of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the 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.”

Exodus 23:10-11 expands the concept of the Sabbath Day (once a week) to the Sabbath Year (once every 7<sup>th</sup> year). Exodus 23:10-11—“You shall sow your land for six years and gather in its yield, but on the seventh year you shall let it rest

and lie fallow, so that the needy of your people may eat; and whatever they leave the beast of the field may eat. You are to do the same with your vineyard and your olive grove.”

The importance of the Sabbath to the Lord is expressed explicitly in Exodus 31:14. “Therefore you are to observe the sabbath, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people.”

Breaking the Sabbath was a capital offence. The importance of the Sabbath Year was expressed implicitly in the Babylonian captivity for 70 years. Jeremiah 25:11—“This whole land will be a desolation and a horror, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years.” See also II Chronicles 36:20-21—“Those who had escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon; and they were servants to him and to his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia, to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths. All the days of its desolation it kept sabbath until seventy years were complete.”

The Sabbath every week was easy to observe. But observing the Sabbath of the 7<sup>th</sup> year was not. That would take a LOT of faith. And it was evidently not observed by the nation of Israel.

There were many rules and regulations developed over the years concerning what it meant to “work” on the Sabbath. Indeed, the books of the Law—Exodus through Deuteronomy—had plenty of detail about the Sabbath. And as we see in the confrontations between the Jewish leaders and Jesus, the regulations and tradition had become very detailed.

We need to be mindful that the Law of the Old Testament was given to the nation of Israel. The law included not just the 10 Commandments but all of the regulations delineated in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy concerning social and economic regulations and rules about the feasts which the Jewish people were to observe.

This Law was not given to the nations of the world, but to Israel. If anyone from the nations wanted to be a part of the Jewish nation, there were provisions in the law for them (for example Deuteronomy 5:14). It is interesting to note that all of the Ten Commandments are repeated in the New Testament epistles in one way or another EXCEPT the Sabbath Commandment. It is not prescribed to the Christians.

There are two truths here for Christians. The first is that the Sabbath is not a rule that **MUST** be observed by Christians any more than we **MUST** observe the festivals of trumpets, atonement, or tabernacles. The other truth is expressed by Jesus—“Jesus said to them, ‘The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath’ (Mark 2:27).”

It is good for us to take a day off of work. Just as we need a certain amount of sleep, so it seems that the Lord knows that we need a certain amount of “down time” from our labors. The wisdom is in maintaining the balance between work and rest. We can always look to God’s Word for wisdom. The ratio of 1:6 is a good place to start.