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THE SABBATH

If you had lived back at the time that God gave the Law to Moses, you would have found yourself face-to-face with the doctrine of the sabbath:

"Keep the sabbath, therefore; for it is holy unto you; every one that profaneth it shall certainly be put to death: yea, whoever doeth work on it, that soul shall be cut off from among his peoples." (Exodus 31:14)

The sabbath was always to be observed on the seventh day (Saturday), at which time the people of God were to rest and worship. It was not enough to merely confess that the sabbath was given by Jehovah and merrily go on your way. The dispensing of this commandment directly and dramatically touched the lives of those who were subservient to it.

It was necessary for them to prepare for the sabbath days in advance. Those under this Law were **not permitted** to do any type of manual labor, thus all

foodpreparation had to be done in advance (Exodus 31:14). No fires were to be kindled (Exodus 35:3). Even the gathering of sticks was prohibited, carrying with it the sentence of death if disobeyed (Numbers 15:32-36). They were also forbidden to travel (Exodus 16:29).

Those under the Law were diligent to keep their conduct in accordance with the commandments under which God had placed them. In their case God didn't suggest that it was a good idea; He **demanded** obedience or the consequences would be death!

Today, we have the privilege of living under God's administration of Grace committed to the apostle Paul, which means we are to follow the instructions of Christ found in Paul's epistles (1 Corinthians 11:1; 14:37).

When God implemented this new program of Grace, which He calls "*the mystery*" (Ephesians 3:3), He instituted many changes. For example, today we no longer observe the sabbath. Every day of the week we have **the liberty** to do as we please, within the boundaries of the Scriptures, of course. We can work, travel as far as we wish and prepare the food. Without forgetting to meet regularly with fellow believers.

In so doing we are acknowledging the fact that a change has taken place in dispensations, which has resulted in a new set of instructions for the Church, the Body of Christ today.

Hopefully this comparison will help us understand that the doctrine God has placed us under will determine how we should walk to honor and glorify Him. A change in doctrine also means a change in walk.

(Source: 'Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians' by Paul M. Sadler)