

free ebook to read and enjoy.) There can also be works of mercy. Who would not stop to help somebody in a car wreck because it is the Sabbath? Talking to the Pharisees about what is lawful on the Sabbath, Jesus said in Luke 14:5–6 “Which of you, having a son or an ox that has fallen into a well on a Sabbath day, will not immediately pull him out?” And they could not reply to these things. Works of necessity and mercy are permitted because the point is not which tasks you perform but whether you are honoring Christ in your heart, devoting the day to the Lord, and connecting with Him.

#### Discussion Questions

- What are some tasks that you have to do on the Lord’s Day (acts of necessity)? How might you approach these tasks in a way that honors Christ?
- Is it possible to do an act of mercy in a way that does not honor Christ? What makes the difference?

#### **Day 5 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse**

To sanctify the Christian Sabbath is to set the day apart as devoted to the Lord. The goal is to honor Christ in our hearts and to grow in our walk with Him as we connect with Him through private and corporate worship. In order to do this well, God has given us instructions to regularly rest from our worldly employments and recreations while still being faithful to do what is necessary and merciful as we care for those around us. We are not chained by a list of do’s and don’ts. Rather, we are given the freedom to put lesser things aside and give our attention fully to loving Christ and loving our neighbors. Galatians 5:13 reminds us, *For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.* The weekly Sabbath is a rehearsal, a sample of what waits for us on that glorious day when we enter our final rest, in communion with Christ forever.

#### Discussion Questions

- Have you grown in your walk with Christ and honoring the Lord’s day more and more? Explain how.
- What lesser things can you put aside?.

# Baptist Catechism

## Family Worship Guide



### **West Oaks Baptist Church**

(in preparation for Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024)

#### **Baptist Catechism Question #65**

**Q:** How is the Sabbath to be sanctified?

**A:** *The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days; and spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God’s worship, except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy.*

#### **Suggested Memory Verse**

*1 Peter 3:15 but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.*

## Day 1 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

As we continue exploring the delight of the Sabbath, this week’s question asks how is it to be sanctified? While God’s Word does not give an exact list of do’s and don’ts for the Christian Sabbath, it does give general indications of what is appropriate and what is not. We will look at some of those this week, but let’s begin with the first part of our answer. It says the Sabbath is to be sanctified (or set apart) by a holy resting ALL that day. With our busy lives, we will have a hard time doing this unless we are intentional and deliberate about following God’s commands to us. If we are going to set apart this day as holy and treat it as we should, then we must first be settled in our minds to honor Christ. 1 Peter 3:15 says...[15] *but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.* Having been graciously saved and sanctified by God, Christians should honor Christ and the Sabbath by keeping it—not just for a few hours before moving on to other things—but for the whole day. Gather with believers for worship, stay and fellowship with others, and when you go home... continue honoring Christ whether alone or with family or friends. It is a day to rest from all you normally do and focus on Christ.

### Discussion Questions

- In what ways does your Sunday look different from other days of the week? What things are the same?
- Commit in your heart to honor Christ this Lord’s Day and pray for the Spirit’s leading in how to carry that out.

## Day 2 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

One of the ways we are to sanctify the Sabbath is by resting from worldly employments and recreations. There is nothing inherently wrong with working a job or playing a game, but the Sabbath is to be set aside for devotion to the LORD. So, when it comes to things like cramming for a test on Monday morning or preparing some big project for work the next day, or watching an exciting new movie... the question is not whether these things are bad. Rather, we should ask ourselves whether they are showing devotion to the Lord? What is your mind thinking about during these activities? Scripture gives us exceptions, and we will talk about those later this week, but generally speaking these kinds of activities are a diversion. They take our attention away from the Lord rather than help with our devotion. Nehemiah found such activities going on and this is what he said: *In those days I saw in Judah people treading winepresses on the Sabbath, and bringing in heaps of grain and loading them on donkeys, and also wine, grapes, figs, and all kinds of loads, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day... Then I confronted the nobles of Judah and said to them, “What is this evil thing that you are doing, profaning the Sabbath day?”* (Nehemiah 13:15–19). What are you truly devoted to in your life, and does it show by the way you treat the Sabbath?

### Discussion Questions

- Which is harder for you to take a break from on the Lord’s Day: employments or recreation? Why?
- Does your mind get bored on Sunday and search for something else to do or think about?
- What could you do to practice being more devoted to the Lord on that day?

## Day 3 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

One of the greatest things we get to do on the Christian Sabbath is worship the LORD our God both corporately and privately. The joy of this is expressed well in Psalm 122:1 *I was glad when they said to me, “Let us go to the house of the LORD!”* We are commanded to worship our God but it is our delight to do so, too. Christians want to connect with God as often as possible. By example, we see that Jesus went to worship and read on the Sabbath. Luke 4:16 *And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read.* We see the apostle Paul preaching on the Sabbath so long that Eutychus falls asleep and falls out the window, dies as a result and then is brought back to life (Acts 20:7). Isaiah 66:23 shows weekly worship as well. *From new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me, declares the LORD.* So, we gather weekly as the church for worship and then also fill the day with private means of worship. Reading our Bibles, praying, singing, private reflection, and connection with God. The point is that God has given us this day as an opportunity to connect with Him, and we ought to do all we can to make the most of it.

### Discussion Questions

- Who are some of the people you enjoy connecting with on Sundays?
- Do you feel like you connect with God as much as you connect with other people? Or are you more likely to just go through the motions of worship?
- How might you be more intentional about enjoying God’s presence this Lord’s Day?

## Day 4 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

In general, we are to rest from our work and recreation in order to devote the Sabbath to the Lord. But, Jesus also taught us that there were some exceptions to this: works of necessity and mercy. The basic idea is that a work of necessity is something that couldn’t be done before the Lord’s Day and can’t be deferred until later. There are certain jobs that do require some work on Sunday, but to be honest, sometimes we put ourselves into difficult situations where work on the Lord’s day becomes necessary simply because we did not plan ahead. In those cases, do what you must, repent, and resolve to not put yourself under such a necessity again. (This is a paraphrase from Nicholas Bownd circa AD 1595, *True Doctrine of the Sabbath*, a