

## HOW TO KEEP THE SABBATH

*Introduction* Isa. 58 : 13, 14: "Turn away thy foot from the Sabbath."

When God's call: "Take your foot off My Sabbath!" first comes to us, we naturally ask: "How does God want us to keep the Sabbath? In what way should our conduct on this day differ from our conduct on the other days of the week?"

God has not left us in doubt on this question. He delights in positive, intelligent, spontaneous Sabbath keeping. He has, therefore, given us a **complete set of guidelines** to follow in our preparation for, and observance of, the Sabbath day. In this lesson we will study the Bible's code of Sabbath-keeping etiquette.

- Discussion*
1. To "hallow" the Sabbath means to treat it with the utmost reverence and respect (Ezek. 20 : 12, 20).
  2. To "remember" the Sabbath means to think of it, and plan for it all through the week (Ex. 20 : 8-11).
  3. To keep it "holy" means to keep it "wholly" for God. Therefore, we will guard its edges carefully (Ex. 20 : 8-11). See Amos 8 : 5 for the wrong attitude.
  4. God's ideal for the Sabbath is a day of "delight", not of dullness and "don'ts", austerity and gloom (Isa. 58 : 13, 14).
  5. We lay aside our own words, works, pleasures and cares (Isa. 58 : 13, 14).
  6. We prepare our foodstuffs, homes and persons on the sixth day (Ex. 16 : 23; Luke 23 : 53-56).
  7. No buying or selling on the Sabbath. Business matters not discussed (Neh. 10 : 31; 13 : 15-22).
  8. The Sabbath is measured from sunset to sunset (Lev. 23 : 32; Neh. 13 : 19). "Even" means "sunset" (Deut. 16 : 6; Mark 1 : 32). We "open" and "close" the Sabbath with praise and prayer.
  9. The Sabbath is "a holy convocation" [an assembly, or gathering together] (Lev. 23 : 3). We assemble for joyous public worship (Luke 4 : 16; Acts 16 : 13).
  10. Three books enrich the Sabbath hours—the Bible, the hymn book, and the Book of Nature.
  11. "It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days" (Matt. 12 : 12). We take sunshine, healing and comfort to the sick and distressed.
  12. We receive from Jesus the innermost sacrament of the Sabbath—"Rest for the soul" (Matt. 11 : 28-30; Heb. 4 : 9, 10). This is the ultimate secret of all true Sabbath keeping.

*Conclusion* The Psalmist prayed: "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law" (Ps. 119 : 18). It is only when our eyes have been opened by the Spirit of God that we come to see the true worth and beauty of the Sabbath.