2026-2027 Confirmation
Year 3: Lutheran Christianity
The Tomorrow River Lutheran Parish

Lesson 4: The Small Catechism: The Third Commandment

The Third Commandment

Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy.

What is this? Or what does this mean?

We are to fear and love God, so that we do not despise preaching or God's word, but instead keep that word holy and gladly hear and learn it.

> ***8*** *Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy.* ***9*** *Six days you shall labor and do all your work.* ***10*** *But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns.* ***11*** *For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and consecrated it.* – Exodus 20:8-11 NRSV

Rightly Keeping Sabbath is something that Jesus and his opponents and his contemporaries fought a lot about! Notice that Jesus NEVER said that the keeping the Sabbath is unimportant or optional! It remains a command!

Jesus did say: “Sabbath was made for humanity, not humanity for the Sabbath” – and then because we are who we are, we go right to work abusing our freedom until what we would call Sabbath is unrecognizable… play time, lazy time, work time.

We are not bound to a specific day. For our Jewish neighbors it’s the seventh day reflecting the creation story: six days of work followed by a day of rest. Could be any day for us. Might as well leave it Sunday.

There is an enormous piece of social justice here:

> *…You shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns…*

This is a day of REST for everyone. Rich and poor, human and animal.

Rest. But not at the expense of unavoidable or necessary work. Not something to be surrounded by ever more rules. Do what is necessary and good. And then rest. Tend your relationships. Try to find a little peace. Get off the hamster wheel.

Neither sitting cozily in a corner avoiding all work …
… nor decking oneself out in finery

We are to <u>keep</u> it holy.
It is holy in itself as it is created and gifted by God. We want it to be holy for us. Sacred. Special. Reserved for doing holy and necessary works. And what is more Holy and necessary than focusing on the Word of God?

Sabbath "to do" list:

- Attend the services of God's House
- Learn and meditate on God's word
- Put ourselves in the path of faithful preaching
- Be teachable
- Do not come to find fault or to be entertained
- Come to be found, to be healed, to be convicted and to be forgiven

> ***38*** *Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home.* ***39*** *She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying.* ***40*** *But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me."* ***41*** *But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things;* ***42*** *there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her."*
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> – Luke 10:38-42 NRSV