

# Growth Group Questions

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost ~ June 2, 2024

## Introduction

As we move into the summer season, rest is on the mind for many people, especially those tied to a school year calendar. What kinds of rest do people need? What happens if they don't get that rest?

## Into the Word – Deuteronomy 5:12-15

1. Deuteronomy is Moses' summary of the law given directly by God. In what ways were Old Testament believers to keep the Sabbath "holy?"
2. *Sabbath* is the Hebrew word for "rest" and we usually focus on the break Israelites took from physical work. What do these two verses reveal about the further purpose of God's Sabbath command?
  - Ezekiel 20:12 *"Also I gave them my Sabbaths as a sign between us, so they would know that I the LORD made them holy."*
  - Psalm 122:1 *"I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go the house of the LORD.'"*
3. We are free from Old Testament ceremonial commands that dictate *how* we keep a Sabbath for God. (See next reading.) But God's command to keep a Sabbath time remains. How do New Testament believers keep this command in Christian freedom?
4. In Israel, God's Sabbath command was written into national law. Should Christians in the United States seek to enact laws forbidding businesses to be open on Sundays? (Hint: Think of the difference in government and purpose between our nation and theirs.)

## Into the Word – Colossians 2:13-17

5. Verses 16-17 are important to help us understand our freedom from Old Testament laws and regulations given to Israel. What was the purpose of those laws and how did they point ahead to Jesus?
6. Christ fulfilled every point of God's command perfectly, freeing us from its written code and canceling our "legal indebtedness." What are some "laws" that people try to place over free Christians today? (Not just Old Testament laws, but other works they say are "required" too!)
7. For Jews, being uncircumcised meant you were set apart from God's covenant of grace. Why is "uncircumcision of the flesh" a good way of describing people who don't know Christ?

## Into the Word – Mark 2:23-3:6

8. What does Jesus mean when he says, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath"? How does Jesus' summary of the Law (including the 3<sup>rd</sup> Commandment!) in Mark 12:30-31 explain this statement?
9. We scoff at the Pharisees for adding to God's law and condemning things like picking grains of barley to eat and healing and walking too far. But what extra rules do we (consciously or not) add to God's requirements for salvation? (For help, see question 6 above.)

## Closing Prayer

Savior Jesus, help me to always remember that my salvation is your gift. Lead me to respond to that gift with a life of faith, not to earn heaven but to celebrate it already given to me. Amen.