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T W O  
S E R M O N S  
U P O N T H E  
S A B B A T H;  
G I V I N G

A Scripture History of the Institution; shewing  
the Nature and Ends of it; and the right  
Manner of observing it.

Preached at  
W A R E in *HERTFORDSHIRE*.

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By *W. WEBSTER*, D.D. Vicar.

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L O N D O N:

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To the Right Honourable the

S P E A K E R,

And the Honourable the

HOUSE, *of* COMMONS,

T H E S E

S E R M O N S,

(On a Subject of the last Importance to private  
and publick, present and future Happiness;

On a Subject little understood by many, and less  
regarded;

At a Time when all *True Piety* is looked upon, by  
*many* of all Ranks and Orders of Men, as *Pu-  
ritanism*, and *Enthusiasm*;

When the *Sabbath* is not only *Neglected*, but  
*openly Insulted*;) )

ARE,

*with the most humble Submission, and*

*the profoundest Respect, inscribed by*

*their most obedient*

*humble Servant,*

W. WEBSTER.

Feb. 6. 1750.

*The Corner of Grange-Court, Carey-  
Street, by Lincoln's-Inn.*

## G E N. ii. 2, 3.

*And on the seventh Day God ended his Work, which he had made, and he rested on the seventh Day from all his Work which he had made.*

*And God blessed the seventh Day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his Work which God created and made.*

**A**S I purpose to discourse to you concerning what we Christians call the *Sunday*, or *Lord's Day*, I have chosen, for my Text, those Words of *Moses*, wherein he gives an Account of the original Appointment of one Day in seven for *religious Uses*; intending, from thence, to lead you through a short History of its *Institution* 'till it terminates in the Appointment of this our *Christian Sabbath*, by the Authority of the *Apostles*, in honour of *Christ's Resurrection*. My main Design is, to instruct you in *what manner* the Sabbath ought to be observed by us; but, this cannot be done effectually without giving you a right Notion of the *Nature*, and *End* of the Institution; any more than you could tell how to apply any *Instrument*, properly, without knowing for what *Uses* it was intended, and what it is capable of serving.—To encourage you to give me the more patient Attention, I promise not to amuse you with *doubtful*, and *needless* Points of *Curiosity*, which have been usually introduced into this Subject; but only to lay before you such useful Matters as are plainly and expressly told Us in the *Bible*, or are obvious to *Common Sense*.—Before I enter upon the *Historical Part*, by way of *Introduction*, I shall make two Remarks.

1. As we are manifestly intended for *Religious Creatures*, it is impossible that this Intention should be answer'd unless Men employ *some Part* of their Time on *Religious Subjects*, and in *Religious Offices*; but, *Experience* shews, that if Man-

kind were left at Liberty, *when*, and how *often*, they would perform these Duties, the Duties would not be perform'd at all by the *Generality*. This, I think, may convince any impartial Person that there is all imaginable Reason to believe that God *did* appoint an Institution for this Purpose from the *Beginning* of the World. This, I say, would appear highly probable, from the *Nature* and *Reason* of the Thing, were the Scriptures silent about it.

2. It is, likewise, equally reasonable to suppose that God should have taken some Method to preserve the *Memory* of the *Creation*, in order to preserve the Knowledge and Worship of Himself, the *Creator*. Now, what Method could so effectually have answered this Purpose, as the Appointment of one Day in seven for Men to rest from their daily Labours, that they might be at Leisure to worship *God*, and attend upon the Business of *Religion*, as *God* had rested from *his* Work of Creation? These Considerations shew the *Credibility* of the Account, which *Moses* gives us in the Words of my Text, of a *seventh* Day's Rest; and is a full Answer to the Conceit of some Learned Men, who thought that, tho' it be mentioned here *immediately after* the Account of the Creation, and closely connected with it, yet the *Sabbath* was not actually instituted till above Two Thousand Years after. It is somewhat strange, that Men of Abilities should entertain such an absurd Opinion. For, besides that it supposes a most judicious and correct Writer to write after the most unnatural and inaccurate manner; it is *morally impossible* that the Thing should be true. If it be, then the infinitely wise God suffered the World, for so long a Time, to be without an Institution highly expedient in itself, and as well fitted to answer the Purposes intended by it from the *Beginning* of the World, as ever it would be *afterwards*.—For these Reasons *Moses* must be understood in the plain and obvious Sense of the Words, when he tells us,

“ That on the seventh Day God ended his Work *which*  
 “ He had made, and rested from all his Work that He had  
 “ made;” that God blessed the seventh Day, and sanctified  
 “ it, because that in it He had rested from all his Work  
 “ *which* God created and made.”

The former Chapter tells us the *Order* and *Manner* of the Creation of the World, which was finished in *six* Days; and my Text tells us that God, having thus finished the Heavens, and the Earth, and all the Host of them, He *blessed* the seventh Day, and *sanctified* it, *because* that in it He had  
*rested*

rested from all his Work of Creation.—The Reason of his blessing and sanctifying the seventh Day we have in those Words—because that in it He had *rested from all his Work*—the *Nature* of that *Blessing*, or *Sanctity*, with which God honoured it, above the other six Days, consisted in its being thus *separated* from the rest, and *set a-part* for the *Worship of God*, and for the *Religious Improvement of Men*—That this is the Meaning of those Words is evident from a great Variety of Places in the *Bible*, where we read, of God's *sanctifying*, that is, *setting apart* PERSONS, and BEASTS, and PLACES, and THINGS, for *his particular Use*.—The *Prophets* and *Priests* under the Law, and the *Apostles* under the Gospel, were not *taken from among Men* that They might spend their Time in *Idleness*, but that They might be employed *for Men*, in Things *pertaining unto God*; as have been all their Successors in the *Ministry*.—*Beasts* were not *sanctified*, or *separated*, that They might not be employed, but that They might be used in *Sacrifices*; nor were *Places* and *Things* separated from *common Uses*, that they might not be used at all, but that they might be used in the Service of *Religious Worship*. In like manner, the *seventh Day* was not *blessed* that Men might not do any thing on that Day, but that They might employ it to *Religious Purposes*. But, more of this hereafter. Let us now proceed in the *History* of the Institution.

From the FIRST Institution of the *Sabbath*, at the *Creation*, to the Deliverance of the *Israelites* out of *Egypt*, we find no *direct* Mention of it, neither does there appear to have been any necessary Occasion for it; the taking notice, even of its Observation by the People of God, either before, or after the Deluge, was needless after it had been so expressly enjoined in the Beginning. But, after *that* great Deliverance, we find the Sabbath mention'd, together with the *Reason* of its being mention'd, in the following Manner.

At the fourteenth Chapter of *Exodus*, Ver. 30. we read, *Thus the Lord saved Israel THAT Day*. If we turn back to the twelfth Chap. Ver. 14. we shall find that the Day here mentioned was the *last* of the Feast of *Unleavened Bread*; which Feast lasted *seven Days*; the *first* and *last* of which were kept Holy; the *former*, in Memory of the Deliverance of the *Israelites* out of *Egypt*; the *latter*, in Memory of God's overthrowing *Pharaoh* and his Host in the *Red Sea*. Bishop *Patrick*, upon the Authority of the great Mr. *Mead*, is of opinion, that this *last Day* of the Feast of *Unleavened Bread* was the very Day which was afterwards appointed by *Moses*,

for the *Jewish Sabbath*, because, when the *Decalogue* is repeated in the fifth Chapter of *Deuteronomy*, the *Creation* is not mentioned, but the *Redemption* out of *Egypt* is made the Ground of the Designation of *that particular Day*, after the preceding six Days: Whether the Day, for the Observation of a Sabbath, were now *changed* on the Account of that Deliverance, or whether this Day happened to be the *seventh Day* that was appointed at the *Creation*, the *greatest Man* that ever lived could only *conjecture*, there being no *positive Proof*; but, if the Argument, here offered, proves any thing, it proves, that the *first Day* of the Feast, and not the *last*, was the Day, because, as the learned Bishop himself observes, upon *this Day* the *Jews* were delivered out of *Egypt*, and were commanded to keep it Holy in *Memory* of that Deliverance.

In the sixteenth Chapter, we have an Account of God's sending the *Jews Food from Heaven*, of which every Man was to gather enough for his Subsistence, *daily*, for five Days, and on the sixth Day a *double Quantity*, because God would send them none on the seventh Day, That being intended for a Day of *Rest*.

At the twenty-second Verse, begins the Account of this Institution. “ And it came to pass on the sixth Day They  
 “ gathered twice as much Bread, two Omers for one Man,  
 “ and all the Rulers of the Congregation came and told  
 “ *Moses*. And He said unto them, This is That which the  
 “ Lord hath said, *To-morrow* is the *Rest* of the *Holy Sab-*  
 “ *bath* unto the Lord: Bake that which ye shall bake To-  
 “ day, and seeth that which ye will seeth; and that which  
 “ remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the Morn-  
 “ ing; and they laid it up until the Morning, and it did not  
 “ stink, neither was there any Worm therein. And *Moses* said;  
 “ Eat That To-day, for To-day is a *Sabbath* unto the Lord,  
 “ To-day ye shall not find it in the Field. Six Days ye shall  
 “ gather it, but on the *seventh Day* which is the *Sabbath*, in it  
 “ there shall be none.” And at the thirtieth Verse we read thus.  
 “ So the People *rested* on the *seventh Day*.” From whence  
 we may observe, that, tho' *This* was a *particular* Institution  
 appointed the *Jews* in Memory of their Deliverance out of  
*Egypt*, and therefore no mention is made here of the *Cre-*  
*ation* of the World; yet, so much of the *Original* Institution  
 was preserved as to make it a *seventh Day Sabbath*, tho'  
 there were *Circumstances* added to it that were adapted to  
*their particular* Condition. At this Time, and not before,  
 a *Rest* from all *Work* seems to have been appointed. There  
 can

can be no reasonable Doubt but that under the *patriarchal* Dispensation, all *pious* Persons did perform religious Offices upon one Day in seven, in a manner beyond what was usual upon the other six Days in the Week, but did not cease from *all* kind of Labour until *now*. And this being a *new* Institution (*new*, in respect of ceasing from all Work) it is called in Scripture a *Sign* or *Token*; that is, a Mark of *Distinction* whereby it was known to *what* God they did belong, as the *Heathens* made it known *what* God they worshipped, by their *religious Rites*. By keeping one Day in seven *holy*, we acknowledge ourselves Servants of that God, who in *six* Days created the World, and rested from his Work on the *Seventh*. By resting from *all* Work on *That* Day on which God delivered them from their *Egyptian* Servitude, the *Jews* acknowledged *Him* to be their *Deliverer*; so that it was to *them*, a *double* Token, or Sign.

A very little while after this, the *Ten Commandments* were published from *Mount Sinai*, and, *then*, the *Sabbath* was solemnly ratified, but in Terms *more general*, and applicable to *all* Persons. In the *former*, the *Jews* were commanded not to *bake*, or *seeth* any thing, to dress no Victuals on the Sabbath-day, or to go out of the City where they inhabited. The *latter* being intended for *perpetual* Obligation, to out-live the *Mosaick* Institutions, and to bind *all Mankind* to the End of the World, there is no mention made of the *particular Prohibitions* given in the *former*. Besides, if it had not been the Intention of God to make a distinction between the Sabbath which was *purely Jewish*, and a Sabbath which was to be *more lasting*, and of *greater Extent*, there seems to have been no occasion at all for the *former Institution*, when the *latter* was to succeed it so soon after.—That the Sabbath, appointed from *Mount Sinai*, was intended to be of *perpetual* and *universal* Obligation is evident, from its being join'd, and written upon the same Tables, with the other Nine Commandments which are allowed to be so.—And what still farther confirms it is, the *Reason* given for the Institution, which equally concerns all Persons, in all Places, and in every Age of the World.—Thus we find it at the xxth ch. of *Exod.* v. 8. “Remember the Sabbath to keep it Holy. Six Days shalt thou labour, and do all thy Work, but the seventh Day is the *Sabbath* of the Lord thy God, &c. for in six Days the Lord made Heaven and Earth, *wherefore* he blessed the seventh Day and hallowed it.” Now, does not this Reason for keeping the Sabbath concern *all the World* as much as the  
the



the *Jews*? All the World, therefore, are equally obliged to observe it.

Indeed, at the 5th Chapter of *Deuteronomy*, Ver. 15. *Moses* tells the *Jews*, “ That they had been *Servants* in the Land “ of *Egypt*, and that the Lord brought them from thence, “ and that, *therefore* the Lord commanded them to keep “ the *Sabbath-Day*.” But, this proves nothing more than that the *Jews* were under a *double* Obligation to keep the Sabbath; as *Men*, in Memory of the *Creation*; as *Jews*, in Memory of their *Redemption* from *Bondage*; even as *we* are under a double Obligation, as *Men*, and as *CHRISTIANS*.

But, if we proceed, we shall meet with many Occasions of repeating the *original* and *general* Institution of the Sabbath, without any mention of any *particular* Circumstances respecting the *Jews*.

At the 23d of *Exod.* we find it repeated, upon the Appointment of a *sabbatical Year*; which *sabbatical Year*, as well as the *sabbatical Day*, was called a *Sign*, or *Token*.—As God, by an *Angel*, deliver'd them from the *Egyptians*; and by *Moses's* Wand drowned the *Egyptians* in the *Red-Sea* when They were in pursuit of the Fugitives; so, by *Joshua*, he subdued the *Canaanites*, and put the *Israelites* in Possession of their Land; in Memory of which, God ordered that as soon as they came there, and had Rest in their new Possessions (reckoning from their peaceable Settlement) they should observe the seventh Year, and every seventh Year for ever, as a Year of Rest. The Law stood thus, Chap. xxiii. ver. 10. “ Six Years thou shalt sow thy Land, and gather in the “ Fruits thereof, but the seventh Year thou shalt let it *rest*, “ and be *still*.”—With some Variation in the Words it is more largely set forth at the 25th Chap. of *Leviticus*, “ Speak “ unto the Children of *Israel*, and say unto them, When “ ye come into the Land which I give you, then shall the “ Land keep a *Sabbath* unto the Lord.—Six Years thou “ shalt sow thy Fields, and prune thy Vineyards, and ga- “ ther in the Fruits thereof, but in the *seventh* Year shall “ be a *Sabbath of Rest* unto the Land, a Sabbath for the “ Lord; thou shalt neither sow thy Field, nor prune “ thy Vineyards.”—This Rest of the Land was a Sabbath for the Lord.—That is, an Acknowledgment of his being the *Proprietor* in right of his being the *Conqueror* of the Land; for, as the Psalmist says, It was not *their own Sword*, neither was it *their own Arm*, that got them the Victory over the *Canaanites*, but it was the omnipotent Hand of  
God.

*God.* Accordingly, God directed to what *Uses* the Products of this Year should be applied; not to the *particular* Use of the *Owners* of the Land, but to *common Uses*; for *all* the People; not excepting the *Servants*, or, even, the *Beasts*; for *all* in *common*, as He fed them with Manna in the Wilderness.—But, you will ask, perhaps, How there could be proper and sufficient Food for all the People, and for all the Beasts, when neither the Land was sowed, nor the Trees prun'd? The 5th Verse tells us how. The Fruits of the Earth, That Year, grew *of themselves*, without any Cultivation; as *Commentators* suppose, either from the Seed which casually fell the Year before, or from the old Root which sprouted out again. But, to my Apprehension, this is a very unsatisfactory Account, as it is contrary to all Experience of the ordinary Course of Things. Is it not more rational to suppose that, as God forbid them the Use of those Means which are, *ordinarily*, necessary to make the Fields and the Trees produce their Fruits, if they trusted in his Providence he would *blefs* That Year, which was sanctified to his Honour, with an *extraordinary* Fertility. As the Observance of this *sabbatical Year* of Rest to the Land was a *Sign*, or *Token*, so, likewise, was it a *Covenant*, whereby they might be assured of his miraculous Blessing, if, in Obedience to his Command, they did not plow, or sow, or prune.

As I had occasion to mention this *sabbatical Year*, I was willing to give you an Account of it; but, the Reason of my mentioning of it was, its carrying on the Thread of the Scripture History of the *Sabbath*.—Lest the People should imagine that this being a Year of Rest from all the Labour of *Cultivation*, they were, during that Time, exempted from the Observation of the *seventh Day*, and might do any work on *That Day* which they were allowed to do on any other Day of the Week; for this Reason, I say, immediately after the Appointment of the *sabbatical Year*, a Repetition of the *sabbatical Day* is subjoined, Ver. 12. “Six Days thou shalt do thy Work, and on the *seventh* “Day thou shalt rest, that thine Ox and thine Ass may “rest.”

We find the same Caution used on another Occasion, and That was, the building of the *Tabernacle*. When God had told *Moses* that he had appointed proper Persons for the Work, and had given them particular Instructions how to make it, then the Lord spake unto him the following most solemn Words, which command your most awful Attention.

“Speak

“ Speak thou also unto the Children of *Israel* and say un-  
 “ to them, Verily my Sabbath ye shall keep, for it is a  
 “ Sign between *me* and *you*, throughout your Generations ;  
 “ that ye may know that I am the Lord that sanctify ye.  
 “ Ye shall keep the *Sabbath*, therefore, for it is *holy* unto  
 “ you.—Every one that *defileth* it *shall surely be put to death* ;  
 “ for, whosoever doth any work therein, *That Soul shall be*  
 “ *cut off from among his People*.—Six Days may Work be  
 “ done, but on the *seventh* Day is the *Sabbath* of Rest, holy  
 “ to the Lord ; whosoever doth any Work thereon, *That*  
 “ *Soul shall surely be put to death*.—Wherefore the Chil-  
 “ dren of *Israel* shall keep the *Sabbath*, to observe the *Sab-*  
 “ *bath* throughout their Generations, for a *perpetual Cove-*  
 “ *nant*.—It is a *Sign* between *me* and the Children of *Israel*  
 “ for ever.—For in *six* Days (mind the *Reason* which  
 “ God gives for this Observation) the Lord made Heaven  
 “ and Earth, and on the *seventh* Day he *rested*,” Chap.  
 xxxi.—And in the xxxvth Chap. This Command is repeated  
 again, and some particular Works are specified. Now, the  
*Reason* of so solemn a Charge on this Occasion is very  
 plain.—As the *Tabernacle* was for *holy* Uses, the People might  
 naturally have thought that any Work on That Day was  
 lawful, if it were done in *God's immediate Service*. But, God  
 lets them know, that *Obedience* is better than *Sacrifice*, and  
 would not permit them so much as to *light a Fire* on That  
 Day, for the use of the *Building*.—So *great a Stress* does  
*God* lay upon the Observance of *positive* Institutions, tho'  
*Man* is apt to make such *Trifles* of them.

At the 23d of *Lev.* their several *Feasts* are enumerated ;  
 and, the *Sabbath* being a *Festival*, for fear the People should  
 think themselves at liberty to do such Works on the *Sabbath*  
 Day, as were allowable on some *other* Festivals, here is a  
 Caveat entered against doing any Work on That Day.

Thus I have given you a short, but full, Scripture Hi-  
 story of the *Sabbath*, as it is contained in the Books of  
*Moses*.—In which Account you have seen that it was *first*  
 instituted immediately after the *Creation*, in Memory of it ;  
 that it was, afterwards, upon the Delivery of the *Jews* from  
*Egypt*, appointed That People with *additional* Circumstances  
*relative* to their *particular* Condition ; that, at the solemn  
 Publication of the Ten Commandments from Mount *Sinai*,  
 the *general* Institution was confirm'd ; that, upon several Oc-  
 casions, this Command was repeated ; at the Appointment  
 of the sabbatical Year ; the Building of the *Tabernacle*,

and the Enumeration of their Feasts.—And from this History you may observe two things well worth Notice.

1<sup>st</sup>, The frequent *Repetitions* of this Command. And,  
2<sup>dly</sup>, The *Sanction* of it.

Besides the *preceding* Repetitions, both the *Command* and the *Sanction* are several Times repeated, in the Compass of *five* Verses, in That Quotation which I made from the xxxi<sup>st</sup> of *Exod.*—Now, God would not have guarded This Institution with such *extraordinary* Care, if the Observance of it had not been of the utmost Importance, and highly acceptable to Him; nor have annexed so severe a *Penalty* to the Breach of it, had it not been highly displeasing to Him.—*He shall surely be put to death.—That Soul shall be cut off from among his People.—Whosoever was guilty of a publick Violation of it, he was stoned to death.—If he did it so secretly that he could not be detected by sufficient Evidence, it was the generally received opinion of the Jews, that God took the Matter into his own Hand, and inflicted some heavy Judgment upon him, in the Course of His Providence.—And pray observe, that this severe Sanction was not annexed to the particular Institution, given to the Jews, in Memory of their Deliverance from their Servitude in Egypt, but to the general Institution, appointed at the Creation, confirm'd from Mount Sinai, often repeated afterwards, and in Terms, and for a Reason, respecting the whole World.*

We are now come to give an Account of our *Christian Sabbath*, when the Day was changed from the *first* to the *seventh* Day of the Week. This is a Subject that has employed the Pens of the Learned, and occasioned many Books to be written upon it; but I never consider'd any *disputed* Subject that seems to lie in a less Compass, or to be more obvious to *common Sense*, without the Assistance of *Learning*.

From the History, which I have given you out of the Old Testament, it appears very plainly that a *seventh* Day Sabbath was appointed for a *Reason*, the force of which must reach *backwards* to the *Beginning*, and *forwards* to the *End*, of the World. I shall not repeat what I have said, but the Substance of it is this, “ In *six* Days God created  
“ the World; on the *seventh* Day God had *ended* his  
“ Work; and for *This Reason* He *blessed* the *seventh* Day,  
“ and made it *holy*. This is the Tenour of the *original* In-  
“stitution

“stitution at the *Creation*, of the *Republication* of it from  
 “*Mount Sinai*, and of the several *Repetitions* of it after-  
 “wards.” This Institution being thus established upon  
 a *Reason* that must hold *universally*, it clearly follows that  
 we *Christians* are obliged to observe a *seventh Day Sabbath*,  
 in memory of the *Creation*. The only Question is, whether  
 we be obliged to observe the *same Day* of the Week which the  
*Jews* observed. If we be, is it because God commanded  
*them* to keep that Day? If so, then you make it a mere *Jewish*  
 Institution, and, consequently, it was nailed to the Cross  
 of Christ, and died with Him, as all the other *Mosaical*  
*Ordinances* did.—Is it because the *Jewish Sabbath* was upon  
 the very Day of the Week which was appointed at the  
*Creation*? This is more than any Man, or all the Men in  
 the World can prove. But, to cut this Argument short, it  
 has been demonstrated \* that the *same Day* would not be the  
*seventh Day* from the *Creation* in all Parts of the World,  
 and that in *some Parts* the *Sabbath* would fall eighteen  
 Hours later than in *Palestine*. If there be, therefore, such  
 a thing as a *Demonstration*, this Fact *demonstrates* that it never  
 could be the Intention of God, that the Observance of the  
*seventh Day* from the *Creation* should be of *perpetual* and  
*universal* Obligation, though he most certainly intended that  
 the Observance of *one Day* in *seven* should be so.—If  
 therefore, upon the *Abolition* of the *Jewish Law* *Christians*  
 had no Directions from the *New Testament*, it must have  
 lain in the Breast of *human Authority* to determine it. But  
 then, as the *Jews* had something *particular* appointed them  
 in honour of their miraculous Deliverance from *Egypt*, so  
*Christian Powers*, if left to themselves, would naturally  
 have been led to something, in the Appointment of a  
*Christian Sabbath*, that might preserve the Memory of our  
 Deliverance from a much greater Bondage by Christ.

Having thus prepared the Way, let us see what Light  
 the New Testament affords us.

It is objected that our Saviour did not, Himself, appoint  
 the *first Day* of the Week for the *Sabbath*. But, how do  
 these Objectors know That? He did not, indeed, Himself,  
 observe it, for this plain Reason, because he could not ob-  
 serve a Rite in memory of his own *Resurrection*, while He  
 was alive. It does not, however, follow from thence that  
 He did not instruct the *Apostles* privately what They should  
 do after his Death.

But

\* *Waggenfeil* against *Lipman's Carmoen Memoriale*, p. 51.

But They may reply, that, tho' He could not, Himself, observe this Rite in his Life-time, He might have done it after his *Resurrection*.—To this Objection it is a sufficient Answer to say, that He knew best what was proper to be done. But, tho' He did not observe it, Himself, yet, if he had not done it before, He might as far as They knew, *then* order it to be done; and there is abundant Reason to think that He *did*. He was Forty Days upon Earth with them, instructing them concerning the future Settlement of his Church; and it is not at all probable that in his Instructions He should omit so capital a Thing as the Appointment of a *Christian Sabbath*, in the Room of the *Jewish*; and such a one as might be a *Sign*, or *Token*, between God and Us *Christians*, in the same manner as the *Jewish Sabbath* was a *Sign*, or *Token*, between God, and That People.

Some *Christian Writers*, in the Warmth of their Zeal, have maintained that our Saviour, after his *Resurrection*, did, in effect, tho' not *directly* appoint the *first Day* of the Week for *our Sabbath*, because He appeared to his Disciples on that Day, when they were assembled together, for *Christian Worship*.—I must ask their Pardon if I do not see how these weekly Meetings for publick Worship on that Day should derive their Authority, or how that Day could receive its Sanction, from *Christ's* Appearances among them, when these Meetings on that Day were *prior* to his having appeared there; for we read, that they were assembled together before He came.—But, their having made Choice of this Day before He *did* come, this shews plainly that *Christ* had given them Instructions about it before.—This seems to me highly probable, but I lay no Stress upon it; but his first Appearance to them being on the first Day of the Week, when they were assembled for *Christian Worship*, seems to be the strongest Testimony of his Approbation of the Institution, as his Approbation gave a strong Sanction to it. It is sufficient for the Purposes of my Point, that the *Apostles*, who must know their Master's Will, and had full Power to determine all Points which He, Himself, had not determined, did observe this Day, as the *Christian Sabbath*, and that all *Christian People* in all Parts of the World, from the Apostles Days, have followed their Example.—It is no Answer to this Argument to say that in the Acts of the Apostles we meet with no *express Injunction*; for, their *Practice* had the Force of a *Law*, because they had a *Commission* from *Christ*, and by Inspiration from the Holy Ghost were *infallibly* directed in the Execution of it; and they proved  
their

their divine Commission, and Inspiration by *Miracles*. Thus *commission'd*, thus *inspir'd*, they settled this Right by their constant Practice; it was then understood to be a *Christian Ordinance*; and what would any Man have more? As *Primate, Bramhall*, justly observes, “He that will not be satisfied with the perpetual Tradition of the Universal Church, *i. e.* the whole World of Believers, including the *Apostles themselves*, is utterly incapable of any real Satisfaction.”—But, whatever Foundation the *Sunday* may be supposed to stand upon; whether an immediate Appointment by *Christ* Himself; whether an *Apostolical* Institution under his Direction; whether an *Ecclesiastical*, or *Civil* Establishment; a *seventh Day Sabbath* stands, and ever must stand, irreversible, immoveable, upon the solid Rock of an immediate Appointment by *God Himself*, as the *Creator* of the World. If this be admitted (and I may venture to challenge the whole World to confute it) there can be no Room for a rational Debate whether the *first* or the *last* Day of the Week, be the fittest for a *Christian Sabbath*.—The Death of *Christ* delivered us from the Dominion of Sin, and the Power of the Grave; upon the *first* Day of the Week He rose from the Dead, publickly to testify that God had accepted his Death for the Purposes of our Redemption. Highly expedient, therefore, is it that the Memory of this glorious Event should be perpetuated in the Hearts of all those who expect a Share in the Benefits of it: And how could that be done more effectually than by the Appointment of the *Sabbath* upon *that* Day which assured to the World the *Efficacy* of the Atonement which He made for Us?

We are next to consider how this sacred Institution ought to be observed.

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# S E R M O N II.

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GEN. ii. 2, 3.

*And on the seventh Day God ended his Work, which he had made; and He rested on the seventh Day from all his Work which He had made.*

*And God blessed the seventh Day, and sanctified it; because that in it He had rested from all his Work which God created and made.*

**U**NDER this Head I shall consider, **FIRST**, what we ought *not* to do upon the *Sunday* — **SECONDLY**, what the Duty of the Day *requires* from us, in order to answer the Purposes of the Institution.

**FIRST**, Let us consider what we ought *not* to do upon the *Sunday*. And these *Prohibitions* I shall consider under *Three* different Heads.

1. As They are plainly *implied*, tho' not *expressed*, in the *original* Institution of a *Sabbath* at the *Creation*.
2. As They are *expressly* contained in the *Fourth* Commandment, published by *Moses* from *Mount Sinai*.
3. As They are specified in an *Act* of *Parliament*.

You see, I omit those *Prohibitions* which are mentioned in the Institution that was given to the *Jews*, immediately after their *Deliverance* from *Egypt*, because, *That* was *relative* to their *Deliverance*, and *peculiar* to *Them*.

**FIRST,**



FIRST, then, let us consider what *Prohibitions* are *plainly implied*, tho' not *expressed*, in the *original Institution* at the *Creation*.—God instituted a *Sabbath*, i. e. a *Day of Rest*; in *Memory*, and in *Imitation*, of his having been employed *six Days*, and resting from the *Work of Creating*, on the *seventh*. But, how is the *Design* of this *Institution* answered, if on the *seventh Day* Men follow the common *Business*, and ordinary *Affairs of Life*? This *Day* is *sanctified*, distinguished from the other *six Days*, and *set apart* for *pious* and *religious Uses*; but, if we spend this *Day* in the *Pursuit of secular Affairs*, or our *usual Recreations*, it is not employed for the *Purposes* intended by *God*. Now, does this *Institution* concern *all Mankind*, or only *Masters* and *Mistresses*? Surely *all Mankind*. Therefore it was intended for a *Day of Rest*, and *Religious Uses*, for *Servants*, also: The *Consequence* of which *Rest to Men* must be *Rest to Beasts*, too.

SECONDLY, I shall consider these *Prohibitions* as they are contained in the *Fourth Commandment*. It is agreed by all *Writers*, that there were some *Prohibitions* that concerned the *Jews ONLY*; such as *dressing no Meat*; *making no Fires*, for any other *Uses* than *warming themselves* in cold *Weather*; *not going out* of their *Places*, i. e. *not farther* than the *Suburbs* of the *City* where they dwelt, &c. Those we have nothing to do with. As to the *Fourth Commandment*, delivered from the *Mount*, tho' it was given to the *Jews*, it was not intended for a *Law peculiar* to that *People*; because, as I observed to you before, the *Reason* assigned for it, respects *all Mankind equally*, as the other *Nine Commandments* do. The *Obligation* must be as *extensive* as the *Reason* upon which the *Law* is grounded. The *Reason* still subsists in its full *Force*, consequently the *Obligation* must continue. The *Reason* is *unlimited*, consequently the *Obligation* must be *universal*, wherever the *Law* is sufficiently *promulged*. In this *Case* a *formal Confirmation* of it was not necessary, in order to make it *obligatory* upon *Us Christians*; it is enough that our *Saviour* did not *formally repeal* it. It is strange that it ever should be made a *Question*, whether the *Fourth Commandment*, any more than the other *Nine*, be still in *Force*. But, were it a *Law purely Mosaical*, and void, every *Part* of it is *virtually contain'd* in the *original Institution*, appointed at the *Creation*, as I observ'd to you. But, let us see how the *prohibiting Part* of the *Law* stands.—“ In it  
 “ (i. e. on the *seventh Day*) *Thou shalt do no manner of*  
 “ *Work*, *Thou* and thy *Son*, and thy *Daughter*, thy *Man-*  
 “ *servant*, and thy *Maid-servant*, thy *Cattle*, and the  
 “ *Stranger*

“Stranger that is within thy Gates.” Here, no particular Works are *specified*, as there were in the Institution before the giving of the Ten Commandments from the *Mount*; but only a *general* Prohibition. Some Sorts of Works were allowed even under the *Rigour* of the *Jewish* Dispensation; according to our blessed Saviour’s Interpretation: Some Exceptions, therefore, must be admitted here, and the *Nature* and *End* of the Law must be our Guide in determining the necessary *Limitations*. The general Intent of the Institution seems to be satisfied if Men abstain from following their *ordinary Businesses, Trades, Professions, and Diversions*. But thus far, I think, the Prohibitions contained in the Fourth Commandment, are binding upon *Christians*, as well as *Jews*, by Virtue of that Commandment.

But there is an *additional* Obligation from *human* Authority. For,

THIRDLY, The *Legislature* has very wisely interposed, by *Civil* Sanctions to secure Obedience to the Law of God. The Law of the Land forbids all *Trade, Commerce, or Business* of any kind, unless where it is a plain Act of *Mercy*; all *unnecessary* frequenting of *publick* Houses \*; all *unnecessary Travelling*. It forbids all sorts of Sports and Games, whether publick or private. And highly proper these last-mentioned Prohibitions are: For, *Amusements* are as inconsistent with the *Nature* and *End* of the Sabbath, as any kind of *Business*. Such was the *Piety* and *Wisdom* of our *Forefathers*. I am sorry that I cannot do Justice to my Subject, without giving Uneasiness to my self, and, probably, Offence to others. It is with Reluctance that I am obliged to mention how these wise and pious Laws are not only *neglected*, but *insulted*; not only by the *vulgar* and *illiterate* Part of the People, but by the *Rich* and *Great*, by the *Makers* and *Guardians* of the Laws. They are very much injured, if *Gaming* in their own Houses be not a common Practice among many of them; but I am sure, I do them no Injury, if I charge them with *Travelling* openly on the *Sunday*, and in Time of *Divine Service*. After these influential Examples, can it be any Wonder, that *Gaming* should be so frequent at *Taverns* in the *polite* Parts of *Westminster*? †  
That

\* Every *Ale-House* is forbid, under a Penalty to suffer any Body to sit down to *Tipple*, (as the Act expresses it) in his House.

† A Friend of mine had it from a *Waiter* in one of them, that they sometimes used 30 Packs of Cards in a Day.

That the Roads about *that great City*, and the CAPITAL, should be *crowded* with *Carriages*, and *Horses*? That even *Stage-Coaches* should be permitted to go and come, to, and from, the *Neighbouring Villages*? That *Taverns* and *Ale-houses* in those Places should be full all Day long? That *Waggons* should be seen in *remoter* Parts of the Kingdom? When the *vital* Parts are decayed, no wonder if there should be *Corruption* and *Distempers* in the *inferior* Parts of the Body.

It is my Desire to treat all Mankind with decent Respect, but if I had the Honour of addressing myself to them, I would coolly and candidly expostulate with those of the *Nobility*, and *Gentry*, as are guilty of these open Violations of the Laws of their Country. Setting aside the *Obligation* arising from the plain Law of *God* in this Case, if there be such a Thing as *moral Obligation*, we are *morally obliged* to obey all *human* Laws enacted by *sufficient* Authority, and these *Prohibitions* have the Sanction of *all* the Authority that is vested in the *whole Constitution*; and *no* Law can have *more*. If, therefore, the Members of the Society will take the Liberty, for their own private *Conveniency*, or *Pleasure*, to violate the *publick* Law, there is an End of *Government*, and of *Order*; of all *Decency* and *Decorum*, as well as of *Religion*. If one Man may take his *Pleasure*, or a *Journey*, upon the *Sunday*, because he cannot do it so *conveniently* on any other Day of the Week, *every* Man must have the *same* Liberty, and *every* Man must be the Judge of his *own Conveniency*; so that this *discretionary* Power, in *private* Persons, of *dispensing* with the Law, does in Effect *vacate* the Law, and renders it of no Use.—But the Law knows nothing of these *private Conveniencies*, but requires *Obedience*. In Time of *Harvest*, when the Weather has been unfavourable, and the *Corn*, or *Hay*, is in Danger of being spoiled, it would be *extremely convenient* for the *Farmers*, if they might take the Opportunity of a fine Day to break the *Sabbath*; but, *irreligious* as the *present* Age is, the very *worst* of them do not presume upon such a Liberty, tho' there would be much more to be said in Mitigation of *their* Crime, than can be pleaded in Cases of *lesser* Inconveniencies, such as most People's are. Nothing but *necessary* Works may be done on this Day. But *Conveniencies* are not *Necessaries*. What are *Necessaries* our Saviour has determined, *viz. pulling an Ox out of a Ditch*, or *curing a Man that is sick*. By *Parity of Reason* we may save a Person from *Ruin* or any *very great* Mischief, where the Case requires *immediate* Assistance, as in those above-men-

tioned.

tioned. I say, *immediate* Assistance, for, let the Service be ever so great that we can do him, unless it be of such a Nature that it cannot wait till next Day, without manifest Hazard of losing the Opportunity of doing it, no *Necessity*, consequently no *Mercy*, can be pleaded. But, in those *Extremities* the Law of the *Land*, as well as the Law of *God*, will bear a Man out in *doing good* on the *Sabbath* Day. But, with Reverence to the *Legislature* I speak it, I think, the Law should leave a Man, as little as possible, to his own *Judgment* of the *Necessity* of the Case. In *many* Cases it *must* be done; in *others*, it needs not. I will instance in *Traveling* on the *Sunday*. There may be very good Reasons, Reasons of *Necessity*, for doing it; but, in *most* of these Cases it could be no Prejudice, if the Law required the Person to carry a *Certificate*, under the Hands of the *Minister* and *Churchwardens* of his Parish, of the *Reality* of it; or some such Caution might be used. At *London*, *Watermen*, as I have been informed, are not at Liberty to carry a *Fare* without a *Permit*; unless it be a *Clergyman*, *Physician*, *Surgeon*, *Apothecary*, or *Midwife*. And, why cannot this Caution be used on *Land*, as well as upon the *Water*? For want of it we see the infinite bad Consequences arising from a *discretionary* Liberty. Our *Roads* are filled; *publick* and *private* Houses hindered from doing their Duty, by wicked Families who have no Religion, and by idle People who never think. I am willing to believe, nay I know, that Numbers of those who offend in this way, retain a serious Sense of Duty, and transgress thro' Ignorance. These I would intreat to consider the Point, with the Attention that is due to its great Importance, and they will easily convince themselves that *Disobedience* to *Government* is no light Offence, were the *Subject Matter* of the Law of ever so trifling a Nature. Every wilful Transgression of the Laws of our Country adds to the Number of our Sins, and the Load of our Guilt; and, if persisted in, will increase our Punishment in the next World.

While I am upon the Head of *Prohibitions*, I must take notice of one Way of *profaning* the *Sabbath*, and offending against *Civil Authority*, which very few, I doubt, have any Notion of; I mean, *riding* out, either on *Horseback*, or in a *Coach*, *after the Duty of the Day is over* (as they weakly imagine) whether it be to take the Air, or to make a Visit. You may be surprized at my Doctrine, but it is certainly true, because this is *travelling*, and *employing Servants* and *Cattle* as *unnecessarily*, as much as taking a *Journey* is, and therefore is as much *forbidden*, by the *Intention* of the original

ginal Institution, by the *express Letter* of the 4th Commandment, and by the Laws of the Land. For the same Reason, all *unnecessary Entertainments* on the Sunday, are, *virtually*, prohibited; because, instead of *contriving* (as every Master of a Family ought to do) how to give his *Servants* as much *Rest*, as possible, from their *ordinary Labour*, and as much *Leisure*, as possible, for the Business of *Religion*, this is loading them with *extraordinary Labour*, and hindering them from doing their Duty to *God*.

Having shewn what we ought *not* to do upon the *Sunday*, we are next to examine what we *ought* to do. For, tho' it is a Day of *Rest* from the ordinary Concerns of *this Life*, it is not intended for a Day of *Idleness*, but of *BUSINESS*. Let us therefore, consider what is the *proper Business* of this Day. At the 31st Chap. of *Exod.* *Moses* says, that the *Sabbath* was *holy* unto the *Lord*, and *holy* unto the *People*. Before the *Deliverance* of the *Jews* from *Egypt*, the *Sabbath* was *sanctified* to the *Knowledge* and *Worship* of the *true God*, the *Creator* of the *World*. To the *Jews* it was *farther* sanctified, to the *Knowledge* and *Worship* of Him as their *Deliverer* from their *Egyptian Bondage*, and their *Law-giver*, as they were a *peculiar People*, distinguished from the rest of the *World* by a *select Body* of *Laws*. To us *CHRISTIANS* the *Sunday* is *sanctified*, i. e. *set apart*, for the *Knowledge* and *Worship* of *God* as our *Creator*, and to *Jesus Christ*, our *Redeemer* and *Lawgiver*; and to our *Improvement* in the *Knowledge* of the *Doctrines* and *Duties* of *Christianity*. From this short Account we may easily shew how *Christians* ought to spend the *Sunday*.

As the *Jews* were obliged to attend the *Jewish Worship* at such Times as were appointed by their *Law*, and to improve themselves in the *Knowledge* of the *Law*, and of other *religious Truths*; so we *CHRISTIANS* are required to attend *christian Assemblies* at the Times appointed by *publick Authority*; and, at *Home*, to improve ourselves and Families in *christian Knowledge*. To these *religious Uses* the *Sunday* is *sanctified*, or *set apart*; in the same Manner as *Places* and *Things* are *consecrated*, or *set apart*, for religious Uses. And, as *they* are *profan'd* whenever they are applied to *common Uses*, so the *Sunday* is *profan'd* whenever it is spent in Attendance upon the *ordinary Affairs* and *Amusements* of *Life*.

How often *Christians* ought to go to *Church* on *Sundays*, the *New Testament* has not specified, any more than how often in a Day we should pray in *private*, or how much of our

our Income we should give in *Charity*; but *publick Authority* has determined that every Man, who has an Opportunity, and is not *necessarily* hinder'd, should go to Church *Morning* and *Afternoon*. You may say, *where* does the Law of the Land *expressly* require this? To which I very readily answer, *No where*; and, yet, I insist upon it that the Law *does*, nevertheless, *require* it. It is the *Will*, or *Intention*, and not the *Letter* only, or the *Penalty* of the Law that binds the *Conscience*. Now, that it is the *Intention* of the Law that every Man, who has an *Opportunity*, and is not *necessarily* hinder'd, should go *twice* a Day, is undeniably evident from its providing an *Evening*, as well as a *Morning Service*, which it would *not* have done, if it had not *meant* that the People should attend them. If there were no *other* Obligations, this would be a sufficient one upon all the Members of the *established Church*, by virtue of That Obedience which is due to Government. But, if the *Legislature* had been *neuter* in this Case, who, that *calls* himself a *Christian*, can think that *twice* a Day is *too often* to go to Church on *Sundays*? What *good* Christian would not *readily* and *joyfully* embrace the Opportunity? *You*, my Brethren are so happy as to *have* the Opportunity; I wish I could see by your Behaviour that you are duly sensible of your Happiness. In order to induce you to be more constant, I shall briefly remind you of the *Object*, and the *Subject*, of your publick Devotions; and a very little Reflection upon them will make you stand amazed at your own Conduct; that, instead of *neglecting* this honourable, this advantageous, this comfortable, and delightful Duty, upon such *little* Pretences, you are not tempted rather to be *superstitiously* pious, at the Expence of *Mercy* to others, and a proper Regard to your own Health, and Safety. It is impossible for the most elevated Genius to do Justice to the infinite Perfections, and peerless Majesty, of that God who is the *Object* of these our Devotions. He is *glorious in Holiness*, *fearful in Praises*, *doing Wonders*. His Goodness has induced Him, his Power and Wisdom have enabled Him, to *create* and *govern* more Worlds than our Imaginations can reach to the Conception of. This is so *grand*, so *awful* an Idea, that my Flesh trembleth, my Blood runs cold in my Veins, my Mind is overwhelm'd with Terror, while I think of it. And, yet, *this* is That—It is impossible for me to express the Fulness of my Thoughts.—I can only say, *this* is That *inconceivably great* and *good* Being, whom we come hither to worship. To have the Liberty of a free Address, nay, to

be invited to come boldly to his Throne, and pour out our Hearts before Him, is such an Honour as, one would think, should excite Ambition in the *Meanest*, and more than satisfy the Ambition of the *most aspiring* Spirit. Consider farther, what it is that you approach Him for.—We are daily, and hourly offending this great and good God; and the first Part of our Business here is, to *unite* in a joint Confession of our manifold Sins and Wickedness, and an humble Supplication for Mercy.—If we have a due Sense of our Sins, and of the fatal Consequences of them, shall we not with the utmost Anxiety and Impatience, desire the Opportunity of *joining* with our Fellow-Sinners in the *House* and upon the *Day*, dedicated, by Himself, to his Honour; in Hopes that the *Sacredness* of the *Day*, and of the *Place*, and the Force of our *united* Humiliations, might be, as they certainly are, more powerful with God, than any *private* Acknowledgements in our *Closets*?—The next Part of our Devotions consists in *Praises* and *Thanksgivings*, in publickly celebrating the adorable Perfections, and wonderful Works of God, especially that stupendous Act of *Mercy*, our *Redemption* by *Christ Jesus*. Praise, to a *generous* Mind, is a most *joyful* Act; and, whenever there is *Gratitude*, it is a *pleasant thing to be Thankful*—The *remaining* Part of our Devotions consists in *supplicating* God to continue to us his Blessings, to supply all our Wants. And, what are those? The Support of our Being, with all the Necessaries, Conveniencies, and Comforts of it; *Grace* here, and *eternal Glory* hereafter. And,——Now, my Brethren, having fairly given you a plain State of the great Importance of our Business at *Church*, be so just to yourselves as to *Recollect* the *pitiful* Excuses, that often satisfy you in the Neglect of it. If you be *sincere*, your Memory cannot Fail you; if you be *not*, I shall put you out of Countenance, and provoke you, but not convert you, by mentioning them. I shall only request two very reasonable things of you. The first is, to consider, *before-hand*, how you may *order* your Affairs, so as not to subject yourselves to the Temptation of neglecting your *Church*, for the Sake of your *present Interest*.—The second is, when you find yourselves inclined to stay at home, particularly on *Sundays*, or go abroad, either upon some Scheme of *Business*, or *Pleasure*, *seriously* to consider with yourselves (for it is a *very serious Thing*) and compare your Motives for *absenting* yourselves, with the strong and weighty Reasons for *going to Church*;

and then, you must be *infatuated*, if you neglect *such a Duty* for *such Trifles*.

There is but one thing more necessary towards your Instruction concerning the right manner of observing the *Sunday*, and that is, How we are to spend the remaining Part of the Day? It is a very prevailing, but very erroneous, Opinion, that the Duty of the Day does not *begin* 'till the Time of going to *Church* in the *Morning*, and that it ends with the *Evening Service*; not considering that it is not only a *Part* of the Day, but the whole Day that is *appropriated* to *religious* Uses. As the *Sunday* was intended to be kept in Memory of the *Creation*, and of our *Redemption*, we ought to *contemplate* upon those Subjects at *Home*, as well as make them the Subject of our Praises and Thankgivings at *Church*. As it is *sanctified* to our Improvement in the Knowledge of the Doctrines and Duties of *Religion*, we should, on That Day, *particularly*, employ our ourselves in reading the *Bible*, and other *good* Books (not *Romances* and *Novels*; not *Plays*, or *profane History*; not Books relating to *worldly* and *secular* Affairs; (the *Sunday* was not *consecrated* for *such* Uses) but *religious* Books; in order to *know* our Duty, and be excited to the Performance of it; and to compare our *Lives* with the *Rule* of our Actions, that we may see where we have been defective; and those who have *Families*, should see after *their* Instruction, as well as their *own*. These are the Uses for which the *Sunday* was intended, and when it is not applied in this *Manner*, it is *profaned*. No Body can say, but that these Things must be done at some Time, or another; but, unless there be some *set* Times for doing them, the Generality of Mankind would wholly Neglect them; which shews how *expedient*, I might have said *necessary*, the Institution of the *Sunday* is for these religious Purposes.—But, is the *whole* Day so *absolutely* devoted to *Religion*, that no Body must make a Visit, or take any sort of Recreation, even where it can be done without making their *Servants* and their *Cattle* *WORK*; especially, the *Trading* and *LABOURING* Part of Mankind, who have little Leisure at any other Time, to see their Friends, or for any other *Amusement*? I dare not say so.—But this I dare say, That the *less frequent*, and the *shorter*, our Visits are, (unless, they be charitable Visits to the Sick) and the *less* Pleasure Men take on *Sundays*, the better; that our Thoughts may not be too long *interrupted*, or *indisposed* for those serious Subjects which ought to employ us at that Time. An Attention to Things *foreign* to the Business of the Day, will not  
only



only *interrupt* it, but render the Mind less capable of doing it in a proper manner. An Attention to *pleasurable* Objects, or *Conversation*, will more *indispose* us for *Religion* than any *honest Calling* would do. *Light Mirth*, or any *agreeable Amusement*, dissipates Thought, and begets a *Levity* of Mind that is utterly inconsistent with That *Composure* and *Gravity* which every Part of the Duty of the Day requires. The *Rich* are the most inexcusable, if they *trifle* away the *Sunday* in *impertinent Amusements*, because *they* have the *whole Week* at their Command, and are *always* at Leisure to take more Pleasure than is consistent with the *Temper*, and *Duties*, of a *good Christian*. As to the *poor*, and *busy* Part of the World, that I may not be Thought *rigid*, I chuse not to give you my *own* Sentiments, but I'll give you the Opinion of a most eminent *Prelate*, so remarkable for his *Candour*, that his enemies accused him of being *too loose* in his Notions; I mean, the *Great*, and Good Archbishop *Tillotson*; his Words are these, "Not that we are excused from  
 " minding Religion at *other* Times; but that those who are  
 " *straitened* at other Times by the necessary Cares of this  
 " Life, may be sure to mind it *then*, and may have no Colour  
 " of Excuse for the Neglect of it at *that Time*, which  
 " God hath allotted for that very Purpose, and which it  
 " is unlawful to employ about our *worldly* Affairs. God  
 " expects that we should serve Him at *other* Times, that  
 " we should live in an *habitual* Sense of Him; but *This* He  
 " peremptorily challengeth to *Himself*, and expects that we  
 " should employ it in *his* Service, and dedicate it to *Religion*,  
 " to the Contemplation of God, and heavenly Things,  
 " with the same Seriousness and Diligence, as we do upon  
 " other Days employ *our Labour for the Meat that perisheth*;  
 " and the less Leisure (mind *This*) we have upon other Days  
 " for this Purpose, the more *entirely* should we *devote* and  
 " *consecrate* this Day, to the Purposes and Duties of *Re-*  
 " *ligion.*"

And, now, upon the Whole, I appeal to any one of you, whether one Day in seven spent in such a Manner, as I have described, would not make you pleased with yourselves, beget a Tranquillity and Self-complacency of Mind at Night, and have a very great Influence upon your Thoughts and Actions during the whole Week? This is a very *rational*, but not the *only* Motive for a due Observation of the *Sunday*. For we have Reason to expect the Displeasure and Vengeance of God if we *profane* it; and, consequently, a particular Reward if we conscientiously observe

observe it. You have heard, in the Scripture History of the *Sabbath*, that the Institution was guarded with the most solemn Sanction.—If any one violates it, *He shall surely be put to death.—That Soul shall be cut off.* If we look into the *Prophets*, they will tell us, how severely God has threatened, and how severely he has punished, the Breach of it. I shall cite two of them, which are very sufficient to awaken your Apprehensions. “*Neh. xiii, 16, 17, 18.* There dwelt Men of *Tyre* also therein, which brought Fish and all manner of Ware, and sold on the *Sabbath* unto the Children of *Judah*, and in *Jerusalem*. Then I contended with the *Nobles* of *Judah*, and said unto them, What evil Thing is This that ye do, and profane the *Sabbath* Day? Did not your Fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this Evil upon us, and upon this City? Yet ye bring more Wrath upon *Israel* by profaning the *Sabbath.*” *Isaiab*, Chap. lviii. 13. promiseth a particular Blessing to those that did not go after their own Doings; i. e. follow the Business of this Life; nor take their Pleasure on the *Sabbath* Day, &c. At the xviiith Chap. *Jeremiah* tells the *Jews*, that if they carried any Burdens out of their Houses, and thro’ the gates of *Jerusalem*, that if they did not hallow the the *Sabbath* Day, but did bear Burdens on the *Sabbath* Day; even entering in at the Gates of *Jerusalem* on the *Sabbath* Day; then, God would kindle a Fire in the Gates thereof, that should devour the Palaces of *Jerusalem*, and that it should not be quenched, ver. 27. And at ver. 24, 25. there is as great a Blessing promised to the Observance of the *Sabbath*, “If ye shall diligently hearken unto me, saith the Lord, to Bring in no Burden thro’ the Gates of this City on the *Sabbath* Day; to do no work therein; then shall there enter into the Gates of this City Kings and Princes sitting upon the Throne of David, riding in Chariots, and on Horses; and this City shall remain for ever.”

My Brethren, Do ye really believe the *Bible* to be the Word of God, or do ye not? If ye look upon these strong Declarations of Anger and Approbation as *invented Stories*, I have cited them to no Purpose; but, if they be *real Facts*, they are of great Moment, forasmuch as we have all imaginable Reason to believe that the Breach of the *Sunday* is as offensive, and the due Observance of it as acceptable to God, now, as the Breach or Observance of the *Sabbath* was under the *Jewish* Dispensation. Nay, much more so, the *Sunday*, our *Christian Sabbath*, being appointed in honour of *Christ*, our Redeemer. If God punished the *Jews* so

so severely for carrying Burdens, for kindling a Fire, for doing the *least* Work, or taking their *Pleasure*, on *their* Sabbath, and not delighting, rather, to spend it in *religious* Exercises, will he not take Vengeance on us *Christians*, if we follow our *ordinary* Concerns and Recreations on the *Sunday*, which is, in Obedience to the *Original* Institution of a *Sabbath*, and the 4th Commandment, to be observed in Memory of the *Creation*, as much as the *Jewish Sabbath* was, and in Memory of a much greater Deliverance than That of the *Jews* from *Egypt*? It is intended as a Day of *Rest*, that we may be at *Leisure* to frequent Assemblies where Ordinances are administer'd that are of a much higher, and more beneficial, Nature, than any of the *Jewish Institutions* were; where more sublime Doctrines, more important Truths, and more perfect Precepts, are taught, and explained. It is intended that on this Day we should *privately* improve ourselves in the Knowledge and Practice of a more excellent Religion; fit ourselves for a State of greater Happiness, and avoid a greater Misery, than was threaten'd, or promised, under the *Mosaical Dispensation*. All these Circumstances consider'd, the Guilt of *profaning* the *Sunday* must be proportionably greater than the *Profanation* of the *Jewish Sabbath*; and can we believe that where the *Sin* is greater, the *Punishment* will be *less*? It may not be so *visible*; *Judgment* may not be executed *speedily*. The *First* Covenant was established upon *temporal* Sanctions; the *second*, upon *invisible* and *eternal* Ones; but, this does not *exclude* a *general*, or a *particular* Providence, that *interposes*, tho' not *apparently*, either to *blefs*, or to *punish* Nations or *particular* Persons. And what can better *intile* us to his *Favour* than a due Observance of his *favourite* Institution? What more likely to bring down a *Curse* upon us than Disobedience in so *tender* a Point? If God were to inflict upon us no other Punishment than *withdrawing* his *Grace* for neglecting so great a Means of *Improvement* in Piety and Virtue, This would exceed any Evil that we can suffer in *this* Life; and the Apprehension of so great a Danger ought to awaken us into a careful and regular Discharge of this Important Duty. But, whether Chastisements overtake us *here*, or not, we are *sure* that, *Judgment*, at the LAST GREAT DAY, will pronounce a most severe Sentence upon those who have wilfully, and habitually *profan'd* the *Sunday*. It will, *then*, be of no Signification, that they contriv'd, by *Secrecy*, to escape publick Notice; that silly People have been afraid, or ashamed, to *inform* against them; or that indolent Magistrates have neglected

neglected to put the Laws in Execution. All *hidden* Sins will be laid open; all such *secret Sinners* will be detected; and all such as, thro' Cowardice, or want of Zeal for the Honour of God, have not endeavour'd to *prevent* such Instances of *Profanation*, will be Sharers in their *Punishment*, because Partakers with them in their *Guilt*.——I hope, there are none in this Place who do not believe the Certainty of a *Providence*, a *future State*, and a *future Judgment*. To *all such* what I have said, concerning God's Anger and Favour, must be affecting, if any Arguments can affect them; but as I intend, God willing, to *print* these Sermons, they may possibly light into the Hands of some *Infidels*; and, therefore, I shall offer some Considerations that Deserve *their* Attention, because they affect their *present* Happiness.

The Happiness of Mankind in *this* Life must, in a great Measure, depend upon the Peace and good Order of civil Society; witness, the many Frauds, Thefts, Robberies, Murders, Maimings, and other Crimes, which make it unsafe to place that Confidence in one another which Trade, Commerce, Friendship, and all Intercourse require; which make it dangerous to travel by Day, or sleep at Night; to go abroad, or to stay at home. We see, we *feel*, how Destructive these Enormities are to *social Happiness*, and have Reason to dread their quick Progress, and our *growing Danger*. These Evils are like a great Stone rolling down-hill, which rolls the faster the nearer it comes to the *Bottom*. All thinking People must be desirous of seeing a *Regulation* of such Disorders, and many are projecting the proper Means of affecting it. Many Remedies, no doubt, may conspire towards a Cure of this dangerous Distemper. I hope, in my Turn, I may be allowed the Liberty of proposing one. Like most other good Medicines, mine is very *simple*, consisting of two Ingredients, only; *Religion*, and *Virtue*. To talk of keeping the World in order without *their* Assistance, is mere *Quackery*. You may as well imagine that a Ship, with all her Sails crouded, but without Ballast, or Rudder, should ride safe amidst Rocks and Shelves in a Tempest. *Infidels* pay a *Compliment* to Religion, when they intend to *vilify* Her? They suppose Her to be a Composition contrived by *Priests*, or *Politicians*. But, for what Ends? For her *Utility*, for her *Necessity*, towards the Support of *Civil Society*. Is this *indeed* the Case? What could be a stronger Recommendation of her to those who believe no *future State*, than to say that She is *necessary* to the publick

sick Peace and Order of the World? What can be a greater Reproach to their *Understanding*, to their *Common Sense* and *Prudence* (for as to *Conscience* they pretend to none) than to depreciate, and destroy, the great Means of their own Safety and Happiness? Men, in every Relation of Life, want, and Desire, the friendly Aids of *Religion*, and, yet, most People slight Her, and many abuse Her.

*Religion* being acknowledged to be the great Support of *Society*, What is the great Means of supporting Her? Various are the Concurrent Helps that may be given Her, but there is one Means worth them all, and without which all the rest will be *ineffectual*. This is provided us by the infinite Wisdom of God. I mean, the regular Observation of the *Sabbath*, in the manner that I have recommended to you. What Effects it would have upon the Minds, and Manners of Men, must be obvious to the lowest Understanding that will think a little. How absolutely necessary it is, especially in our present Circumstances, will appear from a cursory View of the State of the Nation, and the Nature of Things. Can Men believe the Truths of Religion without any Evidence? Or have any Evidence without Instruction? Can they *practise* their Duty without *knowing* it? Or will they be *inclin'd* to do it, without having a Conception of the proper *Motives*? Can Men be *religious* without ever *seriously* thinking about it? And, yet, it is evident that the *Generality* of Mankind, without *Compulsion*, will think of nothing but *Business*, or *Pleasure*. They must owe all the little that they do know, and *practise*, of Religion, to *publick Instruction*, and *publick Worship*. If this Observation were ever true, it is more particularly so at this Time; when *Luxury* and *Voluptuousness*, those Enemies to all serious Thought and Reflection, to every Religious and Virtuous Disposition, are at so great an Height, that People neglect the Concerns of *this* Life, as well as of the next. There is a *continual Rotation* of pleasurable Amusements\*; some of them Inflammatory, Provocatives to Lust, and calculated for intriguing; all of them tending to banish Reflection, and weaken the Mind, when it is so *constantly* attentive to them. I have not time to paint all these Scenes of Entertainment, and describe their natural Effects, especially on  
young

\* We have been lately told in one of the Daily Papers, that the Resort to the *Play-houses* is so much increased within twenty Years past, that the Managers can afford to give the *first* Rate Actors 1000 *l.* a Year, and the *second* Rate 500 *l.* Such are the Wages of those who *please* and *corrupt* Mankind; while many honest Men, who have spent their Life in doing *solid Good*, are *unsupported*, *unrewarded*, and even *sighted*.

young Minds, warm, unexperienced, fond of Pleasure, in the Heat of Blood, and impatient of Application to any thing that is of a *grave* Nature. Do not these Circumstances make it the more necessary to *oblige* all People to devote *one* Day in *seven* to such Uses, as may be an *Antedote* against such strong Poison? His *Majesty* in his last Speech from the Throne, recommended it to the Consideration of *Parliament*, how to put a Stop to those Enormities, which terrify every sober Person that thinks of them. This was worthy of his Majesty's tender Care of the Happiness of his People; and I hope it will not be thought a Piece of *Presumption* in me if I observe, that regulating publick Entertainments, and enforcing of the Observation of the *Sabbath*, will be the most effectual Means of doing it.

F I N I S.

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