

GOD'S DAY THEN & NOW

In Old Testament times, God gave His people the seventh day—the Sabbath—as a day for rest and worship. But ever since Jesus rose on the first day of the week, most Christians keep Sunday as a special day for God. Read the following verses and list some ways God's day can be kept special—both then and now.

Psalms 92:1 _____

Psalms 118:24 _____

Matthew 12:12 _____

Acts 20:7 _____

1 Corinthians 16:2 _____

KEY VERSE

"Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy."

Exodus 20:8



A DAY SET APART

¹Members of a Jewish religious group in Jesus' day. Pharisees strictly obeyed the law of Moses (in the first five books of the Old Testament) and the traditions of great rabbis, or Jewish teachers.

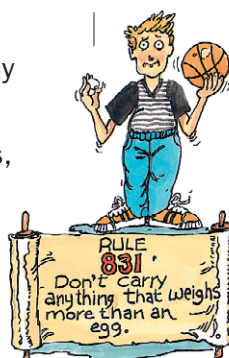
God commanded that the seventh day was to be a day of rest. The Pharisees¹ tried to keep God's Ten Commandments, and lots of other rules too. It was especially important to them to not work on the Sabbath. The Pharisees often got upset with Jesus because He was friendly to people they thought were really bad. They avoided contact with people who refused to follow Jewish laws. It bothered them that Jesus didn't seem to care about all the rules² they had added to the commandments.



SCRIPTURE SPOTLIGHT
Matthew 12:1-4, 13-14

At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath.

His disciples were hungry and began to pick some heads of grain and eat them.³



²The Pharisees made up over 1,000 strict rules dictating what people could and could not do on the Sabbath.

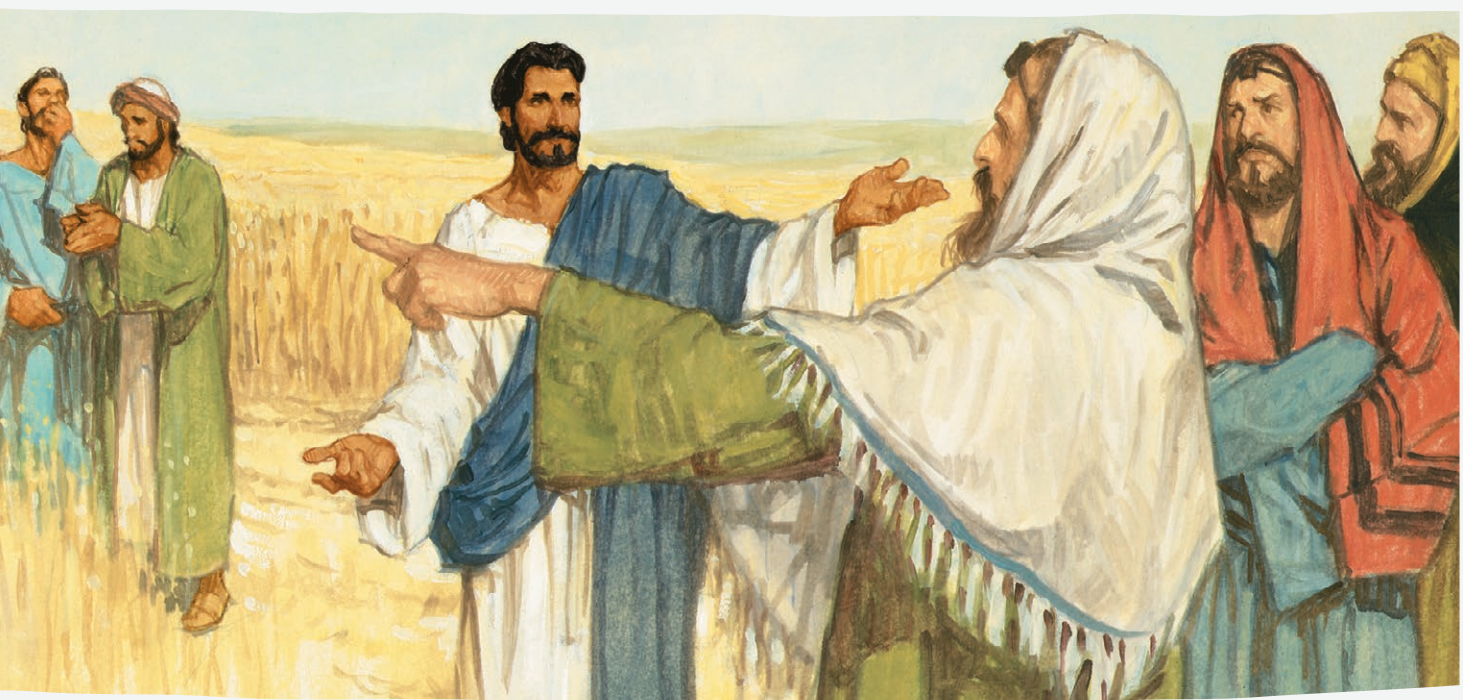
When the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, "Look! Your disciples are doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath."

The Pharisees said no work was to be done on the Sabbath. What were the disciples doing that was like working?

He answered, "Haven't you read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? He entered the house of God, and he and his companions ate the consecrated bread—which was not lawful for them to do, but only for the priests."

Jesus answered the Pharisees with an example from the Old Testament that was familiar to the Pharisees.





Read 1 Samuel 21:1-6. How is this account like the one about Jesus' disciples?

Jesus told the Pharisees that God wanted people to be kind rather than obey a lot of rules. Then Jesus told them that He was the Lord of the Sabbath. This meant He had authority over the laws about the Sabbath.

Read Matthew 12:9-12. Why did the Pharisees continue to question Jesus? How did Jesus respond to the Pharisees? What does His answer mean?

Jesus answered that if a sheep fell into a pit on the Sabbath, its owner would rescue it. And people are more

important than sheep. So it is lawful to do good deeds on the Sabbath.

Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." So he stretched it out and it was completely restored, just as sound as the other. But the Pharisees went out and plotted how they might kill Jesus.

Why do you think Jesus healed the man? How did the Pharisees respond?

The Pharisees' laws had made the Sabbath a time of rules. But the rules of the Sabbath were given to us by God to help us set aside time to be with Him.



³To get the kernels out of the straw, grain could be beaten with a stick, trampled by oxen, or rubbed by hand.



My Day

God

gave us a special day to be with Him.
But often our days of rest are busy and focused
on everything but God. Here's your chance to plan
some time to spend with God after you get home today.
What will you do?

Here are some ideas for ways to make your time with God special.
Use the ones listed here or think up your own.

Who else (if anyone) will be with me when I spend my time with God?

What will I do to make this time special? (check any that apply and add your own):

- ☐ Read my Bible
- ☐ Pray aloud
- ☐ Pray silently
- ☐ Write a prayer in my journal
- ☐ Write a poem to God
- ☐ Sing or make up songs to God

____ (your idea)
____ (your idea)
____ (your idea)
____ (your idea)

Where will I spend my special time?

- ☐ Spend time in a quiet place indoors
- ☐ Go outside and enjoy God's creation
- ☐ Other _____

When will I spend my special time with God?

From _____ to _____.

With God