

**DISCUSSION:**

1. God required progressive farming long before anyone understood the principles of modern agriculture. Le 25:2B-5.
2. God has also long understood that as land needs rest from its customary work to be renewed, so people need rest from their customary work to be renewed. As overusing land in one way impedes its productivity in that use, so overworking people in one way impedes their productivity in that work.
3. It is the principle of Ec 10:10. Suppose you come across a man feverishly chopping up a huge tree. You ask him, "How long have you been at it?" He responds, "Over five hours. I'm exhausted, but I still have a long way to go." You reply, "Why don't you take a break and sharpen your axe. I'm sure you would be far more productive." He exclaims, "But I don't have time to stop and sharpen my axe. I'm too busy chopping up the tree!"
4. God gave the children of Israel the seventh day of the week, or Saturday, as a day of rest or a Sabbath day from their customary work for at least three types of renewal.
  - A. Physical renewal. Ex 23:12.
  - B. Spiritual renewal. Ex 31:12-13; De 5:15; the preface to Ps 92, "A Psalm, a Song for the Sabbath day;" Lu 4:16; Ac 15:21.
  - C. Social renewal. Mt 12:9-14.
5. God expected the children of Israel to keep the Sabbath day holy. Nu 15:32-36.
6. The children of Israel did not keep the Sabbath day holy.
  - A. In deed. Ne 13:15-18.
  - B. In heart. Amos 8:4-6.
  - C. In effect.
    - 1) The Sabbath rest was intended to lighten burdens. Isa 58:13-14A.
    - 2) The children of Israel made it another burden. Mk 2:27.

**APPLICATIONS:**

1. **Christians do not have to keep Saturday as a day of rest or a Sabbath day.**
  - A. First, the Sabbath day is not mentioned in scripture until Exodus 16:23 when the children of Israel were in the wilderness and it was not explained until God gave the law for the children of Israel to Moses on Sinai. This denies that it was an all-time provision for all people.
  - B. Second, God only gave the Sabbath day to the children of Israel, never to the Gentiles. Ex 31:12-14A, 16. God indicted the Gentiles for many things, but never for failing to keep the Sabbath holy because they were never required to keep the Sabbath day holy.
  - C. Third, the NT explicitly denies that Christians have to keep Saturday as a day of rest or a Sabbath day. 2 Co 3:5-7, 11; He 8:13; Ac 15:5-6, 19-21; Col 2:16 (singular and plural are used interchangeably in Ex 31:12-17).
  - D. Fourth, the Jewish Sabbath, a day of rest on earth, foreshadowed Christian Sabbath, an unending day of rest in heaven. Col 2:16-17.
  - E. Fifth, Sunday, the first day of the week, the Lord's Day of the NT, is in some ways similar to Saturday, the seventh day of the week, the Sabbath day of the OT, but the Lord's Day is not the Christian's Sabbath day! Why did some Christians meet so late on Sundays? Acts 20:7-9. "All this happened at night ... probably because it was only at night, when the day's work was done, that slaves could come to the Christian fellowship. That also explains the case of Eutychus. It was dark. In the low upper room it was hot. The many lamps made the air oppressive. Eutychus, no doubt, had done a hard day's work before ever he came and his body was tired. He was sitting by a window to get the cool night air. The windows were not made of glass. They were either lattice or solid wood and opened like doors, coming

right down almost to the floor and projecting over the courtyard below. The tired Eutychus, overpowered by the stuffy atmosphere, succumbed to sleep and fell to the courtyard below” (Barclay).

- F. Sixth, I believe we should honor the principle behind a day of rest, but we cannot require that people take that rest on Saturday or any other particular day of the week.
2. **Christians need physical, mental, spiritual, and social renewal that they might work most effectively for God and other people.** Our bodies, minds, souls, and our relationships with God and men are the axes we use in our service to God and men.
- B. Because they become dull through use we must periodically stop and sharpen them otherwise we will be far less productive than we can and ought to be.
  - C. To renew ...
    - 1) Physically and mentally we must rest and relax (Ex 23:12; 1 Sa 16:23; Ro 15:30, 32), eat right (1 Sa 30:11-12; Mk 6:30-32), exercise (1 Ti 4:8), get proper medical care (1 Ti 5:23), mourn (Mt 14:13A), etc.
    - 2) Spiritually we must read the word of God (Ps 119:50), pray (Lu 5:15-16; Mk 1:35; Lu 6:12), attend Bible classes and worship, etc.
    - 3) Socially we must spend time together both inside and outside the context of our customary work, do good, etc. 1 Pt 3:7; Acts 1:21-22; Luke 9:10.
  - D. We must proactively prepare to renew or it will likely never happen. Luke 23:54.
3. **We rest to work, we do not work to rest.**
- A. Heaven is the place for us to permanently rest. He 4:9; Re 14:13; He 4:11.
  - B. We must not retire too soon. See “lovers of pleasure” in 1 Timothy 3:1-5; Ps 71:17-18; Php 3:12-14; 2 Ti 4:6-8.
4. **We must learn from the mistakes the Jews made with the Sabbath.**
- A. We must not make serving God a joyless endeavor.
  - B. We must not focus on lesser things to the neglect of greater things.