



Scott Turansky, Senior Pastor
September 20, 2020

GENESIS 2:1-3

Series: Understanding Your Roots

[PRAYER] Heavenly Father, we do want to lift up Taylor and Jay as they get married next week, that you would work out all the details of the things that need to happen that are going on and protect them. We ask for your blessing on their marriage as well. Lord, we also pray for Charlie. Debra has just announced in our Facebook Live that he's got three to four months to live it looks like with his cancer. So Lord, I pray that you would be working in their hearts. Thank you for what you're doing in their lives and I just ask for your blessing in their lives. Show your grace, Lord, please in Charlie and Debra and the rest of their family. We pray for Lorraine who broke her arm and we ask that you would heal her quickly so she can get back to doing busy things that she loves to do. Lord, each one of us has needs and challenges that remind us of our frailty and our weakness. So much so that we need your strength, your leadership, and your guidance in our lives. Lord, take your word today and teach us from it, we ask. In Jesus' name, amen.

If you'd open your Bibles with me to Genesis 2 today. We're in Genesis 2. I entitled this series of messages that we're working on "Understanding Your Roots." It's this whole study in the book of Genesis. The reason I call it "Understanding Your Roots" is because if you understand the book of Genesis, the rest of the Bible makes more sense. Furthermore, if you start asking questions about your life and you start asking questions about who you are, where you came from, all of those things lead us back to the book of Genesis and there's some great answers for those questions there that we need. We looked at creation and we looked at the fact that God in creation says "worship me." So we're drawn to worship Him. We looked at being created in the image of God. Very important concept that we looked at last week.

On the seventh day God rested. So today we're going to ask the question, what do we do with the Sabbath day? I would think that if you've been around the Bible a little bit you've seen and heard and read about the Sabbath day. What do we do with that? Do we celebrate the Sabbath? Why don't we observe the Sabbath day here at Calvary Chapel Living Hope? You're going to find out the answer to that question today as I take you through the scriptures and understand it. But also you're going to get a greater appreciation for Jesus Christ who fulfills the Sabbath in the rest that we experience with Him. That's where we're going today.

But let's start by looking at our passage today and what God has to say in Genesis 2:1-3. It says – *Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. So God created the heaven and the earth and they are completely done now. And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.*

So God created the heavens and the earth in these six days and then He rested. Not because He was tired, but because He was done. He finished creation work. So God's done with that part of creation. In fact we don't have Him creating the world again. What we have though are His creative acts are demonstrated to us in a number of different ways ongoing. Every miracle that He does is a resurrection or is a creation of some kind. Whether it's the ten plagues that He did in the Exodus or if it's the turning of water into wine. There's this miracle that takes place, which is creation. And then of course when anybody accepts Jesus Christ into their life they begin to change. There is this old things passed away, there is a new creation has come. So God is a creative being. I mean that's part of who He is. He creates. And He wants to do that creative work in you and me.

On that seventh day, God stopped and just rested. There's a celebration of all the work that He had finished. It is done. I would just suggest a good application for us is to pause every once in a while, maybe every Saturday, maybe once a week, but to pause and to say, "Wow. God has made a beautiful world. Wow. I am grateful for all He has made. Today is the day the Lord has made. I will rejoice and be glad in it." That's kind of the statement you could make on this creation celebration day, the Sabbath day.

Now what do we do with that, though? What do we do with the fact that He says that He sanctified and He made it holy. He rested on this day. It was set apart, this day that He made just as a celebration. Of course we read all this stuff that we have later back into what He's saying here. But on that day He just celebrated the fact that it was done. And we can do that same thing.

Now as we're going to understand the Sabbath, we must go next to the Ten Commandments. Because that's what's going to be strikingly clear in the Ten Commandments what God has to say about this day. So let's look at Exodus 20:8-11. He says to the people of Israel – *"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy."*

So now by the time that Moses receives the Ten Commandments and God is working with the Israelite people, it becomes something different than it was at the very beginning. In fact we see this Sabbath is practiced the way it's talked about here seems to start right at the time of Moses and the wilderness experience of the Israelites coming out of Egypt and it ends at the time of Christ. I want to show you why that is. I'm going to take you to the scriptures and show you what's going on.

See God made a promise to Moses and this Sabbath is going to be a sign of the covenant. Which leads me to some other covenants. So let me share with you some of the promises God made and the signs that go with them. You'll remember this as I lead you through these passages.

For example, in the Old Testament we have this experience of a flood where God destroyed the earth by water. When He started over with Noah and his wife and their three sons and their wives, they came out of the ark and they looked up in the sky. After the sacrifice was made, God made a promise to them – I will never destroy the world by a universal flood again. They looked up in the sky and there was a rainbow and God said that rainbow is the sign of the covenant, the promise that I've made to you. There was a promise and there was a sign that went with it.

Later on now, we have Abraham. God chooses Abraham and He makes this promise to Abraham and He says – Abraham, *your descendants are going to be as many as the stars of the sky or as many as the sand of the seashore*. In other words, you won't be able to count them all, there will be so many of them. *And through you all the nations of the earth will be blessed*. It's a reference to Christ if you take that scarlet thread through the genealogies that comes down from Abraham all the way down to Jesus Christ Himself. In the gospel of Luke and the gospel of Matthew you have genealogies to take you back just so you know where Jesus comes from. It's all part of this plan that God has established.

And God says to Abraham it's *through you all the nations of the earth will be blessed*. Not the Jewish people. Not just all these people that are numerous. But it's all the nations will be blessed as a result of this experience I'm doing right now. I'm making a promise to you and I'm going to make a sign for you regarding this covenant. It's going to be circumcision. You are going to be very different than anybody else. All the boys are going to get circumcised as babies and you're going to be different. You're not going to be like everyone else. You're not going to be like the Gentiles. You're going to be Jewish people. You're going to be separated. You're going to be different. And God created the sign of circumcision to represent that ratifying of the covenant.

So when He comes to now the Israelites and He comes to the Sabbath day, you've got to recognize that God brought the Israelites out of Egypt and they are His chosen people. They are on a mission. They have been rescued, they have been saved from the Egyptians. So they come out and God says I'm going to lead you by the hand and I'm going to teach you what righteousness is all about. I'm going to show you what that looks like. This is such an amazing covenant and a promise. We look at it from the backside looking back. But if you were coming into this from that side, you'd be saying, "Wow, God. This is so great, thank you." God says I'm going to show you what righteousness is all about. I'm going to teach you what kindness is. In the law it says if you borrow something from your neighbor and you break it, your job is to pay for it or restore it before you give it back. I'm going to teach you what kindness is all about.

There's 635 laws in the Old Testament and these laws help you understand various things. How to be kind. They're going to teach you how to be generous. When you plant crops and they grow, the very first part that you get, you bring that and you give that to the Lord. You want to be generous. He says when you then continue in your harvesting of the crops, you want to give ten percent of that to the Lord's work. I'm going to teach you how to be generous, He says. I'm going to teach you humility. When you make a mistake and you sin, you're going to go before the priest and you're going to sacrifice an animal and you're going to confess your sin to the priest. Humility – I'm going to teach you that. I'm going to teach you about spirituality, how you can worship me. I'm going to teach you how to set aside the Sabbath and how to set aside

festivals and how to set aside other ways that you're going to worship me with sacrifices and so on. And the people were so grateful.

I remember when I was twelve years old I got a 10-speed bike and it was great. It was one of those with the curly handle bars and the tape wrapped around it. And if you wanted to go really fast, you got down on the bottom part of them and you could go... I was excited. I got a 10-speed bike. It was just super. I was so pleased.

I imagine these people getting this covenant and they're going yes, this so great! I've got something really special, a great relationship with the Lord. It is this special relationship with God and He is going to hold me by the hand and He's going to teach me about righteousness and what it is. And God says I'm going to have a covenant sign with you and that covenant sign is the one in Ezekiel. I'm going to read it to you here. He says – *Moreover, I gave them my Sabbaths, as a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord who sanctifies them.* That's Ezekiel 20:12.

So the Sabbath becomes the sign of the covenant with Moses. So on the Sabbath, not only would they recognize creation and thank God for all He did before He rested and celebrate that, but they would also remember that God had made a covenant and was teaching them about righteousness. The Sabbath was part of the law. There were all kinds of guidelines about the law. In fact the Sabbath was in part to teach them how to rest so they would know how to rest. God was taking them by the hand and saying I'm going to teach you everything you need to know about living a godly life, about doing what's right. I think you would like that, wouldn't you? Sometimes you're saying I don't know what's right in this situation. God says I'm going to show you what's right. I'm going to give you all these laws to govern so you know. And the people were going yes, this is so great. So every Saturday they would be reminded of the fact that God had given them the law, it was a gift that they had, and they would rest, they would practice rest.

But there was a problem that came along with all of this in that they would also feel guilty because they couldn't keep the law. They would break the law. They had to continually offer sacrifices. So along with this whole system of the law that God gave, these guidelines and principles and this covenant, there was this uncomfortable feeling of guilt and shame and knowing that they really weren't able to keep their part of the deal. That is the Mosaic covenant and God established the Sabbath for this very purpose so they would acknowledge this on a regular basis and they would know about it.

Well that Sabbath rest and that Sabbath day continues on until the time of Christ. But before I can get to Christ and talk about what He does with the Sabbath, I want to take you to Jeremiah because God has a new covenant. I told you about the covenant to Noah and the covenant to Abraham and the covenant with Moses and the people. But I want to take you to the new covenant because that's the covenant that we enjoy and where we live now. The new covenant. Let's just read it together so you can see it.

In Jeremiah 31:31-34 it says this: *Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of*

Egypt... It's not going to be like that Mosaic covenant, it's not going to be like that way of understanding righteousness, it's not going to have the priesthood, it's not going to have the sacrifice, it's not going to have the temple. It's not going to be the same. It's going to be new. It's a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord.

Here's what He's going to do. This is what the new covenant is. This is where you and I are today. Watch this. It says – *I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts.* So instead of being on tablets of stone, it would now be written inside of a person, inside of their hearts. *And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.*

So the new covenant is somehow...they don't know how yet because it's only a prophecy in Jeremiah. They don't experience the reality until Jesus' coming. But he says there's going to be a time when you won't have the guilt associated with that law. You're going to understand righteousness, not in the way of obeying all the commands that are out there, but something is going to happen inside of your heart. That's what he's saying.

We understand that more fully then when we come to Christ because Christ then when He comes onto the scene He introduces something new called the kingdom of God. Jesus Christ starts to really introduce this new covenant, what it's all about. So let's ask the question, what does Jesus do with the Sabbath day? Because if the Sabbath day is something that must be kept, you know that Jesus who is sinless is not going to disobey that. He would obey the Sabbath laws. But He makes a point to not obey them. In fact Jesus is outlining a whole new way of living that says you've heard in the past about the law, I'm now teaching you about something that's new.

He starts in the Sermon on the Mount by talking about the beatitudes. These are things that are inside of you that God wants to do inside of your heart. But He goes further into the Sermon on the Mount and He says to the people – *"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who lusts after a woman in his heart has already committed adultery."* See Jesus is already making the transfer here. There's something new going on here in this new covenant. He said – *"You have heard that it was said, 'Do not murder,' but I tell you anyone who is angry with his brother (it says *raca*) is guilty of judgement."* There's something going on in the heart. There's a transfer that Jesus is making to help us understand the kingdom of God, which is this new covenant that He's bringing.

What is the sign of the new covenant? We have the Sabbath as the sign of the Mosaic covenant. What is the sign of the new covenant? Well Jesus tells us. When He's in the upper room He takes the cup and the bread after dinner, He holds up the cup and He says – *This is the new covenant in my blood; do this in remembrance of me.*

There are two signs of this new covenant. One is communion where we remember, just like every Saturday they would remember creation and they would also remember that there was a covenant between God and the people. Now Jesus is saying you will always remember the

crucifixion, you will always remember me. You will always remember my death. It is a reminder to us of who God is and what He wants to do in our lives. It's the new covenant in my blood.

The second sign is baptism. When a person gets baptized they identify with Jesus, they identify with Christianity. They say, "I want to serve God in my life. I want to acknowledge something that's already in my heart." It is an outward sign of an inward reality. Today five people are going to get baptized and they're making a very important statement that says I have done something inside of my heart. God is doing that work. I've given my heart to Him and He's doing something deep within me and I want to get baptized as a demonstration of that. That's part of the sign that ratifies this new covenant that we have.

When Jesus Christ came, now everything is different. They used to have to come before God with sacrifices and a priest and go to the temple. Now things are different. Now you don't have to come to a priest to confess your sins. Now you can come directly to God. Jesus is the high priest. Now you don't have to offer blood sacrifices to God. Now you have one sacrifice, Jesus Christ, who died on the cross for us. That becomes a sacrifice for us that we need and that He does in our lives. For the forgiveness of sins the righteousness that you had to do in the law that you weren't able to accomplish is now accomplished in the righteousness of Christ. It used to be you'd have to go to the tabernacle or the temple. But when Jesus Christ died on the cross, you remember the story that the curtain separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. It was torn in two, demonstrating the fact that we now have access into the presence of God. Everything changed.

Now when Jesus came, He didn't abolish the law. He didn't get rid of it. The Bible tells us He fulfilled the law. So He took all the things that were in the law in the old covenant and He turned them into the new covenant. We have the old covenant and we have the new covenant. We have the Old Testament and we have the New Testament.

When I was twelve years old I received that special bike, that 10-speed bike that I really liked. But when I was sixteen years old I got my first car. It was a Volkswagen Super Beetle. Orange was the color. It was the first year they made the Super Beetle I think. It didn't have the straight window on the front. It had the curved window. It was a really cool car. When I went into my family garage and I went in there and saw my bike and my car, I said, "I want the car. I'm taking the car out today." Forget the bike! The bike, although it was great when I had it, it was the old thing now. I've got something new.

The new covenant is like that Super Beetle. And that's how we look at it now. Because the Super Beetle is great. It's just God's grace. So there's this comparison in the New Testament between the grace of God and the law. What is it? What do you want? Do you want the grace of God or do you want the law? Well if you only had the law, you're going, "Thank you, God, for the law. I really love the law. This is great. Thank you for your relationship. Thank you for teaching me, walking me through life, teaching me what righteousness is." But when the Super Beetle comes along you say, "God, I love your grace. This is what I need." This is the new covenant that God has for us. So God transfers everything. Everything changes then and the Sabbath practices start to change.

Now Jesus started to change them. Luke 6, I just want to reference that for you. You can look there. It's a passage where Luke is trying to illustrate how Jesus handles the Sabbath. If you ask the question how does Jesus handle the Sabbath day, the answer is "anyway He wants." Because in Luke 6 here's the story. It starts this way in verse 1. It says that Jesus' disciples were walking along the pathway and they took some heads of grain and they rubbed them together, blew off the chaff. If you rub them together and you blow off the chaff you only have the grain left. They popped it in their mouth and they would eat the grain, barley or wheat. And they would enjoy that. "Oh no," the religious leaders said. "Why are your disciples doing that on the Sabbath day? They're harvesting grain and working." Jesus makes this statement in that passage. He says – "*The Son of Man is the Lord of the Sabbath.*" What He's saying is the same thing we've already said that He doesn't come to abolish the law, but He fulfills it. And Jesus is illustrating that to the people right there in that story.

Well right away then Luke gives another illustration because in this passage Luke is trying to illustrate the power of Jesus over the Sabbath. So he tells the story on another Sabbath day there was a man who came into the synagogue who had a shriveled-up hand. So being the Sabbath day, Jesus decided to make this an illustration. So he said to the man, "Come and stand in front of the people." So the man came out and stood in the front. And He said, "Stretch out your hand." The man holds his hands out here. I'm sure he was embarrassed about his hand that was shriveled up, but Jesus says stretch it out. So He stops and He says to the people, "Is it okay to do good or to do bad on the Sabbath? If you want to do something good, is that okay?" And then He says to them man, "Stretch out your hand." So the man stretched out his hand and it was healed on the Sabbath day. You would think everybody would be rejoicing, but no. The religious leaders are mad. They can't believe He would do this on the Sabbath day. And they look for a way to start to kill Him.

Well what is Jesus teaching? Continually Jesus is teaching that the Sabbath is not for today. He's moving on from this. There's a new covenant. The Sabbath was part of the old covenant. And so now all the believers who are becoming Christians, who are following Christ are understanding this. This is becoming something new. It became especially clear after Christ died on the cross and He rose on the first day of the week. Starting then on the first day of the week the believers started changing when they would have a special day. They started worshiping on the first day of the week, Pentecost. The first day of the week when the Holy Spirit came down. It was their custom then to meet on the first day of the week continually. Interesting. There was this transfer that took place.

Now you have to imagine being in the church at that time. The early church as it had just started. You've got Jewish believers and you've got Gentile believers. The Jewish believers have grown up with the Sabbath all of their lives. They've lived with it. So now they're Christians. Now they've accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, they recognize that He is the answer and they need the Super Beetle, they need the grace in their lives. And so they accept Jesus Christ into their hearts and lives. But now it's Saturday and they feel really uncomfortable doing any work on the Sabbath because that's what they grew up with. So now there's this dialogue, there's this debate among the church leaders, among the church people about whether you should have this day of rest on this Saturday, whether that's something that we're obligated to do now. The

Gentiles never celebrated it anyway, so they're not concerned about it. But some of the Jewish people are. They don't know what to do with it all.

So Paul writes to the Romans and he gives them this instruction. Look at what he says to them. He says – *Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.* So don't judge. *One person regards a certain day above the others, while someone else considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes a special day does so to the Lord. He who eats, does so to the Lord for he gives thanks to God, and he who abstains does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God.* So what Paul is saying is it's not that important. But if it's important to you then go ahead and do it. But he's saying it's not part of what we do now. You don't have to do this as you're moving forward.

Probably the clearest passage of scripture that gives us an understanding of the Sabbath today is the one in Colossians 2:16-17. Same problem. Out there in the church the epistles are written to the churches, giving them guidelines about what to do. This was a contemporary problem. And Paul writes this. He says – *Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.*

Wow. That verse right there summarizes all that we've been talking about. That Jesus did not abolish the law. He came to fulfill it. And the Sabbath is something that's fulfilled in Jesus Christ Himself. Just like the sacrifice, just like going to the priest, just like going to the temple are now something we don't do, the same thing is true about the Sabbath. We don't have to celebrate the Sabbath or observe it the way they did in the Old Testament. Because now it was a shadow of something yet to come and that reality is Jesus Christ Himself. And us, we don't observe the Sabbath at Calvary Chapel Living Hope. And most of Christendom does not. There are some groups like the Seventh-day Adventists or Seventh Day Baptists that hold onto that. But most of us in Christendom do not observe the Sabbath day for the very reasons that we've said.

But there is one more idea I want to share with you and that's this idea of rest. Because when Jesus Christ died on the cross He not only fulfilled the Sabbath day, but He made possible rest that we need in our lives. And that rest is a spiritual rest. Let me show you what Hebrews has to say about this.

The book of Hebrews is a theological treatise on how important Jesus is. That's why in Hebrews you have it talked about that Jesus is our once-for-all sacrifice. He's our high priest. It's in Hebrews that we learn all about how Christ has fulfilled all of these things that exist in the Old Testament. When we get to chapter 4 it says this: *Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be deemed to have fallen short of it.* In other words be careful here. Don't miss this. This idea of rest is important for you believers. You need to get it. *For we also have had the good news proclaimed to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, since they did not share the faith of those who comprehended it. Now we who have believed enter that rest.* When you believe in Jesus Christ you enter into the rest that Jesus Christ provides. That is a really important truth for us.

I would suggest there are some people who ought to rest on a day because their life is so busy and they're working so hard and things get very complicated in their busyness. So somehow disciplining themselves to take a day or something like that is good. But the real rest is the rest we need for our souls. You can work hard and you can be unhappy. And you can work hard and be all in turmoil and upset. But what God has done is He's created for us this rest in Jesus Christ. When we come to Jesus Christ there's something that happens inside of us, even in the midst of the problems that are out there.

That's why Jesus went on to say in the gospel of John – *My peace I give to you. Not like the world gives.* This peace that God gives to us, he says even in the midst of tribulations you're going to be able to have this peace. So even in the trials we experience, God wants to experience this peace inside of us. That's why He says to all the people – *Come to me, all you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* That's what we need in our lives.

Our lives are definitely full of things that distract us from rest. There are big things that exist in our world right now. We've got the election, we've got the racial pressure issues, and we've got a pandemic going on. Those are big things that are going on right now in our world. And then there are all the things that are going on in our personal lives that have to do with health, that have to do with finances, have to do with relationships and challenges that we all face. Whether it's work or home or wherever we are, those are those struggles that we face. And then in the midst of all of that God wants to be that rest for us.

If you've never accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, this is why. This is one of those things that's going to drive you. I need Jesus Christ. I need this rest. I'm in turmoil. My heart is just messed up. I want to come to Jesus. I want to experience His rest in my life. But this is a message that believers need too. Hebrews says be careful that you don't fall short of this. This is something you need. That as believers we can get easily distracted by all those things around and we need to recognize that Jesus is our rest. We need Him. We need Him to bring around us the serenity that He provides. Even in the midst of the struggle that we face.

I want to encourage you to consider that. How is your soul today? Is your soul receiving the rest that God has designed for you? It is available. It is there. He wants us to be able to experience it in our own hearts and our own lives today. And that is the greatest message of the Sabbath, and its fulfillment in our lives.

Would you stand with me and let's pray together.

[PRAYER] Heavenly Father, we ask that you would prompt us even now to recognize the need we have in our souls for your rest. Lord, we need you and sometimes we find ourselves striving when we should be resting. So teach us what it means to do all the work we have to do. You know we've got all kinds of things that are on our plate that we've got to take care of. But Lord, give us rest in the midst of that because of who you are and who we are with you. We ask this in Jesus' name, amen.