

D & C Lesson 16

“THOU SHALT . . . OFFER UP THY SACRAMENTS UPON MY HOLY DAY”

Prepared by Duane S. Crowther, May 2001

1. The creation and sanctification of the Sabbath Day

A. Definitions: *Sanctification* = to make holy. *Holy* = to be sacred, spiritually pure. *Sacred* = to be set apart for or worthy of worship, worthy of reverence. *Purify* = to make or become pure. *Pure* = free of contamination or corruption. *Worship* = feeling and exhibiting profound respect, interest, devotion and reverence. *Reverence, Revere* = to show profound honor, respect, and devotion to something. *Hallow* = to consecrate. *Consecrate* = to set apart for sacred use and responsibilities. *Pray* = to address and commune with God, to praise and give thanks to God, to entreat or earnestly ask God for something. [See “Sanctification, Sanctify” in *Topical Guide*, pp. 446-447]

B. History:

1. *Abra. 5:2-3, Moses 3:2-3, Gen. 2:1-3*: God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it.

2. *Ex. 20:8-11*: Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. . . . For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.”

3. *Deut. 5:12-15*: “Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee. . . . And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the LORD thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.”

[See *Deut. 5:1-5*, where Moses reminds Israel of their covenant with God in Horeb.]

4. *Num. 15:32-36*: The LORD commanded that a sabbath breaker should be put to death.

5. *Is. 58:13-14*: Isaiah’s promise concerning the blessings of keeping the sabbath day.

6. *Ezek. 20:12, 20*: “I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them. . . . And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye might know that I am the LORD your God.”

[See *verse 13*: “my sabbaths they greatly polluted; *also 16, 21 and 24*: polluted my sabbaths.]

7. The early Christian Church changed the observance of the sabbath day from the seventh day of the week to the first day of the week, which was called “the Lord’s day” [*Rev. 1:10*] in commemoration of the Lord’s resurrection. See *Acts 20:7* (the apostles met that day to break bread [partake of the Sacrament]; *1 Cor. 16:2* (the collection for the poor saints in Jerusalem was taken in Galatia on the first day [when they were met together]; *Col. 2:16* Let no man therefore judge you . . . of the sabbath days [Paul’s instructions to the Gentiles to not accept the judgment of the Jewish “Judaizers” who still worshiped on the seventh day].

8. The Lord has commanded the Saints in these last days to keep the Sabbath day holy. *D&C 68:26, 29*: “This shall be a law unto the inhabitants of Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized: . . . the inhabitants of Zion shall . . . observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy.”

2. The Lord’s commandment concerning how the Saints in these last days are to keep their sabbath day holy—*D&C 59:5-24*: “Wherefore, I give unto them a commandment, saying:”

A. [v. 5] “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy might, mind, and strength:”

B. [v. 5] “in the name of Jesus Christ thou shalt serve him.”

C. [v. 6] “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”

D. [v. 6] “Thou shalt not steal; neither commit adultery, nor kill, nor do anything like unto it.”

E. [v. 7] “Thou shalt thank the Lord in all things.”

F. [v. 8] “Thou shalt offer a sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in righteousness, even that of a broken heart and a contrite spirit.”

G. [v. 9] “And that thou mayest more fully keep thyself unspotted from the world, thou shalt (1) go to the house of prayer (2) and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day.”

H. [v. 10] (3) “rest from your labors,” and (4) “pay thy devotions unto the Most High.”

I. [v. 11] (5) “offer thine oblations” [*footnote*: IE offerings, whether of time, talents, or means, in service of God and fellowman.] (6) “and thy sacraments unto the Most High, (7) confessing thy sins unto thy brethren, and before the Lord.”

J. [v. 13] (7) “on this day thou shalt do none other thing, only let thy food be prepared with singleness of heart . . .”

K. [v. 14] (8) “. . . be perfect, . . . that thy joy may be full.”

L. [v. 15] (9) “do these things with thanksgiving, . . . (10) with a glad heart and a cheerful countenance.”

M. [v. 21] (11) confess God’s hand in all things, and (12) obey his commandments.

N. [v. 23] (13) learn that he who doeth the works of righteousness shall receive his reward: [peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come].

3. **Suggestions for keeping your Sabbath day holy**

A. *Prepare yourself spiritually* to keep each Sabbath day holy. Decide exactly what needs to be done and develop a systematic approach and routine for doing so. Spend time alone with God.

B. *Prepare yourself and your home physically and temporally* to keep each Sabbath day holy.

C. *Covenant with your family* to keep each Sabbath day holy and receive their covenant to do likewise. *Teach them* exactly what this means. Make family goals and commitments.

D. Resolve to *show greatly increased, profound reverence* during Church services.

E. Have family home evenings and other teaching situations in which you *teach the principles of profound reverence to your children*. Practice it. Make and receive promises. Offer rewards?

F. Decide specific things you will do to *make your Church attendance at Sacrament Meeting a time of worship*, a time of prayer, a time of deeper Sacramental communion with God, a time of offering your oblations and vows unto God, a time of expressing your gratitude unto God, a time of spiritual communion and “in tuneness” with God. Express your devotions to the Most High.

G. *Make prayer an integral part of your Sabbath meeting worship*. Pray repeatedly—for those who are leading, for the speakers, for those in need, for the Church, for yourself and loved ones.

H. *Sing the hymns* in all Church meetings and *ponder their messages*. Learn from them and use them as sources of inspiration. Sing well, with good posture and careful voice production, blending your voice with the rest of the congregation. Rejoice that you are singing praises unto God.

I. *Analyze your personal conduct* and identify things you do that may not be appropriate actions to take place within the Lord’s house. List them. Discuss them with your spouse and family. Resolve to make a “mighty change” and make a lifetime correction of any inappropriate Church conduct, and help them to do the same.

J. Make your Sabbath day *a time for personal thought and gospel study* on a more profound, less superficial level. Write. Organize. Learn something new every Sunday study session.

K. Change your personal prayer habits and *make your prayers more profound*, more complete, more introspective, and more communicative on the Sabbath day. Don’t just talk—listen and obey.

L. *Do your best to “be perfect”* each Sabbath day. Be the best person you can possibly be.

M. Do your best to *purify yourself* each Sabbath day. Ponder your weaknesses. Confess your sins

to God. Repent. Strive to free yourself from sin.

N. Each Sunday literally *strive for personal holiness*, sanctification, and worthiness. Strive to prepare yourself for the blessings of eternal life. Learn of them. Envision them. Covenant for them.

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TEACHINGS FROM LATTER-DAY PROPHETS ON THE SABBATH DAY

The Sabbath a Day to Do Worthy and Holy Things - President **Spencer W. Kimball**:

“The Sabbath is a holy day in which to do worthy and holy things. Abstinence from work and recreation is important, but insufficient. The Sabbath calls for constructive thoughts and acts, and if one merely lounges about doing nothing on the Sabbath, he is breaking it. To observe it, one will be on his knees in prayer, preparing lessons, studying the gospel, meditating, visiting the ill and distressed, writing letters to missionaries, taking a nap, reading wholesome material, and attending all the meetings of that day at which he is expected.” [Ensign, January 1978, p. 4]

Teach Your Families on the Sabbath - President **Gordon B. Hinckley**:

“Let the Latter-day Saints be in their homes, teaching their families, reading the scriptures, doing things that are wholesome and beautiful and communing with the Lord on the Sabbath day.” [Ensign, July 1996, p. 73]

“Now I do not want to be prudish. I do not want you to lock your children in the house and read the Bible all afternoon to them. Be wise. Be careful. But make that day a day when you can sit down with your families and talk about sacred and good things.” [Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley, pp. 559-560]

Sabbath Day Scripture Study - The **First Presidency**, when announcing the consolidated Sunday meeting schedule in 1980:

“A greater responsibility will be placed upon the individual members and families for properly observing the Sabbath day. More time will be available for personal study of the scriptures and family-centered gospel study . . .

“It is expected that this new schedule of meetings and activities will result in greater spiritual growth for members of the Church.” [Church News, February 2, 1980, p. 3]

Sacrament Meetings - “President **Gordon B. Hinckley** said that ‘every sacrament meeting ought to be a spiritual feast’ and ‘a time of spiritual refreshment’ [Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley, 1997, pp. 563, 654]. . . . How can we accomplish this? How can we make our attendance at other Sunday meetings more spiritually enriching? . . . by coming with an attitude of worship, by being punctual, by studying the scheduled lesson material before class, by participating actively, by listening carefully, by seeking to strengthen others, and by not criticizing speakers or teachers.” [Gospel Doctrine Teacher’s Manual, 1999, p. 88]

Worship - President **Spencer W. Kimball**: “We do not go to Sabbath meetings to be entertained or even solely to be instructed. We go to worship the Lord. It is an individual responsibility. . . . No one can worship for you.” [“The Sabbath—A Delight,” Ensign, January 1978, pp. 4-5]

Reverence - “Elder **Boyd K. Packer** said that we should be reverent in the chapel so we do not intrude ‘when someone is struggling to feel delicate spiritual communications.’ [Ensign, November 1991, p. 22]

Reverential Worship - President **Gordon B. Hinckley** told of an embarrassing incident he experienced as a missionary:

“We held our meetings in the . . . town hall, which we rented. The floors were hard, and . . . every time a chair moved there was a noise. But this was not the worst aspect of the situation. Far worse was the noisy socializing of the members of the branch.

“On one occasion we invited a family whom we had met while tracting. With great expectation we as missionaries stood by the door to welcome them. There was the usual convivial spirit in the hall, with the members talking noisily one with another. When this family came into the room, they quietly moved toward some chairs, knelt for a moment, and closed their eyes in a word of prayer. *They then sat in an attitude of reverence amidst all the commotion.*

“Frankly, I was embarrassed. *They had come to what they regarded as a worship service, and they behaved themselves accordingly.*

“At the close of the meeting they left quietly, and when we next met they spoke of their disappointment in what they had experienced. I have never forgotten that.” [*Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley*, 1997, p. 557]

Sing the Hymns - Elder **Boyd K. Packer**: “An increasing number of our leaders and members do not sing the congregational songs. . . *We should sing the songs of Zion—they are an essential part of our worship.*” [*Ensign*, November 1991, p. 22]

Partaking of the Sacrament - Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin:

“Windows must be washed regularly to clean away dust and dirt. . . . *Just as earthly windows need consistent, thorough cleaning, so do the windows of our spirituality.* . . . By partaking of the sacrament worthily to renew our baptismal covenants, *we clarify our view of life’s eternal purpose and divine priorities.* The sacrament prayers invite *personal introspection, repentance, and rededication* as we pledge our willingness to remember our Savior, Jesus the Christ.” [*Ensign*, November 1995, p. 77]

Offering Personal Oblations to the Lord - “On the Sabbath we not only partake of the sacrament, but *we also should offer our own sacraments and oblations to the Lord* (D&C 59:9, 12). This means we should make offerings or sacrifices that show our devotion to Him. What sacrifices should we offer? (See D&C 59:8: “*a broken heart and a contrite spirit*”; footnote b for D&C 59:12: “*offerings, whether of time, talents, or means, in service of God and fellowman*”; D&C 64:34: “*the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind*”; D&C 97:8: “*all among them who know their hearts are honest, and are broken, and their spirits contrite, and are willing to observe their covenants by sacrifice—yea, every sacrifice which I, the Lord, shall command—they are accepted of me.*”) [Adapted from *Gospel Doctrine Teacher’s Manual*, 1999, p. 90]

Give Up All That Is Ungodly - Elder **Russell M. Ballard**:

“After His mortal ministry, . . . Jesus told his Nephite Apostles that He would no longer accept burnt offerings but that His disciples should offer ‘a broken heart and a contrite spirit’ (3 Ne. 9:19-20; see also D&C 59:8, 12). Instead of the Lord requiring our animals or grain, *now He wants us to give up all that is ungodly.* This higher practice of the law of sacrifice reaches into the inner soul of a person

“*When we overcome our own selfish desires and put God first in our lives and covenant to serve Him regardless of the cost, we are then living the law of sacrifice.*” [“The Law of Sacrifice,” *Ensign*, October 1998, pp. 10-11]

Carefully Observing the Sabbath Prepares Us to Receive Spiritual Promptings - Elder

H. David Burton: “I . . . know that remembering *to keep the Sabbath day holy is one of the most important commandments we can observe* in preparing us to be the recipients of the whisperings of the Spirit.” [*Ensign*, November 1998, p. 9]