

Alleluia! Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed, Alleluia!

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father, and our Risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

My dear beloved flock, the text for our meditation this morning is the Third Commandment and it's meaning found on page 321.

“Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.” What does this mean? “We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.”

Boys and girls how are you this morning? I pray that you are doing well this morning. Do you ever get tired? After a long morning of playing outside or playing with your toys, I am sure you get tired. After a long day at school, I am sure that your brain gets tired and needs to rest. Even moms and dads need to rest after a long day at work. Today, we look at the Third commandment. “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.” Sabbath. Do you know what that word means? It means rest. This commandment tells us that when we are tired, God through His Word gives us a rest from everything. How does God's word give us rest? Ponder that question as you hear the rest of the sermon. You may go back to your seats and those who love you.

Blessing

What a blessing rest is. We often times take it for granted and do not make enough use of it in our busy world. Sleep and naps are excellent after a long and busy day of work. After all have you ever heard anyone complain about rest? No it does not happen, unless you are Rip Van Winkle. As good as naps are though, they are only short-term rests. For true rest from everything, we turn towards God. As Saint Augustine writes, “Our hearts are restless until they find their rest in Thee.” At its very core, the third commandment entrusts us with a great blessing, the very Word of

God that gives us ultimate rest from sin, from death, and from the power of the devil.

Misuse of Blessing, don't always respect WoG

Many times we misuse this great blessing that we have been given. We do not always respect either God or His Word. How do we disrespect the Word of God? We disrespect it when we do not gather together around the Word of God. We put a sports game for our children, a family gathering or get together as more important than what God does for us here and now. When we use the day, He has given us, not to gather where He has promised to be, but rather use it as a day to sleep in longer or get some extra housework done.

We disrespect the Word of God even by how we use the wonder of modern technology. How often do you look at your phone? On average, Americans check their phones **344 times per day**. (That's once every 4 minutes!). I am sure many people are browsing TikTok, twitter, Instagram, Facebook or just getting lost in the web. How many could be spending that time in the Word? We have the blessing of a multitude of various bible applications on our phones with a wide variety of different translations. That we can have the very words of God on our phones in our hands, written down in our own native languages. How often do we read it? Many people do not even look at it for even five minutes a day in daily devotion, these very words of life given to them! This commandment is very easy for us to violate.

Benefits of Blessing, Word made flesh, in sanctuary as was His custom, FoS!

So what do we do? Given how easily we break this commandment, we cannot depend on ourselves. Rather, we hold onto the very Word of God given to us for our salvation. We cling to the very Word of God made flesh for us, our Risen and Ascended Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. As God made flesh for us, Jesus perfectly kept the law on our behalf, including this

commandment. As the Gospels record, where was Jesus every single Sabbath day? He was in the sanctuary as was His custom. It was a habit, it was a custom for Jesus to be in the sanctuary finding rest in His, and our, heavenly Father. He would often go to solitary places in order to pray and be with His Father. Even as a young child, Jesus gladly heard and learned the Word of God, even when obedience to that very word meant that Jesus goes to the cross. There, He bore our sins in His holy flesh, took our punishment, suffered, bled, and died for us. Rising again from the dead, Jesus gives to us newness of life and gives us His perfect holiness. Ascended to the right hand of the Father, Jesus sends us His promised Holy Spirit.

Christ gathers us together, empowers us with His HS that we may hold fast to the faith granted to us.

Because of His Holy Spirit, we do not despise preaching and His Word. Instead of hating it, we love and adore it. We hold His Word in high regard and honor it among us. Because of the Holy Spirit working in us, we hold it sacred and gladly, joyfully, hear it and learn it.

This is shown as we gather together in worship around the Word that God has given to us. Do we enjoy everything it says? Do we always enjoy hearing the harsh words of Law? No our sinful nature dislikes being told what to do or that something is wrong to do. It bulks at being reminded that we are sinners. Yet, we rejoice over that Word because it is the clear message of God. That we are indeed sinners. That Jesus Christ, God made flesh has saved and redeemed us by His death and by His resurrection from the dead.

Thus, why we gather here for worship. Not because it's something that we do to make ourselves feel better, but because of what we receive. We gather in worship around the Word, and the Divine deigns to serve us. We gather, receiving from God the forgiveness of our sins, the salvation of our souls, and life with Him forever and ever. We bring to God our prayers, our

petitions, as well as our thanks and praises for everything that He has done, and continues to do for us.

Let us never lose sight of this wonderful working of God in us, creating and sustain faith that we may indeed keep gladly hearing and learning the word of God for us men and for our salvation every single day of our lives.

The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard and keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.