

RULES! RULES! RULES!

Rules! You can't live with them and you can't live without them. When I think about rules, my mind immediately goes to my childhood. Eat your vegetables, even the ones I didn't like. Feed the ducks, even when it was cold or rainy outside. Study hard, even when I would rather play. Come home when called, even when I would rather play. Go to bed on time, even when I would rather play. (I liked to play!)

Deuteronomy 5:6-21 gives us the Ten Commandments. As I reread them, I wonder if anyone even remembers them any more. Cursing is part of the language anymore. Adultery is fast becoming a way of life. This country is filled with idols that we worship with far more enthusiasm than the Lord God almighty. And then there is the Sabbath. Deuteronomy spends much more time and space to stressing the importance of the Sabbath than any of the other Commandments. Sabbath means Rest in Hebrew. I can hear the protests now. But we both work, and Sunday is the only time we have get things done. But I'm too busy to take a day off and sit down. But I have to go shopping. When will the grass get mowed?

The point is that God did not give us the rules just so that He could watch us follow them. God gave us the Ten Commandments because they are good for us. It's like eating your vegetables or going to bed on time. It's like standing in line. God also gave us reason and free will. And laws and rules can certainly be taken to extremes. That is what the Jewish nation did. There may be times when we don't observe Sabbath. But still, the Sabbath is a Gift from God. The Sabbath is good for us. "The Sabbath is made for man."(Mark 2:27) God did NOT make His rules to oppress our Civil Liberties or to show who is in charge. He made them because He loves us and wants the best for us. God's rules are meant to help people, not hinder them. God knows that we need to have a day of rest. Physically, mentally, and spiritually. We need a day for worship and for fellowship with family and friends. We need a day for refreshment and renewal, for Re-Creation. We need a day for eating together, for sharing our joys and challenges, for taking a nap or going for a drive, for reading the Bible or John Grisham, for listening to the Everly Brothers or the Pointer Sisters. We need a day of re-creation.

Martin Luther once said "If I am too busy to pray, then I am too busy NOT to pray." I suggest that if you are too busy to observe the Sabbath, then too busy NOT to observe it. Schedule it if you

must. Make a priority of it. It is, after all, one of the Ten Commandments!

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