

Lord of the Sabbath

Program #1

A Tiny Remnant

Kenny Kitzke

LawstSheep Ministries

Yes, indeed. According to the Gospel of Mark, in Chapter 2, verses 27 and 28, we find that Jesus said, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore, the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.” When I quote the Bible, I am using the New King James Version, unless otherwise noted.

I hope that you know this Lord of the Sabbath. I hope today you remembered the day He is the Lord of, and which He always kept holy. When Jesus personally declared that the Sabbath was made for man, I suspect that he knew the Sabbath was intended for man’s good by our loving God, by His and our Father, at the creation of all things!

But, when we look around the world, do we find that most people both know Jesus as Lord of the Sabbath, and also keep the Sabbath day holy as Jesus did? No! No, indeed. Have you ever wondered why? I admit that it somewhat perplexes me.

Have you ever thought about how many people have actually read or understood what Jesus said, taught or did as recorded in the holy scriptures? Would you like to take a different look at the reality that we see today among the people of the world in this regard? I feel pretty confident that no one has ever asked you to take this particular look at our world before. Well, if you are feeling brave, and enjoy the search for knowledge and understanding of the words of God to mankind and much as I do, please don’t touch that radio dial.

To better focus on this situation and understand what Jesus said and meant about Himself and the Sabbath, we can construct a two-by-two matrix diagram. Don’t let the mathematical jargon scare you off. This is a simple but powerful technique for analyzing overall situations by looking at their pieces. It is sort of like building a puzzle piece by piece until the entire beautiful picture finally emerges.

In the secular world of problem solving, this diagram is often called a Johari Window. That is spelled J o h a r i. It was named after the two men who first invented it as a means to model human understanding. Their first names were Joseph and Harry. If you do an Internet search on “Johari Window,” you will find some fascinating examples for how this simple model can increase your understanding in very practical terms. It is a creative way to “look” at situations in a more organized and helpful way.

So, let’s construct a Johari Window about these two statements made by Jesus about the Sabbath. If you have a piece of paper and a pen handy, you can draw a window for yourself. Or, if you don’t, a Johari Window is so simple that you can probably just visualize the window in your mind.

To start, draw, or picture in your mind, a square. Then, draw a vertical and horizontal line right through the center of the square. What do you see now? You should see a square box divided into four equal compartments. It looks like a window with four panes of glass. Window makers would call it a window with four “lights.”

Now, we can add some words to our Johari Window. We can label the horizontal and vertical sides of our square. On the horizontal bottom of the square we can put “Know Jesus,” short for “Know Jesus as Lord of the Sabbath.” On the vertical left-side of the square we can put the label, “Keep the Sabbath.”

Below the lower-left pane write, or imagine, a “No” and beneath the pane on the lower-right put “Yes.” On the left side of the lower-left pane we can put “No” and next to the upper-left pane put a “Yes.”

Are you still with me? We are almost done. Hang in there! For the last step, we can label the four panes according to the labels on the horizontal and vertical sides of the square. Starting at the lower-left pane it would be “No, No.” Going clockwise the upper-left pane would be “No, Yes,” the upper-right “Yes, Yes,” and finally the lower-right pane is “Yes, No.” Wow! There is your finished Johari Window; perhaps the first one you ever created or even ever saw.

Now, you may be wondering, “So what?” What’s the big deal? Well, believe it or not, I think that we can see every man and woman alive today on the face of this earth through one of your four window panes. Isn’t that interesting? Actually, it’s rather amazing!

The lower-left “No, No” pane represents people who do not know Jesus as Lord of the Sabbath and do not keep the Sabbath holy. The upper-left “No, Yes” pane represents people who do not know Jesus but who **DO** keep the Sabbath holy. The upper-right “Yes, Yes” pane represents people who know Jesus as Lord of the Sabbath AND who keep the Sabbath holy. Finally, the bottom-right “Yes, No” pane represents people who know Jesus as Lord of the Sabbath but **DO NOT** keep the Sabbath holy.

Well, there is a picture of ALL mankind today. Perhaps it is a way that Jesus, as Lord of the Sabbath, would look down from heaven and see mankind? He would see me through the upper-right window pane, the “Yes, Yes” pane. Through which pane would Jesus see you? If you are lost in all this, or are otherwise having trouble identifying in which window pane He would see you, please contact me and I will help you locate yourself in this Johari Window.

If you have hung in there with me, congratulations! You are quite a serious thinker seeking new discoveries and understanding about our God. You have constructed a simple, but powerful, picture of humanity. Now we can delve a bit deeper into just who Jesus might see behind the four panes. People seen in the “No, No” bottom-left pane are those who neither know Him nor keep the Sabbath that He said was made for them. Can you identify people whom you see in the world through this pane?

How about atheists, and probably most agnostics? Would they be there? Pretty clear, isn't it?

How about religious people who follow some divine, or human, or non-human being other than Jesus as their Lord? Wouldn't they probably all be there too? This could include Buddhists, Hindus, various Native American Indian tribes, Moslems, Satanists, etc., who worship some god, animal, being or thing, other than Jesus, AND who would also probably not keep the Sabbath day holy. They may have another day like Friday that they observe as holy. Or, they may keep no specific weekly day holy at all.

Chances are that not many of these people will be listening to this broadcast. Most likely you are listening to this program on a Christian radio station. This would not be a popular place for most non-Christians to tune into on their radio dial. However, if I am wrong and you don't know Jesus, or His Sabbath, but would like to learn more about both, I do hope you will contact me. God's word in the Bible says that no man will come to Jesus unless His Father, the God of all, calls them. Is the Father of all calling you to His Son right now? Will you heed the call? I know it is far easier to ignore His call and not challenge your beliefs. But, the easy ways are not always the most beneficial ways.

Through the upper-left pane of our window Jesus would see people who do not know Him as Lord of the Sabbath, yet they keep the Sabbath holy. I suspect that you can easily picture who these people would be? Sure, we would probably see people who practice Judaism, or some sect of it. There may be other groups, but none come to my mind. If you are aware of any, please contact me and we can better fill in our picture of humanity.

Behind the lower-right pane, Jesus would see people who accept Him as Lord, and if they believe their Bible, specifically as Lord of the Sabbath. However, they do not see the Sabbath as a day made for them. Who would that be? That one is very easy. It is most people who call themselves "Christians." However, they do not keep the seventh-day Sabbath that Jesus kept and said was made for man. Almost all Christians keep Sunday, the first day of the week, as holy. I too was a Sunday keeping Christian for half my life.

I, of course, know many Sunday-keeping Christians that have strong, heart-felt reasons for keeping Sunday. Perhaps some will appear as guests on this program and we can compare our reasons from Scripture for our beliefs. Of course, other Christians do not keep any day holy believing that every day is the same for those in Christ. That would also be an issue worth discussing.

Now, we have only one window pane to go, the "Yes, Yes" pane. That's the one through which Jesus would see me! I accept Jesus as my Savior, the Messiah whom God promised to send to save sinners like me; and like you. I obviously accept Jesus as Lord of the Sabbath, which He said He was. Best of all, He is Lord of my whole life, as He commanded.

I strive to keep all the applicable laws of God and avoid sin and lawlessness, like He did. Of course, He did so perfectly whereas I still stumble. What a great blessing Jesus is to

us! What light He provided to those who would hear His voice. He is far greater than the Sabbath day itself! That is for sure. Yet, it seems to me that God provided both His Son and His Sabbath for my good.

Now, let's return to our Johari Window and use it to think a bit further; venture a bit deeper. Do you like thinking and meditating on the Word of God as much as I do? So, here is something to contemplate. Behind which of the window panes do we see the most people?

Best I can tell, about 2 out of 3 people alive today are behind the bottom-left, "No, No" window pane. If there are roughly six billion people alive today, an incredible four billion would not know or accept Jesus as the Lord of the Sabbath much less keep the Sabbath day holy.

The creation of man on the sixth day was the crowning achievement of the Almighty's week of creation work. And, the next day, the seventh-day of the week, Jesus says was made for man. As God looked at His creation, He saw that it was very good. So, God made, blessed and sanctified this seventh-day for the benefit of man; the jewel of His creation week.

Unfortunately, as I speculated earlier, few of these billions of people will ever hear this broadcast. Some will never even hear the name Jesus. Others will hear His name but not believe His claims of being the Son of God, or of being the Lord of the Sabbath.

Yet, it was into this lost world that Jesus sent His Apostles and disciples to preach the Good News that they may be saved and obtain eternal life with God the Father. All of us behind the other three panes, must be willing to be witnesses to them concerning the true and living God of all. Perhaps something you will hear on this Program will be the very fact that will open their minds when God calls them to His son. Jesus had warned His disciples as he looked at the multitudes who would gather to hear Him, that the harvest of souls was truly plentiful, but the laborers to reap them were few. He then said in Matthew 9: 38, that His disciples should "Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest." And, so, let us never shy away from this labor.

What is the next biggest group of people alive today as seen in our Johari window? Undoubtedly, it would be the Christians seen behind the lower right pane. A couple of billion souls that are alive today and who profess belief in Jesus as the Christ. We find them scattered among tens of thousands of different denominations of Christian Churches and organizations. They may be classified as Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical, Pentecostal, Fundamentalist, etc. Some may not be registered as being in any formal Church denomination or organization. But, of all these types of believers, we can be quite sure that few keep the Sabbath holy. The reasons for this will be the subject of many of our radio programs throughout the year.

The remaining windows shed light on two, considerably smaller groups of people. The upper-left pane reveals those who practice some form of Judaism. This is a relatively

small fraction of the people alive today: Millions of people compared to billions behind the previous window panes. Judaism, like Christianity, also has a number of sects and divisions. I am quite sure there are independent synagogues and individuals who are not members of any religious organization.

Jews are scattered all around the world. There are more Jews who live outside the nation of Israel than within. But, one sign of most Jews is that they keep the seventh-day Sabbath holy. In Exodus 31: 17, the LORD calls the Sabbath “a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever.” Jesus, being a child of Israel and son of David himself, naturally and customarily kept the Sabbath holy each week, including attending at the local synagogue.

Just like there are groups of Sunday-keeping Christians who have discovered the understanding and blessings of Sabbath-keeping, there are Sabbath-keeping groups of Jews who have discovered Jesus as the promised Messiah of Israel. I pray that people in either group will listen to this Lord of the Sabbath radio program to gain a better understanding of the unity that can be found in the Lord of the Sabbath.

One of my favorite verses from Scripture about this separation among the people of God is found in Ephesians 2: 13-18.

But now in Christ Jesus you who were once far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.

Of course, this middle wall of separation alluded to a wall in God’s temple in Jerusalem which partitioned off a Court for the Gentiles. Gentiles could not have access to parts of the temple where only Jews could enter according to certain ordinance laws of God given to Moses for Israel. These ordinances made Israel and Jews somewhat unique and separate from Gentile nations and peoples. These ordinances evoked differences in various religious and social customs and tended to be a source of enmity between Jews and Gentiles (even those Gentiles who also trusted in the God of Abraham).

Here we see that whether Jew or Gentile, the believers in Jesus could see that enmity abolished. They would both become new men who could live in peace with one another. We will have much more to say about these ordinances that would no longer separate Jews and Gentiles who are in Christ. Obviously, we will explore why the Sabbath command is not one of these ordinances in future radio programs.

Last, the upper-right window pane lets us see the smallest group of people. They are a tiny remnant of people who not only accept Jesus as their Savior, their Messiah and their Lord; they also keep the seventh-day Sabbath holy. Among the better known religious groups are the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, the Seventh-Day Baptists, various

Messianic Jewish congregations, etc. I have seen lists of over 400 such groups.

There are also many individual believers in Jesus as Lord who are not “members” of any “Church” or major religious organization but who keep the Sabbath day holy. They may call themselves “Independent” or “Unaffiliated” Sabbath-keepers. Many are scattered in small congregations, often meeting in rented facilities.

There are also even smaller fellowships composed of just a hand-full of families who meet weekly in each other’s homes. Not all of these groups use the term “Christian” in describing themselves. They might prefer to call themselves “Nazarenes,” “People of the Way,” or even a “Congregation of Yahweh.” I have seen compilations of thousands of such congregations and fellowships. I am sure there are such people in the sound of this broadcast who will find this Sabbath program a blessing. I hope you will write me and pray for me to continue this ministry for the Lord of the Sabbath.

This is much like the earliest disciples of Jesus in what might be called the Apostolic church. Many were Jewish. But Scriptures tells us that both Jews and Gentiles would meet on the Sabbath day as local believers in Jesus to hear the Apostle Paul preach. Such a group of called-out believers in Jesus is referred to in the Greek as the “ekklesia” or in English as the “church,” or the body of Jesus, the Christ. Hence, we see the Church of God at Ephesus, or at Corinth, referred to in the Bible.

The church is the believers in each locality. The church is people. But, the church of Jesus was also collectively all such believers throughout the world. Church in the Bible never refers to buildings that have a steeple and a cross on top, or any place of gathering. The Church of God in the Bible also never referred to any particular religious organization, or an incorporated denomination, as such terms might be used today. The church of God properly refers to the people who are disciples of Jesus, accepting Him as their Savior and their Lord.

This weekly program is dedicated primarily to this smallest group of peculiar disciples of Jesus who want to remember and keep holy the Sabbath day; which He also kept. We want to keep the Fourth Commandment just as much as all of the Ten Commandments.

Due to geographic isolation, illness, disability, or age, we know of many individuals, married couples, or families, who can’t travel about for assemblies on the seventh-day of the week in their region. They are essentially home-bound. We hope brethren like this will find our radio program a special blessing each Sabbath. We will rejoice together each week in the day the Lord of the Sabbath claimed was made for mankind. We will delve into the rich meaning of all of God’s Sabbath days and their bounty of blessings that bring delight for those who keep them holy.

I suspect that the greatest number of people will be hearing this broadcast on a Christian radio network and station. Chances are, consistent with our Johari Window analysis, that they will be Sunday-keeping Christians. They may not know exactly when, how or why Christian religious groups changed from keeping Saturday like Jesus and His Apostles

did, to keeping Sunday. I too was rather surprised when I first studied these things.

Or, perhaps Christians not in the habit of observing any day of rest, or not having a holy convocation each week at a Church, might tune in seeking understanding and the truth of God revealed through His Word about the blessings Sabbath fellowship can provide to one another.

I believe that everyone can find delight and purpose in learning more about how the Sabbath will draw them closer to the Lord of the Sabbath and in the process also bring glory to our great God. You may be surprised to learn that even after the earliest Christians began worshipping on Sunday, many still kept Saturday as a day of holy rest.

I wonder how many listening today know that among the earliest Christian settlers of the United States, we find community leaders who kept the Sabbath holy. Some states made laws concerning its observance. It is a matter of history. But, why would they do that? And, why did they stop, or did they stop?

In conclusion, regardless in what window pane Jesus would see you, I feel certain you will learn some valuable teachings straight from the word of God and from the practices of our Lord Jesus. I am not aware of any similar type of weekly radio broadcast in this region. So, if you find it interesting and valuable, please let friends know that Saturday (not just Sunday) can be a day of special blessing for them as relayed by the Lord of the Sabbath.

This is Brother Kenny saying, please join us next week at the same time and place on your radio dial. We will begin exploring from the holy Bible how our Almighty God made and sanctified one day of each week for man, for all men, for all mankind, forever. You don't want to miss this foundational program.

Until then, may God bless you and keep you safe and joyful. I ask this in the precious name of Jesus, the Christ. Amen!