

J.R. Miller:

"The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" Mark 2:27

The Sabbath was not made for man merely as an arbitrary law which he must observe. It is as much a law of his nature, or in harmony with his nature, as is the night which bids him cease his toil and seek rest and sleep. It was made for man's physical nature. It has been proved many times that the body needs the Sabbath. Then it was made for man's spiritual good, to give opportunity, not alone for physical rest "but for communion with God, when the noise of business and of toil has ceased. It was made for man to promote his welfare in every regard. All history proves that the Sabbath is a blessing wherever it is observed, and that its violation always brings loss and suffering.

Our Lord clearly showed by His example and teaching that the Sabbath is never meant to be a burden or to work oppressively. Though secular work is forbidden on the Sabbath, it is not a violation of the sacredness of the day for us to prepare food sufficient to meet the hunger of our bodies, or to lift out of a pit a beast that has fallen into it, or to heal a man who is sick. There is no great need in these days to say much on this side of the question. Not many people are now disposed to make the Sabbath a burden or a cruel yoke. The tendency is the other way.

At the same time, it is well to understand just what our Lord taught on this subject. He never sought to make the Sabbath oppressive or a burden. Works of necessity are allowed, even though they may seem to violate the letter of the law. So also are works of mercy, works of benevolence. It will be hard, however, to get out of this great saying of our Lord "any excuse for running railway trains, for keeping stores open, or for the hundredth part of the secular goings-on that men want to bring in under the shield of Christ's teaching.