

come legalistic. A legalist is any person who seeks to earn salvation by attempting to keep any law or rule. As we have seen already, righteousness comes by faith in God's grace and God Himself works in the believer both to will and to do of His good pleasure (Philippians 2:12,13). Of all the ten commandments, the Jews made the Sabbath command the most burdensome. Jesus proved by life and death that it is a joy to keep the commandments of God and the true Sabbath of God, by faith in God's gracious character (John 5:1-4).

In Matthew 12:1-21 Jesus gave the Jews and all mankind a lesson in Sabbath keeping. He kept the Sabbath as a day of joy, freedom, happiness. A day on which good deeds are to be cheerfully performed. A day for intimate communion with God, a day of worship and prayer indeed, Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath, (Matthew 12:8). He is Lord of the Sabbath not only because He instituted it (St. John 1:1-3; Genesis 2:1-3), but He is Lord of the Sabbath because He kept it perfectly, leaving us the example of happy Sabbath keeping.

How did He keep the Sabbath? By faith in His Father, being emptied of self, and allowing the Father to perform God's (Gen. 2:1-3) perfect Sabbath keeping through Him. By being Lord of the Sabbath He thus confirmed the Old Testament truth that the Sabbath is the sign of God's gracious work of saving us from sin, Ezekiel 20:12,20.

Friend, Jesus invites you to receive the rest of salvation. Salvation brings peace and therefore rest. Righteousness brings peace and rest. The true keeping of the Seventh Day Sabbath is the outward evidence of the indwelling righteousness of Christ, the sign that we have ceased from our own works and have surrendered to God to perform His works in us. Consider the following scriptures: Romans 5:1,2; Romans 8:1-4; Matthew 11:28-30; Ephesians 2:8-10; Hebrews 4:9-11; Psalm 119:97,119,165; Philipians 2:12,13; Galatians 2:20,21 and St. John 14:15.

So completely did Jesus surrender to His Father's will, so completely did He empty Himself of self that only the Father was manifested in and through Him. Thus He fully and completely revealed the character of God. He demonstrated fully that the Father is absolutely righteous, gracious, kind, gentle, meek, mild, and harmless. This must be so for if Christ did nothing of Himself but allowed the Father to dwell in Him and do the works of righteousness, then the character exhibited by Christ must have been the character of His Father.

“I can of mine own self do nothing...I seek not mine own will but the will of the Father which hath sent me.” John 5:30.

“...The Father that dwelleth in me He doeth the works.” John 14:10.

“...For I am meek and lowly in heart .  
Matthew 11:29.

Thus Jesus revealed that God the Father, is kind, meek, gracious and compassionate. He is not a terror or a cruel person but He is righteous, compassionate, kind and loving.

We thank God for the testimony of Jesus for it is the testimony or witness which reveals that faith in God and denial of self is the only method by which true righteousness is obtained; it is the testimony or witness which reveals God the Father to be perfectly righteous, perfectly in harmony with His law which is but a transcript of His character. But Revelation 19:10 also defines the testimony of Jesus, as the spirit of prophecy. This prophetic gift of the Holy Spirit is always in perfect harmony with the Bible, the nature of Christ's humanity and the truth of God's character. Thus God's true end-time saints will have the words of the spirit of prophecy as further confirmation of the testimony of Christ.

In conclusion then, the Testimony of Jesus is the full revelation of the character and righteousness of God in and through fallen human nature, and is made manifest by obedience to all the commandments of God, with the keeping of the true seventh-day Sabbath being the glorious outward sign of the indwelling

Christ. Jesus Himself gave the formula for this perfection when He said:

“I in them, and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.” John 17:23.

And the Apostle Paul summarized the victorious Christian life in Galatians 2:20: “I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.

God invites you, friend, right now, to cease from your own attempt to achieve salvation by works and to surrender all to Christ so that the old man of sin will be put to death, and the New Life, the Divine Nature, the Seed of Christ shall be begotten in you by the Holy Spirit. With this gift of righteousness by the faith of Jesus, God will carry forward the work of sanctifying you unto perfection, so long as you keep trusting and surrendering all to Christ, and so long as you abide in Him and allow Him to dwell in you, victory is assured.