

# Instruction In The Westminster Standards

## The Historic Standards of Presbyterian Denominations.

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### STUDIES IN THE WESTMINSTER SHORTER CATECHISM

Q. 60. How is the Sabbath to be sanctified?

A. The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days; and spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy.

**SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:** Lev. 23:3. Ps. 92:1, 2. Luke 4:16.  
Matt. 12:11, 12. Jer. 17:21, 22.

#### QUESTIONS:

1. What do we mean by sanctifying the Sabbath?  
The Sabbath is sanctified by God in that He made it holy. The Sabbath is to be sanctified by man by man's keeping it holy, by his using it for other purposes than his regular employments.
2. What two things are we to do on the Sabbath day?  
We are given permission by God to do two things: holy resting and holy worship.
3. From what are we to rest on the Sabbath day?  
We are to rest from all things that are not of necessity and mercy. This means that we are to rest even from things that are not sinful, that are lawful on other days, such as worldly employments and recreations.
4. When we speak of "holy worship" do we mean we must spend all day in church?  
No, it is not meant that all day must be spent in church but it is meant that we should spend our time in either public or private worship. It should be a time for our souls to be renewed by God as we worship Him in prayer, Bible study, family worship.
5. Would you say it is alright to rest the body on the Sabbath day?  
Yes, it would be well within the keeping of the commandment to rest the body. This is one of the reasons for the Sabbath day for God knew in the beginning that the body would need one day of rest out of seven.
6. Should there be any preparation for the Sabbath day?  
Yes, there should be both physical and spiritual preparation. For example, everything possible should be done prior to the day in the physical realm so that the day might be spent as unto Him. Our devotional article speaks of the spiritual preparation.

## PREPARATION FOR THE SABBATH

The family is gathered in church on Sunday morning. The service is about to start. The minister asks a question, asks it even before the Invocation. He asks, "How many of you have taken time to prepare your souls for this, the Lord's Day?" How would we answer such a question; what would have been our answer last Sunday morning?

There has been much said regarding the keeping of the Sabbath day, and this is proper. Indeed, our country is guilty of breaking it time and time again and born again Christians are joining in. But possibly some emphasis should be put on the matter of preparation for the day. There seems to be little said about this important aspect. It might well be there would be less breaking of the Sabbath if there was more preparation for it!

How can we prepare for the Sabbath day? What things would be important for us to do in order that we might be better prepared to spend the day as the Lord would have us to spend it? The following list might be helpful as we seek to live unto Him in this area:

1. Dedicate the day to the Lord beforehand and rejoice at the prospect of it. Recognize this is truly the Lord's Day. We should seek, by His grace, to make it a special day of blessing to our souls.
2. Use a good portion of the time on Saturday evening for a spiritual retreat. Closet yourself with the Word, with prayer, filling your soul with the things that be of God. Recognize that your heart needs to be cleansed from the things of the world, necessary things possibly, but things that have entered in to choke the Word.
3. Use some time for meditation. Instead of only reading the Word and praying, think on the things of God and of God Himself. Think on His works, on His holiness, on the wonderful fact of redemption, on the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.
4. Pray for the minister, pray that he will be prepared for the preaching of the Word, the primary means of grace. Hold him up before the Throne of Grace, pray that he will be a fit vessel for the Master's use.

It is time that God's people, His saved, prepare themselves for the Lord's Day and its activities. As the people of Israel had to wash their bodies before the law was presented to them, so should the believers in Christ prepare their souls for the Lord's Day. (Ex. 19:10). Think of what the result could be in His work if His people were to make some spiritual retreats in preparation for His day!

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