

## “BETTER IS ONE DAY”

Text: Psalm 84

Campmeeting 2015 #3, GGSDA, 8/22/15

**INTRO.: A. NOTTING HILL**—I think a lot about what makes people change their mind. **Julia Roberts** makes \$20 million a movie, boy works in a bookstore, he broke up with her, she comes back to London, walks in the door, gives him this incredible painting by Chagall, he had a copy, she gives him the original—asks if she can have another chance—no, it would never work. She says, famous line, **“I’m just a girl, standing in front of a boy, asking him to love her.”** She walks out, asks his friends, was I wrong--hits him—he’s an idiot. They go racing all over London until he finds her. What changes his mind? First she’s not worth it—then she is. Why, with God, for some people it’s just the opposite—at first God is worth it, church, Sabbath—then all of a sudden, not worth it any more. **Young couple**—premarital counseling this week, terrific kids—not in church anymore—“Hate to tell you this, Pastor Dan, we respect you so much--Not relevant, didn’t work any more “

**B. Is there anything that could ever happen**, in the shaking time at the end of the world—that could knock you out, decide, Sabbath and the Church just not worth it anymore? **ICE CORES**, layers for every year, go down 100,000 years, people can’t find any flood. **GC PRESIDENT** have an affair. **SENIOR PASTOR** takes off with all church’s money, blows it in Las Vegas. They find some **GRAVE** in Jerusalem, says—this is Jesus Christ, crucified, AD 31. He’s just dead. He’s not alive, they made it all up. On the news, TV, Facebook, twitter, cover of TIME magazine—Jesus is dead. Is there anything that could knock you out?

**I. “BETTER IS ONE DAY.” PSALM 84:10 “Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked.”**

A. If you’re honest—going to church vs. going to the Mall—which would you rather? Church—or surfing? Sabbath, or football game? Why for most Christians, Sabbath just an hour. One hour for God. Rest of the day, back to normal. But here it says, “Better is one day with God, than 1000 somewhere else.”

B. It was supposed to be this incredible day. If every day was supposed to be better than the day before, Sabbath is supposed to be the best. Better than the 6<sup>th</sup> day, which means better than sex and marriage and making love. With God Himself. Delight. One day with God—better than 1000. What’s happened?

1. For 15 years I’ve talked about the girl I was dating in HS, we talked whether to go further physically—finally we just did it—started holding hands! You start dating, first you talk, then hold hands, then kiss, then finally get married, honeymoon. God meant Sabbath to be this next level—day to be with God.

C. If Sabbath is a taste of heaven. Then every day in heaven—is a Sabbath. 1000 years of Sabbaths. If don’t like Sabbath down here, won’t be in heaven—heaven is 1000-year Sabbath! **So what’s happened?**

D. God wants a day—we give Him an hour. Jesus begs His disciples to give Him an hour, they give Him minutes. When He wants 10%, we put in a dollar. When He says, Go to church, Don’t forsake the assembling of yourselves together, we turn on the TV, live streaming. OK sometimes. But why, do we always reduce God?

E. But these singers say--**Message**—“**One day spent in your house, this beautiful place of worship, beats thousands spent on Greek island beaches.**” Would you say that? Or rather take the Greek islands?

F. He says: **PSALM 42:1 “As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God, when can I go and meet with God?” 1 day, better>1000**

G. I saw one of my church members, thought he had a little gas, died that night, heart attack. Thought the problem was here, but really problem was his heart. You were made for God—we think we need to go buy something, eat something, travel somewhere—at the core, in your soul—hungry for God.

**II. SOME DAYS HAVE MORE OF GOD THAN OTHER DAYS.** A. These people are out in a cave somewhere with David, miss the Temple. **BUT isn’t GOD everywhere? These kids thought, can be spiritual anywhere, don’t need church, Sabbath. But David thought—more God at the Temple.**

B. **Burning Bush**—Take your shoes off, holy ground. Yes, God is everywhere, but somehow there was

more of God there. **Shekinah glory in the Temple.** God everywhere, but more intense—right there. We all have God in us—but **Christ—pure God. Nothing but God. In one place.** Even if God is everywhere, wouldn't you be closer to God if you were next to Christ? Yes. So in one sense God can be everywhere, but still there be more of God some places. You can be more aware of God some places, see Him more clearly.

C. So maybe it's the same with **Time.** God is everywhere, all the time. But there are some times where there is more of God, where God is more intense, more real. **One Day—with God—better than 1000 w/o Him. Why Heschel calls the Sabbath a Sanctuary in Time. God is there.**

D. **BAKLAVA**--I went 2 years once without any sugar. Doctor's orders. And then I was OK again, first bite back, somebody gave me some **baklava.** Pure sugar. The rest of the week sugar is there, mixed in with cereal. But Baklava—pure. The rest of the week God is around. We can feel God everywhere in our lives. But the Sabbath is pure God. Why he said, "Better one day with you, than a 1000 without you, O God." **Bacchiocchi—Week without a Sabbath—spaghetti w/o sauce. The rest of the week is like holding hands, the Sabbath is like making love.**

**III. IS THE SABBATH ARBITRARY?** A. There is an Adventist theologian in Loma Linda, Dr. Tonstad, has written a great book on the Sabbath, share one idea with you. One of the reasons that the Catholic Church felt like they could get away with changing the Sabbath—was because it was the only one of the Ten Commandments that was not **obvious—not part of Natural Law.** The whole world can see that killing each other is just wrong, that's not going to work. Stealing from your family or neighbors just a bad idea. Telling the Truth--just makes sense. But they said—This Sabbath—one particular day—you just can't see it in Natural Law. So it's **ARBITRARY.** God just did it. But there's no real benefit, it doesn't add anything to your life. So it just doesn't matter that much if we move it from here to here, because it was just a day God choose, there was no deep reason or meaning to why he did it. So God is arbitrary.

1. It'd be like going to the Doctor, I'm sick all the time, losing weight, losing blood—what's wrong with me? Doctor gets out a little spinner, spins it—you've got cancer. Arbitrary. It means nothing, can spin again, change it—just doesn't matter. Could just go **Eeeny, Meeny, Miney, Mo. Choose names of your kids by throwing darts at a dartboard. Fight wars or play sports by flipping a coin, rock, paper, scissors.**

B. But that's the whole debate in the Great Controversy. God gives them every tree except one. The serpent comes along—"Did God really say you can't eat of this Tree?" Why would a good God do that, create this gorgeous tree with incredible fruit—then say, You can't do it. God is just arbitrary. It doesn't make sense. That's the whole problem with God—just makes a lot of laws to control you, show you who's Boss, test you, see if you will obey Him even if it makes no sense at all.. No, He's wrong, you'll be like gods. God says don't do that until you're married, He's just arbitrary, it won't hurt you. So the Catholic Church, Luther, Calvin all said—keep these other 9, they make sense—Sabbath, arbitrary, doesn't matter.

C. **No, God is never arbitrary. God always makes sense. ISAIAH 1:18 "Come, let us reason together."** EGW says **5Testimonies 738(par).** **"Satan puts his own characteristics onto God—that God is arbitrary, severe, and unforgiving."** It's Satan who is arbitrary, God is never arbitrary. God didn't just pick a day to test people, see if they would obey no matter what. This is not **eeny meeny miney mo. This is God, He finishes Creating these incredible people, wants to be with them. Makes this Sabbath. This is God standing in front of them, "I'm just a God, standing in front of you, asking you to love Him."** 1 day—better than 1000 other days. 1 day better than 1000 in Greek islands or Hawaii or Tahiti or Disneyland.

**IV. AND SO I CAN NEVER GIVE UP ON THE CHURCH—BECAUSE OF THE SABBATH.** A. I am a Christian because of Jesus, and grace, heaven, and the Second Coming. But I'm a Seventh-day Adventist—because of the picture of God—AND the Sabbath. It doesn't matter what they vote or what I think of the President or crazy people or politics or the band's too loud.

B. I believe in the Sabbath because it's the **Original Sabbath**. I refuse to take the knockoff, the copy. I believe in the Sabbath because it's in the **Ten Commandments** because He wrote it with His own finger. I believe in the Sabbath because **Jesus kept it**. I believe it because the **whole world** is now realizing you will get more done if you stop work and take breaks and go on vacations and take time for your own soul. I believe in the Sabbath because **God predicted** that someday somebody would try to change it, and exactly at the right time, right place—people tried to change it—and they admit they changed it, they're proud that they changed it. This is just a historical fact. I can give you whole page of quotes. We don't agree. We protest. Once God makes something holy, you just can't change that. I believe in the Sabbath, because the Bible says at the end of the world there will be one last **Remnant Church** that keeps all the commandments of God. I want to be part of that Church. I believe in the Sabbath because I want to be like **Daniel's 3 friends**, refused to bow down. Doesn't matter what politics happen, votes—not leaving.

**V. IF YOU WANT MORE OF GOD, HAVE MORE OF SABBATH.** A. Admit, down underneath the surface, you have a soul that is really hungry for more of God. **Somewhere, sometime, we have to keep the Sabbath carefully enough to experience God, give God a chance to have more of those deep, magic moments with God, then we will long for the Sabbath, can't wait for the Sabbath?** Then we would say with these people, "**Better is one day with you, than 1000 days on Greek islands.** Better is one whole day with you, God, than a day at the Mall, or at the beach, or doing homework, or watching football."

B. **Do the things that make God real to you. Different for everybody.** Go to church. Somewhere. God says, where 2 or 3 gathered, He's there. More of Him when there's a group. Talked to a cousin of mine, where going to church—Church of Dan Smith. Dwight Nelson. Internet. **Hillsong** DVD, play at home--not the same. **Can look at pictures of the Taj Mahal**—not the same. Have to be there yourself.

C. **Nature. Stars. Beach. Desert. Music. Theological discussion Sabbath afternoon. Service.** Go help somebody. Don't know where, I'll tell you. **Learn where you feel God the more pure, the most concentrated—and do that on the Sabbath. Take out whatever gets in the way. Reason God says take stuff out—so you'll not be distracted—be with Him.** People talking to you, earplugs. Texting. Girl getting married said to him this week—can we have just one hour—no texting?

**APPEAL:** Story—**little girl** came into store. Pawnshop. People called him Pappy. Little girl came in, made little bell ring. Wanted to buy a present. Who for? Grandpa. Don't know what to get. How about a pocket watch. No. Opened the door again, like the bell. I want the bell. No, bell not for sale, been in my family 100 years. She left. He felt bad, no one in family to pass bell on to, only daughter hadn't seen in 10 years. Called little girl back, I'll sell you the bell. How much is it? How much do you have. \$2.47. It's exactly \$2.47. Later that night, closing the store, heard the bell, little girl—Did you change your mind? No, she grinned, Mommy says it's for you. And the mother walked in—"Hi, Dad!" Bell brought them back together. **What the Sabbath does—every week, been busy, running around, get a little apart from God—come back—with God. 1 day—better than 1000 days in the Greek Islands.**