Sermon at Bluff 10 June 2018

**The Sabbath was made for the good of man; man was not made for the Sabbath** (Mark 2.27)

Going by train to school – meant free travel at weekends. Often visiting grandad with mum on a Sunday afternoon. Somewhat tedious for a teenager.

Sunday often meant cold meat and veg, no buying, no games, no washing.

In Manchester training to be a minister, Sunday afternoons/evenings were boring. TEXT?

How about you? What has been your experience of Sundays? A day of rest, or restrictions?

Today these restrictions have largely disappeared – good or bad? Has pendulum swung too far?

Need to remember that most are not Christian/Jewish, thus restrictions do not make sense.

Sabbath comes from story of Creation – God rested on seventh day having finished initial creation.

Sabbath has two major elements:

[1] A Day of Rest

Some people try to cut back on sleep – but we mysteriously need it.

A Day of Rest is also needed by everyone, at some regularity - for me it is Monday!

It is why we have holidays, and, in some professions, sabbaticals (eg teachers and ministers).

If there are restrictions they are meant to enable that rest. Hence, no buying, washing…

The Day of Rest is not necessarily a day to do absolutely nothing.

And some things which seem like work might bring rest to others. TEXT.

[2] A Day to Honour God

Many do not recognise this, even in churches, with irregular attendance.

Again this does not necessarily mean camping at church for the day. Sundays meant SS (twice), and church in the evening, for my family when I was young.

Some might honour God by visiting family, volunteering at a rest-home, baking for the needy.

Mark 2.23-3.6: Jesus saw feeding and healing as honouring God, even if they involved work. TEXT.

It is important then that we examine all we do on Sunday asking:

Is this helpful for rest (for me and/or others for whom I have a responsibility)?

Does this honour God?

At the same time we need to avoid legalism, and imposing our answers on others. TEXT.