

violence, greed, and unhappiness, the fact that there is no rest, no worship of God? Even when people go on holiday they take their cares and problems with them (and many are still in contact with work via the mobile phone just in case something goes wrong there). There is no escape from the pressures of life. In the beginning God rested and gave humans a 'Sabbath day' a 'day of rest' but now mankind has moved so far from God's wise intentions.

Jesus Christ said that He would give us His peace, a peace with God, a peace through Jesus Christ where all that is wrong between us and God is taken away. Society is clearly wrong with God as we ignore Him and the provision of rest that He has suggested for us. When we come to the Lord Jesus and ask His forgiveness He becomes our peace, even in the stresses and strains of life. Because we belong to Jesus every day is a "Holy Day" as it is lived in His will. Every day is a day of God's provision and mercy in our lives.

Are you a victim of modern society with all its selfishness and occupation with possessions and pleasure? Do you leave God out of your life and suffer the consequence, the lack of peace with God that Jesus can bring you? Today, as you rush around the shops, go off to your sport or do whatever will occupy you this Sunday, stop and think, please realise that you are privileged to have the day off. Realise, however, that you are not making the best of this time or of your life. Come to Jesus Christ and serve Him. He will become your peace and you will want to give Him time in you life. The joy is that, whether busy or at rest, whether at work or at play, Jesus can make everyday a 'holiday', a 'Holy Day', a day serving God when the joy of the Lord will be your strength with the privilege of serving God and knowing His peace too.

Please pray the prayer below



Dear Lord Jesus

Thank you for helping me when I could not help myself. I confess to you that I have sinned and done things against the will of God. Please forgive me and cleanse me from all my sin.

Please come into my heart and change me so that I can truly serve you for the rest of my life. I realise that without you I have no hope in this world but that with you I have eternal life

Lord Jesus thank you. I now belong to you and I rejoice in you as my Saviour and can now truly call you Lord. Amen

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**The privilege
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The privilege of Sundays!

.There you are, out shopping on a Sunday. Have you ever thought about what a privilege it is to be able to have a day off, so that you can shop or do whatever you choose, on a Sunday? It was not always like this as not many centuries ago men and women had to work 7 days a week with no holidays at all.

The word holiday, and lots of folks in the UK live for their holidays, comes from the words 'Holy Day' when days off would be given to people to attend



compulsory religious festivals or 'Holy Days'. So the privilege of having a day off comes from religious service and was never intended to be a day for shopping. In the UK, however, that is exactly what it has become and many use the day off for shopping and other recreational activities. Dads take their boys to junior football or rugby; there are gym clubs, horse riding and almost as many sporting activities as you can think of, all which can be enjoyed on a Sunday.

Increasingly major sporting events like Premier League Football matches, athletics meetings and even the Olympic Games are all held on a Sunday. In the film "Chariots

of Fire", which is based on the true events of the 1924 Olympics, Eric Liddell, a well known Scottish Christian Minister, would not compete in any event on a Sunday as he believed the day to be "God's day", a Holy day, a day for worshipping God and not for pleasing ourselves. Liddell did not run the 100 metres his best event as it was run on a Sunday. He went on to win the 400 metres gold medal, a race not run on a Sunday. Lots of laws have been passed in the UK to protect citizens from having to work on Sundays, laws which also very much limit the opening hours of shops to prevent the increase of commercialism on Sunday. Shops and businesses being closed ensure rest time for workers as well as reducing the temptations for those not working on a Sunday.

Most religions have a "day off" during the week and statistics show how wise this, is as it has been proven that students who have a day of rest in the week perform better than those who work on all seven days. The Bible tells us that God rested on the seventh day having made the world, and He made the seventh day holy as a day of rest. God, as their creator, understands human beings and recognises their need for rest both physically and mentally. The seventh day was to be a day of rest, a day to worship God, a day when humans could turn from their labours and spend time giving service to God while at the same time receiving blessing from Him. It was to be a 'sweet smell' to God as savour of rest, only possible

when lives are free from the hustle and bustle that so often occupies them.

In this generation religion,



especially Christianity, has been fairly well discarded and the holiday, the Sunday, the day of rest, so often is turned into a day of alternative activity. Shops and businesses tell us that they need the extra revenue which "Sunday opening" brings them. Boys and girls are keen to play their sport, supporters to watch their favourite team and TV channels keen to spread the Premier League out over the



weekend to maximise revenue. Sundays, therefore are no longer days of rest. They are definitely not Holy Days, even if they are days off work, but rather days spent pleasing ourselves rather than thinking about God.

Maybe shopping is the new religion: spend, spend, spend, is the order of the day and coach companies even run trips to the major shopping centres on Sundays to feed this desire. Sport could also be the new religion; football supporters are said to 'worship' their favourite team and players and the famous Bill Shankly famously said that "football was 'more important' even than life or death!" All these are things which occupy us so that we can please ourselves, do what we want to do and so on. It is all self-centred rather than God-centred, perhaps the new religion is actually "Pleasing Myself" or "Indulging Myself" rather than pleasing God. The Bible talks about people who are lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. Is this what we have become?

Is this what is wrong with our society with all its stress,