

The following story is from Bible History.com about what a Sabbath walk is:

'Over the centuries the authorities within the rabbinical circles of Judaism found ways, from examining the miniscule details of the law, to increase the distance that an Israelite may travel on the Sabbath day. In ancient times they determined that one may travel on the Sabbath from within the city boundaries and this distance was fixed at 2,000 cubits. They based this on Joshua 3:4-5: "And they commanded the people, saying, When you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, ...then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it. Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about 2,000 cubits by measure; come not near it, they ye may know the way by which ye must go: for ye have not passed this way heretofore."

Then after some time the rabbis interpreted "place" to mean city so that it would be acceptable to travel 2,000 cubits outside his city limits on the Sabbath day. Then again later the Pharisees doubled the distance that one might travel by yet another minute detail. They inserted a rule that if one placed food preparations at another location, then that place figuratively became his abode and he may travel to there up to 2,000 cubits and then another 2,000 cubits which made the whole journey 4,000 cubits, ...or a little over a mile.

...In New Testament times and soon after, the Pharisees found another legal fiction and stretched the distance for traveling on the Sabbath a little farther. They theorized that if a person was to travel 4,000 cubits on the Sabbath day, then he would also need to return and thus they allowed 8,000 cubits as the standard.'

We may laugh at this, but are we really any different as we make our rules today and sometimes even calling them Biblical laws. An example of this is an American saying that we should not dance, smoke, drink (alcoholic beverage), or go with anybody who does. While we may refer to certain Old Testament laws as underlying principles, most of the time we make those issues law to fit our religious system. Are we really willing to be led by God's Spirit as He lives in us? If so, then each of us is individually responsible to God in abandonment and then our actions will reflect the state and attitude of our hearts. Then our freedom in Christ Jesus won't be a license to doing things that won't honor God. Instead, our freedom in our Messiah will be an expression of life that honors God in everything we do. It is false teaching that puts burdens on us. To top it off, people adjust these burdens over time as they feel they need to, like the Jews did with the Sabbath walk.

God doesn't call us to control anybody's life, but He does challenge each of us to keep ourselves accountable to the principles of honoring God in every area of our life. Since we still have the same mind and the same body, God teaches us that we need people to whom we should make ourselves accountable. To help ourselves, we personally may set limits and rules, but we shouldn't impose those on others. Often these limits help us with our weaknesses and they can be based on Biblical principles or personal preferences. If these issues are not really Biblical issues, then we should not try to make these specific issues fit God's Word. Once we do, we easily turn around and make God's Word say things that it doesn't. The fact that people in the Bible were meeting on the Sabbath or the first day of the week, doesn't imply that the Bible teaches that we should meet on either or both of those days. In the book of Acts, it shows that sometimes people met every day of the week... how is it that we didn't make that our rule? The Bible only mentions that we should gather together and that we should encourage one another. There are many other things that are mentioned as part of the believers having fellowship with one another, but they are practical examples of issues that were addressed by the local fellowships of believers. Later, various issues were incorporated into the church services as essential parts or rituals, even to the extent that some people over the centuries saw them as ordained by God. This is exactly what God did not want... instead, God wants us to meet Him and allow the underlying issues from Scripture to be addressed as relevant, for changing us from within. God wants the principles of His Word to become the foundation of our lives and not us making God's Word fit our ways. If God's principles are the foundation of our life, we won't try to bring our ways to others, but just bring God's Word, offering passages that draw them to God's principles. In this way, God can establish His fellowship among them and they seek ways of life that will honor God.

Related link:

- <http://www.bible-history.com/backd2/sabbath.html>