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BOOK

Charlie Kirk: 'The Lord's Day saves us from burnout'

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Stop in the name of God! This is not a call to silence the guns, end social injustices or put an end to abuses against the weakest in society. The title of the book released on Tuesday, 9 December penned by the well-known American activist, Charlie Kirk, who was assassinated on 10 September, refers to something more fundamental and primordial that our deteriorating Western culture has not only forgotten, but banned outright: the sanctification of the Sabbath. The idea that man should reserve one day of the week for God rather than Mammon is inconceivable in a culture that has sought to shut Heaven to men. 'Thou shalt have no other gods before me' is the commandment that the Dragon has stolen from the Creator and ordered the two Beasts to repeat to humanity, trapping them in a system of profit and forced entertainment.

In Europe, some categories of workers are still permitted to 'rest' on Sundays, but only so they can invest their time and money in supporting the tourism and leisure industries. Others must work so you can 'rest' in outlets, shopping centres and wellness

centres. While the law in Italy still stipulates twenty-four hours of rest every seven working days, this is only so that employees can then be more productive. In other words, nothing can be conceived as independent of or superior to work; everything is merely functional to it.

An attentive reader of the Holy Scriptures and the tradition of the Church will recognise this delirium as the mark of slavery par excellence, imposed by the devil on man so that he does not worship God. Those who have refused to serve God fear and hate only one thing: that people should stop their activities to worship God. The events of the Exodus are the paradigm of this incessant and frenetic activity of evil, which seeks to rob people of the time, and even the memory, to worship their God. 'The Egyptians made the children of Israel work hard. They made their lives bitter by forcing them to make bricks of clay and by all kinds of work in the fields' (Exodus 1:13-14).

Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh several times to convey the Lord's command: "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Let my people go, so that they may celebrate a festival to me in the wilderness". Pharaoh replied, "Who is the Lord that I should obey Him and let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, nor will I let Israel go!" (Ex. 5:1-2). As a type of the Antichrist, Pharaoh does not recognise the Lord, and therefore does not recognise His people's right and duty to stop and worship Him. Without a Lord, there can be no Lord's Day. If there is no Lord and no Lord's Day, then there is no human freedom.

Kirk's book is a cry of protest and resistance against a world that is antichristian to the core. It is a world that understands only the logic of the market, distraction and the objectification of people. It is a world in which stress, to the point of burnout, devours millions of people every year, causing physical and mental illness and destroying marital, parental and friendly relationships. Like millions of others with similar or less demanding workloads, Charlie Kirk was the perfect candidate to enter the spiral of psychophysical exhaustion in its many forms. However, it was observing the Sabbath that saved him from burnout, as his wife Erika Kirk reveals in the introduction to the book. Charlie didn't write a book about the Sabbath because he wanted to understand its potential impact on his life. He did it because he knew it worked. The Sabbath saved him'.

Embracing the logic of authentic rest, or that 'weekly mental health holiday' as Erika calls it, was not easy for him. It was a conquest achieved little by little, not always observed properly, but always with the awareness that 'if you choose not to observe the Sabbath, you are the one who misses out on the blessing. Not God.' In truth, every

commandment is for humanity, and every time humanity strays from the divine commandments, it is always humanity, both as individuals and as a society, who loses out. This happens without fail, even if we only realise it when it is too late. Even then, we are lost, unable to recognise the signals sent by our personal and social bodies, and unable to find the remedy. This is because we always rush to ask 'science' for solutions to humanity's problems, when only our Creator is able to show and give them to us.

Kirk helps us recognise and address the usual excuses that distract us from worshipping the Lord on the Sabbath. The first is the widespread feeling of guilt we experience when we allow ourselves to rest. 'If taking a day off makes you anxious or ashamed, then you have to ask yourself: what am I really worshipping? No idol condemns rest like the idol of productivity. This is the golden calf of the modern age.' The second excuse is 'I don't have time'. But the truth is that we don't really want to manage our time by setting priorities and eliminating frequent distractions, especially social media apps, which Kirk urges us to drastically reduce. 'What you will experience,' he writes, 'will not be abstinence; it will be an awakening.'

Furthermore, work must not become a form of servitude from which we cannot detach ourselves. We must organise our week so that on the Lord's Day, we are not disturbed by work calls and messages or constantly checking our phones, and we do not have to finish work. Kirk urges us not to procrastinate when it comes to planning our time, so that we can be free for God. We must not wait for better circumstances because they will never come. 'You will never be without commitments. Rest does not come by chance. You choose it. The Sabbath is not about having time; it is about deciding to stop, even when everything else tells you to keep going.' Rest requires courage. It means facing our fear that the world will collapse if we stop working. It means choosing trust over control.

The ability to experience rest and worship on the Lord's Day is a measure of a person and a society. The closer this ability approaches zero, the more the categories of utility and profit reign supreme and people are understood only in terms of their usefulness. The lower this temperature, the more people accept the chains of the Antichrist being imposed on them. Breaking the cycle of mere utility requires more than carving out time to think about oneself; one must reclaim one's being-for-God. It is only by turning to this principle, which transcends history, that we can connect with the principle of true freedom.

The sooner we realise that we have willingly accepted the chains that the Antichrist has brought us as if they were precious jewels by failing to observe the

Lord's Day, the sooner we will be liberated.

Kirk urges us: 'Let the Sabbath be your weekly rebellion' against the power that seeks to enslave us further.