

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED ABOUT THE SABBATH AND SUNDAY —

There is no question, in the Bible, about the truth of the Sabbath day. The united testimony regarding the Bible Sabbath—the seventh-day sabbath—is very clear and very obvious. Yet, in spite of this, there are those who have questions.

There is a basic problem underlying most of them. It is a fact that the majority of Christians today are observing a different day of the week as sacred to their worship of God than the one He commanded them in Holy Scriptures, and they are seeking for reasons to explain this puzzling situation to their own satisfaction. Frankly, in the thinking of so many in our world, it is far simpler to excuse the situation than to return to obedience to the Fourth Commandment.

Then there are those who, in an honest and sincere heart, would rather obey God,—in spite of any inconvenience it might cost them. But when they have expressed their concerns, they have been handed these "questions" and "problems" which, over the years, theology schools have invented in order to pacify the people.

If a man had only the Bible to guide him, there is no doubt which day he would keep as the Sabbath. The problem is not with the Bible Sabbath; it is with this systematic mystifying of men's minds.

Fortunately, there are also answers as well. And we need answers, for this entire matter is a serious one. God has said one thing and men today are saying another.

When the call comes to serve the living God, may we not be as the men in the days of Elijah: "And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, 'How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow Him, but if Baal, then follow him.' And the people answered him not a word" (1 Kings 18:21).

Oh, that in response to the challenge, "Choose ye this day, whom ye will serve," given in Joshua 24:15, there may come the ringing reply, "The Lord our God will we serve, and His voice will we obey." Verse 24.

1 - THE SABBATH IS "JEWISH"

This is a basic objection you will find against the precious Sabbath that the God of Heaven has in love given you. The inference is to be found repeatedly in the writings of men who over the centuries have opposed the Bible Sabbath. The basic thought here is that the Bible Sabbath—the seventh-day Sabbath—was only for the Jewish race:

(1) "If I keep the seventh-day Sabbath, people might think I am 'Jewish.'"

Scripture support for this idea: None.

This charge is not true. I myself have lived in many communities in America, both urban and rural, and have very openly kept the Bible Sabbath all of my adult life—over 45 years—and at no time has anyone ever said or implied that I was Jewish for doing so. But please understand, I would keep it no matter what people might call me. I am not ashamed of the fact that I obey God,—and why should you be ashamed either? It is a wonderful thing to be able to obey the will of our Heavenly Father by the enabling grace of His Son. All the opprobrium of man amounts to

nothing when compared with it. The shame is not on us in our obedience—for God is not ashamed of us. The shame is on those who, understanding the issues, remain in disobedience. We dare not be ashamed of God and obedience to Him.

(2) "The Bible Sabbath is from the Jews; it isn't from God."

Scripture support for this: None.

Repeatedly in Scripture, the Sabbath is called the "Sabbath of the Lord thy God." One example would be in the Fourth Commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt not do any work."—Exodus 20:8-10. It is not the Sabbath of the Jews; it is "the Sabbath of the Lord thy God! "And it is the Sabbath of Jesus as well, for He called Himself the Lord of it (Mark 2:28). It is the Lord's day—of Jesus our Lord and of His Father.

(3) "The Bible Sabbath came to us from the Jews and was only given us by the Jews."

Scripture support: None.

The Sabbath was given to us 2,000 years before there was a Jew. That is a long time! 2,000 years! It was given to us on the seventh day of Creation Week by the God of Heaven, our Creator (Genesis 2:1-3). It is one of the first things we are told in Scripture. Two thousand years later, Abraham the Hebrew, ancestor of the Jews, was born.

(4) "The Bible Sabbath didn't exist before the time of the Jews. It wasn't even known until it was given on Mount Sinai, in the Ten Commandments of Exodus 20."

Scripture support: The fact that the Sabbath is included in the Ten Commandments, in Exodus 20, is said to prove that it was not known by human beings before then.

The Sabbath was given to mankind at the conclusion of Creation Week. "And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made."—Genesis 2:2-3. When God created man, He did not leave him to wander around, trying to figure out his own moral rules. He is a far better Father than that. He explained, to our first parents, the Moral Law; and they, in turn, shared this information with their descendants.

There can be no sin where there is no law for sin is the transgression of the law: "Where no law is, there is no transgression."—Romans 4:15. "Sin is not imputed [reckoned or counted] when there is no law."—Romans 5:13. "Sin is the transgression of the law."—1 John 3:4. For it is only by the law that we have a knowledge of sin: "For by the law is the knowledge of sin."—Romans 3:20. "I had not known sin, but by the law."—Romans 7:7. And there was so much sin, violence and transgression of God's law by the time of Noah that, for this reason the wicked, were destroyed by the Flood (Gen 6:5-7, 11, 13). Sin was in the world before the Law was given on Sinai—and the Law was in the world before that time also: "For until the law sin was in the world,—but sin is not imputed [considered as sin] when there is no law" (Romans 5:13). Adam sinned (Romans 5:12), and so did Cain (Genesis 4:7,10-11), and the Sodomites (Genesis 13:12-13; 2 Peter 2:6). But, like Noah, Abraham was different than others in the world—he obeyed God and His laws. He received special approval by the Lord "because that Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws" (Genesis 26:5).

Before reaching Mount Sinai (which occurred in Exodus 19:1), the people of God were tested as to whether they would obey the Sabbath Commandment that they obviously already knew about.

Thoughtfully read Exodus 16. It was at that time that the people were first given the manna. The giving of this special food (which continued to be given to them for forty years) was clearly an ongoing test of their willingness to keep God's holy Sabbath. "That I [the Lord] may prove them, whether they will walk in My law, or no" (Exodus 16:4). "And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread . . . And he [Moses] said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord" (verses 22-23; cf. 24-25). "Six days shall ye gather it, but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none. And it came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. And the Lord said unto Moses, 'How long refuse ye to keep My commandments and My laws'" (verses 26-28; cf. 29-30, 35)?

From all the above evidence, it is clear that God did not wait 2,500 years after Creation to give the people a moral code to govern their lives. "Sin is the transgression of the law."—1 John 3:4. Where there is no law there is no sin. Each of these four verses says that: Romans 4:15; 5:13; 3:20; 7:7. Yet there was sin from Adam onward (Romans 5:12; Genesis 4:7,10-11; Genesis 2:7-8; 2 Peter 2:7, 8). Abraham obeyed God's commandments (Genesis 26:5). That is what set him apart. May you and I be different too: willing to obey God in a world which does not consider obedience to be very important.

(5) "The Bible Sabbath was given us by the Jews through Moses."

Bible support: The fact that the Sabbath is in the Ten Commandments given at Mount Sinai.

Most of this argument has been covered above. The Sabbath was given us at Creation by our Creator, and 2,500 years later it was written down by the hand of God and then carried down to the people by His servant Moses. At no time in history did the "Jews" give us the Sabbath. To imply such a thing is an insult against God. If, out of love for you, I gave you \$10,000 and you told everyone that someone else had given it to you instead, you would be insulting me. But if I were your God, it would show rebellion and blasphemy on your part. Let us face facts as they really are. It is a serious matter to speak untruths about God. And this is what some men are doing. And it is an equally serious matter to accept those untruths when the Word of God clearly reveals them to be untrue.

(6) "The Sabbath was given only to the Jews."

Bible support: None.

This sacred day of worship was given to all mankind a score of centuries before a Hebrew existed. Gentiles were promised a blessing if they would keep it. Read Isaiah 56:2-7. It was faithfully kept throughout Old Testament, as well as New Testament times, by the people of God—whatever their nationality might be. In Matthew 24, Jesus spoke of coming events at the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world. In that chapter, Jesus said to observe the Bible Sabbath later; not only thirty-nine years after His death (at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70)—but even down to the end of the world as well (Matthew 24:3, 20).

The Bible Sabbath will even be kept in the New Earth (Isaiah 66:22-23). There is never a word or hint in Scripture that the races of mankind are not to observe it. Actually, there is a basic point here that people generally do not recognize: In Bible times, both in the Old and New Testaments,—nearly everyone who was a follower of the true God was a Hebrew. Because of this fact, it is possible for one to say, "Well, the Sabbath was only given for the Jews to keep." This is

a subtle argument, yet fallacious, for the truth is that this argument can equally be used against nearly every other Bible truth, just as well as against the Bible Sabbath. Everything God gave to mankind in Scripture came through Hebrew writers and the Jewish race. It can be used to set aside baptism, tithing, salvation in Christ, Christian marriage, or the Lord's Supper. And it can be used to nullify the other nine of the Ten Commandments as well: theft, adultery, respect for parents, lying, swearing, etc. False arguments show themselves for what they are—false. They are only an excuse for disobedience to the will of God.

2 - "THE SABBATH HAS BEEN ABOLISHED."

This is the second basic excuse for not obeying God's direct command.

Usually it is worded something like this: "The Moral Law of Ten Commandments and the Fourth Commandment—the Sabbath Commandment—have been abolished. We need no longer obey them." Can anyone really believe that God destroyed the moral law that governs mankind? Can any person really believe that Jesus died, so that sin could be taken to heaven and immortalized? Are you and I to believe that rebellion against obedience to God was legalized at Calvary, and that lawlessness is now godliness? It is remarkable how far the theology schools of our day will go in their determined resistance against the authority of Heaven, that they will train the future ministers of our churches, that the people need not keep God's Moral Code for mankind—the Ten Commandments!

This argument takes several forms. Let us examine several of them.

(1) "Jesus said that He came to destroy the Law."

Scripture Support: Matthew 5:17.

Here is the passage they quote for this purpose. Yet, in reality, far from declaring a destruction of the moral law, it is a powerful prediction by Jesus of the law's indestructibility, as well as a startling warning to those who would practice or teach the breaking of it:

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets [the writings of the prophets—the Bible]. I am not come to destroy [them], but to fulfill [them]. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven. But whosoever shall do and teach them,—the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."—Matthew 5:17-19.

After reading that clear statement, I would not wish to be in the shoes of the man who practices or teaches the people disobedience to the Law of God! Would you?

Jesus says here, "Do not for a moment think that I have come down to earth to destroy the Law or the writings of the Prophets—the Bible. I have not come to destroy either of them. Instead I have come for their fulfilling." The key word here in Matthew 5:17 is "fulfill." The theology schools teach their students that it means "abolish." That is foolishness. Twice in verse 17 Jesus said that He definitely had not come to "destroy" the law. "Abolish" means destroy. Jesus came not to destroy the law but to fulfill it? "Fulfill" obviously does not mean destroy. Let us examine the meaning of the word "fulfill."

The word "fulfill" in the Greek is plerossi, and comes from the verb pleroo, "to fill up, or make full," and the noun pleroma, "a filling up, or fullness." And what does that mean? It obviously does not mean "destroy," or kataluo. See Matthew 26:61 for an example of how kataluo is used.

Instead "fulfill" means "to fill up in one's life, make one's experience in it richer and deeper, to make it more fully one's own."

In order to understand this, let us look at other places where the Greek word for "fulfill" is used in the New Testament:

"These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full"—1 John 1:4.

The same word is used here: pleroo. John was not writing the believers so that their joy would be destroyed or abolished,—but that it would become more rich, full, and genuine. This is what Jesus wants for us: that His Moral Law of Ten Commandments may, by His enabling grace, become part of us.

Men will say, "Oh yes, God writes His law in our hearts," and then they will add, "And that's why we don't have to obey it anymore." But this is ridiculous. How can a law be written on my heart if I never obey it? Such a condition may be hypocrisy—but it surely is not Christianity. The theologians need to come down to real life where the rest of us live. Here is another verse where the Greek word for "fulfill, fill, fill fully" is used:

"These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full"—John 15:11.

Here are still more Bible verses where pleroma is used: John 16:24, 2 John 12, John 3:29, and John 17:13. Each one speaks about how Christ intends that His joy may more fully become ours. Each is translated "fulfill" in the Revised Version, and in each case pleroo is the original word. Consider these passages: "Fulfill my joy" in Phiippians 2:2 (cf. Acts 2:28). "Whereof I am made a minister—to fulfill the Word of God [margin: fully to preach the Word of God]"—Colossians 1:25. "And bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, and having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled [made full, made complete]."—2 Corinthians 10:5-6.

Something was destroyed at the cross of Christ, but it was not the law of God. It was the power of sin in the lives of all who will accept Christ's atonement and who, in humble faith, daily submit to the teachings of His Word, the leading of His Spirit, and obedience to God.

"Sin is the transgression of the law."—1 John 3:4. Jesus did not die to destroy the law and enable us more easily to sin. He died to destroy the power of the evil one in our lives and enable us to obey the law. Jesus said that it is easier for heaven and earth to dissolve into nothingness, than for the smallest part of the law of God—the dotting of an "i" or the crossing of a "t"—to pass away (Matthew 5:18).

(2) "The law was nailed to the cross, so we don't need to keep the Sabbath."

Scriptural support: Colossians 2:14 and Ephesians 2:15.

Here are those passages:

"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us . . . and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross."—Colossians 2:14.

"Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances."—Ephesians 2:15.

This does not mean that Jesus took a hammer and nailed a roll of ordinances to the cross. But it does mean that some law or set of laws ended at that time. What law would this be? We know that the Ten Commandments, the moral law of God, did not end at the cross. It is just as wrong today for one to steal, kill, commit adultery, or break any of the Ten Commandments as it ever was. Christ did not come to destroy this moral law; He came to fulfill it and give us a perfect example of obedience to it. "I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love."—John 15:10. "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments."—1 John 5:3. "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked."—1 John 2:6. "Leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps."—1 Peter 2:21. "As His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read."—Luke 4:16. "Jesus Christ: the same yesterday, and today, and forever."—Hebrews 13:8.

Jesus did not come to destroy the moral law. Remember that it was because this law could not be done away with—that Christ had to die. If the Moral Standard given us by Heaven could have been set aside, then Christ need not have died to meet its holy demands. God's holy moral law is as enduring as His own character.

—But Colossians 2:14 and Ephesians 2:15 speaks about "ordinances" which were done away at the cross. What is the meaning of this? In order to understand this, we need to find out what are the different regulations given in the Bible.

First and foremost, there is the moral, ten-commandment law, written by God on tables of stone (Exodus 31:18). Christ said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law."

Second, there are the ceremonial, sacrificial ordinances—the ritual laws of worship. These are the laws which were nailed to the cross. "The law of commandments contained in ordinances." "The handwriting of ordinances that was against us" (Ephesians 2:15, Colossians 2:14). Gone were the blood offerings, the meat and drink offerings, the special yearly holy days and yearly sabbath days "which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ" (Colossians 2:17). These typical services, their special feasts and meals and yearly holy days, such as the Passover and the Feast of First Fruits (not the weekly Sabbath of the Ten Commandments), all pointed forward to Christ's sacrifice and death on the cross. And with His death they ended. For this reason, Paul said, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days—which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is Christ." Colossians 2:16-17. These sacrificial laws were only imperfect shadow laws foretelling the death of Christ. Hebrews 10:1-4 describes these "shadow laws" which foretold and ended at Calvary:

"For the law having a shadow of good things good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."—Hebrews 10:1-4.

At the time of Paul, the Jews who opposed the followers of Jesus scornfully told them that they must continue to eat the Passover meals and be present at Jerusalem for the three large yearly feasts. But Paul explained that this did not matter anymore.

The very same hour that Christ died, the great veil of the Jewish Temple at Jerusalem was torn from top to bottom (Matthew 27:51), thus ending the ceremonial system and its laws. In the figure of Paul's speech, they had been nailed to His cross. Calvary is like a great building to which we must flee in order to be saved. The ceremonial laws are like the scaffolding of the building, to be removed when the building is finished. But the Moral Law is the foundation of the

building. It is the basis of His government and the objective of His plan to save us—to enable us to obey His moral principles and live godly lives.

The Moral Law of Ten Commandments is really quite different than the ceremonial law of sacrifices: The Moral Law is a perfect law (Psalm 19:7, 119:172,142, Romans 7:12) while the ceremonial law was imperfect (Hebrews 7:18,19, 10:1-4). The Moral Law is in itself spiritual (Romans 7:14), while the ceremonial law was not in itself spiritual (Hebrews 9:10). The Moral Law was spoken directly by God Himself (Deuteronomy 4:12,13, 22; Exodus 20:1), the ceremonial law was spoken by Moses (Leviticus 1:1, 2; 7:37, 38, etc.).

The Moral Law was written by the Lord upon two tables of stone (Deuteronomy 5:22, Exodus 31:18); the ceremonial law was written by Moses in a book (Exodus 34:27, Deuteronomy 31:9). The Moral Law is eternal, requiring obedience from all (Romans 3:31, Matthew 5:17, Luke 16:17, Matthew 19:17, 1 Corinthians 7:19, Revelation 22:14). The ceremonial law was abolished at the cross; and therefore obedience to it is not required from any today (Ephesians 2:15, Colossians 2:14-17, Acts 15:24).

Paul warns against any longer regarding the ceremonial meat, drink, and yearly sabbaths of the sacrificial laws (Colossians 2:16). In Romans 14, he again speaks at length about this problem of the ceremonial meats and drinks that some of the converted Jews were demanding be kept by all the followers of Jesus. Carefully read the entire chapter.

Apparently, they were also demanding that the ceremonial yearly sabbaths (the Passover, Pentecost, etc.) continue to be kept also. Paul here asks for tolerance among the brethren. "One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." Romans 14:5. One man thinks that these yearly feasts are important and should be kept. Another thinks that every day is the same, as far as such matters are concerned. Since these are not part of the moral law of God, let each do as he thinks best. But regarding such things as adultery, lying, cheating, Sabbathbreaking, or murder—there is no question. Through the enabling grace of Christ we are to obey this Moral Code.

3 - "THE SABBATH CAN BE KEPT ON ANY DAY OR NO DAY AT ALL."

Although this does not sound reasonable, some still say it.

(1) "The Sabbath can be kept on any day of the week. All we need do is keep one day in seven."

Scriptural support: None.

In the beginning, God set aside the seventh of the first seven days as a day of rest (Genesis 2:1-3), and He commanded us to keep this day. "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt not do any work" Exodus 20:8-10. He is obviously speaking about the seventh day of the week, not one day in seven in the week.

Just four chapters earlier, He forever settled this question, when some of His people decided not to keep the seventh-day Sabbath. Carefully read again Exodus 16 (the story of the giving of manna). It is very clear that the commandment that man should keep the seventh day of the week came from God. Read Exodus 16. God considers it to be a serious matter.

The Sabbath can be kept on any day of the week—only if God says so. But He never did. To say that it doesn't matter is to play games with ourselves. If I wish, I can suggest doubts to myself about the plain statements of the Word of God until I am deceived. But friend, this is not a safe

thing to do. Always deal truly with yourself. Some people select their own day while others believe they should obey God.

(2) "I keep every day holy."

Scriptural support: None.

The man who says he keeps "every day holy," is the man who actually keeps no day holy. The man who keeps the seventh-day Sabbath, as his Creator directed, is the man who has a closer walk with his God all through the week. "All days are holy" really means "no day is holy" and soon the principle of Sabbath observance disappears entirely from the mind. For this reason God gave us something very definite. He knows us better than we know ourselves.

(3) "The Sabbath can't be kept because we don't know what day it is. The Bible Sabbath has been lost over the centuries."

Scriptural support: None.

The weekly cycle has never changed. In brief, the week has come down from Creation unchanged. The Sabbath, given at the beginning of our world and written on rock 2,500 years later, was kept by the people of God down through the ages. God has had a line of faithful followers in every era of earth's history. They have never been blotted out. When, in the time of Noah, there were only eight left—God stepped in and by a flood of waters saved them and destroyed the wicked. If time had been lost by the time of Jesus, He would have set it right. His keeping of the Bible Sabbath set a standard for His followers. The seventh day of Jesus is to be our day, for He is Lord of it (Mark 2:28).

At the time that Christ was on earth, the calendar being used was called the "Julian Calendar." This is the calendar under which Jesus kept the Bible Sabbath. His followers kept it after His death (Luke 23:56), and later in their missionary work (Acts 13:14-16, 40-46, 16:12-15, 17:1-4).

We know, from historical records, that the majority of Christians kept the true Sabbath for the first five centuries after the time of Christ. After that a persecuted minority continued to keep it during the centuries which followed. All during this time, the Julian Calendar continued in effect—and multiplied millions of historical and business records over those years witness to the fact. Then, in 1582, an error in the length of the year was corrected. The Julian Calendar was 365.25 solar days long, but the length of the year is actually slightly different—365.242195 days in length. Because of this discrepancy, as the centuries passed, the seasons shifted. This shift amount to ten days by A.D. 1582, and so the "Gregorian Calendar" was initiated to remedy the problem. It corrected the ten-day error and also began our leap-year cycle. Here is the calendar when the change came:

OCTOBER 1582

— 1 2 3 4 15 16
17 18 19 20 21 22 23
24 25 26 27 28 29 30
31 — — — — — —

Carefully observe that the week was not changed! only the length of that month and year. The week had always been seven days in length. That weekly cycle did not change.

Spain, Portugal, and Italy adopted the new calendar at once. France waited until December of that year. Half of Germany adopted it in 1583; the other half waited until 1700. About that time the Netherlands, Sweden, and Denmark adopted the new calendar also. England did not accept it until 1752. Yet all through those years, when it was Saturday in Spain it was Saturday in England. The NUMBERS or DATES of the month were different, but the DAYS of the week remained the same.

Astronomers tell us that there has never been any change in the weekly cycle. Historians tell us the same thing. The most learned reference books and encyclopedias in the world agree with this. The week has never changed. The unchangeable nature of the Sabbath is even proven by the languages of mankind. Dr. William Mead Jones of London, England, analyzed 160 ancient and modern languages—and found that 108 of them call the seventh day of the week the "Sabbath." This is three out of five of the known languages of mankind!

But do not forget the Jew: Nearly every ancient race of mankind has been obliterated through warfare and intermarriage, except the Hebrew race. God has preserved them alive as a living testimony of the truth of the Bible and the Bible Sabbath,—the seventh-day Sabbath. For ages the Jewish race has kept the Bible Sabbath. And what day is the Bible Sabbath? Ask any Jew. He will tell you it is Saturday—the seventh day of the week.

Satan hates the Sabbath and wants to destroy it—simply because it comes from God. But down through the centuries, God has, by a miracle, preserved the seven-day weekly cycle and His holy Sabbath.

4 -"WE ARE NOW TO KEEP SUNDAY INSTEAD OF SABBATH."

(1) "I keep Sunday because it is traditional—because everyone else does."

Scriptural Support: None.

Worship is the reason for the Sabbath. It is the only day God ever gave us to worship Him on. "In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."—Matthew 15:9. That which God gives us is the truth. We are to believe it and obey it. "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth."—John 17:17. "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."—1 Timothy 2:4. "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."—2 Thessalonians 2:13. "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit."—1 Peter 1:22. It is not safe to refuse obedience to the obvious truths of God's Word. "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination." Proverbs 28:9. "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God."—John 7:17, R. V.

Our safety alone is in obedience to the clear Word of God. "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."—Acts 20:30. "We ought to obey God rather than men." Acts 5:29. "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."—Revelation 12:17. "Every plant which My heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up."—Matthew 15:13. "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen . . . come out of her My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."—Revelation 18:2, 4. "Here are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."—Revelation 22:14.

(2) "I keep Sunday in honor of the Resurrection."

Scriptural Support: None.

The problem is that God never told you or me to keep Sunday in honor of the resurrection of Christ—or for any other reason. But He decidedly and repeatedly told us to keep holy the seventh day of the week. What are the greatest events in history? Creation and Calvary and the Second Advent stand out. In Gethsemane on Thursday night and on the cross on Friday morning and afternoon, our salvation hung in the balance. By sundown Friday it was all settled. The price had been paid. The salvation of those who would accept it was assured. Then came the Sabbath day of rest, and Jesus our Lord rested in the tomb.

On Sunday morning, He rose and another work week began. Christ began working again. Mary was told not to detain Him for He had yet to ascend to heaven—which He did that day. A long trip to heaven and back again. And a visit to the fearful disciples on a road to Emmaus that evening and in an upper room where other disciples were hiding from the Jewish leaders. Frankly, the resurrection of Christ is in no way as important as is Calvary. Those who wish to abandon a clear command of God to keep the seventh day for another day, would do well to keep Friday holy in honor of Calvary. —But we keep a day holy because God says to, not because we decide to! Let us not imagine that we can abolish part of God's Ten Commandments and substitute our own!

Someone will say "I wish we still had a memorial of Christ's resurrection." Actually, Jesus gave us a memorial which combines His crucifixion and resurrection. And He commanded us to observe it.

This definite memorial is baptism. The death and resurrection of Christ are symbolized by the ordinance of baptism, and by partaking of it we partake of that experience with Him. This double symbolism is clearly explained by Paul:

"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin [the breaking of the law; 1 John 3:4] that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ—were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father,—even so we also should [rise and] walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted [buried] together in the likeness of His death, we shall be raised also in the likeness of His resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."—Romans 6:1-6.

As we follow the Bible pattern of baptism by immersion we are enabled to vividly recall the experience of Christ's death, burial and resurrection to life again.

In contrast, the Sundaykeeper, by instituting a certain day in remembrance of the resurrection, makes quite pointless the institution of baptism which was given by Heaven as the intended means of recalling the resurrection event. Perhaps that is why most churches have reduced the ordinance of baptism to the sprinkling of a few drops of water, a procedure which conveys no idea whatever of "baptism into death" or of rising again to walk in newness of life (Romans 6:3-6).

Some say that they keep Sunday because it is the "great memorial of our redemption." This is not true. The sign or symbol or memorial of our redemption is the Bible Sabbath. Our keeping of it is the sign by which all men shall know that we belong to God our Creator and that it is He, and not we ourselves, who is saving us from sin and will ultimately redeem us from this evil world. The seventh-day Sabbath is the seal of the law and the sign that He is our Creator (Exodus 31:16-17). And it is the sign that He is our Redeemer. "Moreover also I gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that

sanctify them."—Ezekiel 20:12. His Sabbath kept in our lives is the sign that we belong to Him. "And hallow My Sabbaths, and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God."—Ezekiel 20:20. The Bible Sabbath is the sign given by our Heavenly Father, that He is sanctifying or preparing us for eternal life. "Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you."—Exodus 31:13.

(3) "I keep Sunday because Jesus changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday."

Scriptural support: None.

The preceding objection, along with this one and the next two, are four of the most frequently heard reasons for keeping the first day of the week holy. Yet all four are without a Scriptural basis. The theological seminaries teach these excuses to their questioning young ministerial students, in answer to their queries of concern as to why Christians keep Sunday when the Bible never says so. Then upon graduation, they go out to the local churches and share these ideas with their church members when they ask about the Bible Sabbath and why it is not kept. And on it goes, generation after generation. The problem here is that we go to men for our answers when we should go to God and to His Word.

Jesus never changed the Bible Sabbath to Sunday. He did not do it during His earthly life, as recorded in the four Gospels, and He did not do it at any other time. Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath (Matthew 12:8, Mark 2:28), because He made it (Genesis 2:1-3); for He is the Creator (John 1:3, Colossians 1:16, Hebrews 1:1-3).

It is His day, the Lord's Day (Revelation 1:10). While on earth it was His custom to keep the Bible Sabbath and thus give us a careful example of obedience to it (Luke 4:16). He magnified the law and made it honorable (Isaiah 42:21) as he rebuked man-made changes in His laws (Matt 15:9, 6). He told us the Sabbath was not made for a certain race—but for "man"—mankind—you and me (Mark 2:27).

Just before His death He predicted the destruction of Jerusalem thirty-nine years later, in A.D. 70, and the end of the world (Matthew 24); and He cautioned His followers to continue to carefully observe the Sabbath when those terrible events should come to pass years, and even centuries, later (Matthew 24:3, 20). He carefully instructed His disciples to keep His day holy, and He wanted them to "remember the Sabbath day" (Exodus 20:8) long after He had returned to heaven. No, there is no word, no hint anywhere in Scripture that Jesus ever changed the Sabbath to Sunday.

(4) "I keep Sunday because the disciples changed the Sabbath to Sunday."

Scriptural support: None.

The disciples would have no more right to change one of the Ten Commandments than you or I would. What man has a right to change the law of God? Only our Creator, the One who gave us the Moral Law and the Sabbath, would have this right.

The followers of Jesus faithfully kept the Bible Sabbath after His death (Luke 23:56), and later in their missionary work (Acts 13:14-16, 40-46; 16:12-15, 17:1-4). They declared that we ought to obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29); and Paul could sincerely say of himself and his fellow believers: "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law" (Romans 3:31). Indeed, the Word of God was being fulfilled, that the Gentiles would one day faithfully keep the Sabbath that the Jews were desecrating (Isaiah 56:3-7). Neither the least

disciple nor the greatest apostle dared to presume to change the law of God. Nor could they have done so, even if they had tried. No man has successfully been able to do this, although there have been men (such as the pope of Rome) who have claimed such authority.

(5) "I know the Bible Sabbath is the seventh day, but I keep Sunday because it is the Lord's Day."

Scriptural support: Revelation 1:10

There is only one verse of Scripture which is used to prove this, and it does not provide such proof. Here it is:

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet."—Revelation 1:10.

John was here speaking of a day quite familiar to him, but a day not specifically named in this verse. Nothing is said here about Sunday. What day was John speaking of? As usual, Scripture is the key to the truths of His Word. Only Scripture can properly explain Scripture. On a certain day, John the Revelator was in vision and saw Christ as well as many future events. John said that day was the Lord's Day (Revelation 1:10). What day was it? It obviously was the day belonging to the Lord. The Bible tells us what day that was.

It is the Day of the Lord. The Bible Sabbath is the day unto the Lord (Exodus 16:23, 25; 31:15; 35:2), the day of the Lord (Exodus 20:10. Leviticus 23:3, Deuteronomy 5:4), and His own day (Isaiah 58:13). Read each of those verses; they clearly name the Bible Sabbath to be the day of the Lord.

Jesus is the Creator who gave us the Sabbath (Eph 3:9, John 1:3, Colossians 1:16, Hebrews 1:2, Genesis 2:1-3), and John had heard Him call Himself "the LORD of the Sabbath day" (Matthew 12:8, Mark 2:28). John well-knew which day was the Lord's Day. This day is the Memorial Day of the Creator (Genesis 2:1-3, Exodus 31:17) and the Memorial Day of the Redeemer (Ezekiel 20:12, 20).

It is the Lord's Day—a day that God wants to share with you. The best day of them all—the Bible Sabbath day—the seventh day.

The time in which John lived helps explain why he used "the Lord's day" as a synonym for the Sabbath as he wrote the book of Revelation. Christianity was coming into ever greater conflict with pagan Rome. The Roman emperors were often deified—called "Lord" and "God"—and worship to them was being required on pain of death. At that time, there were "emperor days" (such as his birthday), at which time religious celebrations were held. The day on which a Caesar visited a certain city was ever afterward considered a holiday there and a day on which he was worshiped. The emperor Domitian was "accustomed to call himself, and to be called, 'Lord and God.'"—Phillip Schaff, History of the Christian Church, 8th edition, Vol. 2, p. 44.

John was banished to the Island of Patmos during Domitian's reign; and, while there, he was given special visions which he wrote down in the Revelation. He saw the glory of his Lord, and he called Him "King of kings and Lord of lords." How meaningful this was to the Christians who would read in the Revelation of the history of pagan and papal Rome and their efforts to make themselves "Lord and God." For untold centuries, faithful followers of Christ died rather than call caesars and popes "Lord and God." John was already being introduced to the persecuting power of Rome; and, as he prepared in chapter one to speak of the glory of Christ, he declared HIM to be the Lord—Lord of His Day, and Lord of those who accepted him and His Day. We live at the

end of time. Let us today come and worship Him on His Day—the day of the true Lord, the Lord of heaven and earth. The proof of His Lordship is His Creatorship (Revelation 4:11)—which the Bible Sabbath shall memorialize through all eternity. Come, let us worship our Maker and prepare for the magnificent worship services of the future: "For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make, shall remain before Me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the Lord."—Isaiah 66:22-23.

(6) "I keep Sunday because it is the Christian Sabbath."

Scriptural support: None.

Sunday is not the Sabbath of the Christians in the Bible, nor is it the Sabbath of the Christians in the early centuries afterward. However, we can properly call it "the Catholic sabbath," for it was the bishops of Rome (later called "popes ") who first required that Christians observe it. It was half-pagan philosophers of Alexandria in Egypt who first suggested it to Christians, but it was the Roman bishops who first demanded it. All this is repeatedly told us in history. We dare not call it the "Christian Sabbath," for many Christians of earlier ages were martyred because they refused to keep Sunday sacred.

Sunday has never been the Sabbath of Christ. And we would rather have the Sabbath of Christ than all the sabbaths that man can invent. Jesus Himself told us, "In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."—Matthew 15:9.

It may come as a surprise to some, but it is a historical fact that Christians never called Sunday the "Sabbath" until the seventeenth century—over sixteen hundred years after the time of Christ. Before that time, the word "Sabbath" was applied only to the seventh day of the week—the Bible Sabbath. But in 1595, Dr. Nicholas Bownd (or Bound), a learned Puritan clergyman of Norton in Suffolk, England, set forth the notion that the Sunday is the "Christian Sabbath." Such an idea had never been imagined before. Everyone knew that the Sabbath was the seventh day. At first this "Puritan Sabbath theory" was opposed by the Church of England as a novelty so utterly new that it was denounced as cunning heresy and rebellion against the state church of England. Even King James I, who authorized the King James translation of the Bible, denounced the "Christian Sabbath" idea. Sunday was not the Sabbath and everyone knew it. But, in almost one generation, the change was made; for, by 1750, churchgoers in England were generally calling Sunday "the Sabbath." And thus it has come down to our own day.

5 - "WE NEVER WERE SUPPOSED TO KEEP THE SABBATH."

This objection takes various forms. In order to avoid obeying a clear commandment of God, some will say "the Sabbath was only made for Adam and Eve," in spite of the fact that, down through the ages of Scripture, the Sabbath commandment was often repeated. Some others say "the Sabbath is not to be kept till the New Earth." But again Scripture proof is lacking. God's people in the Old Testament and Jesus and His disciples in the New—all kept the Bible Sabbath. And here are two similar objections:

(1) "The Sabbath was made for God, not for man."

Scriptural support: Exodus 20:10.

Here is part of this verse: "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord Thy God." That is said to be the proof of this strange theory, that the Sabbath is for God and not for mankind.

But here is the rest of this verse: "In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates."

And there is the verse just before it: "Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work, but . . ."

And so it goes all through Scripture. The Sabbath that our Creator rested upon is the Sabbath that He gave us to rest upon. Jesus said, "The Sabbath was made for man." Mark 2:27. That is clear and should settle the matter.

(2) "The first Sabbath was long ages of time, and we can't keep it today."

Scriptural support: None.

The thought here is that each day of Creation Week was thousands of years in length. If this were true, then Adam was made on the sixth day (Genesis 1:26, 31) which was thousands of years in length; and this was followed by the seventh day (Genesis 2:1-3), supposedly of "thousands of years, "when God rested on the seventh day and blessed and hallowed and dedicated it. Following this, Adam fell into sin and was driven from the Garden (Genesis 3). This would mean that Adam lived for many thousands of years before the Sabbath was first given. This, of course, is not true. Adam died at the age of 930 (Genesis 5:5). And even stronger language than this: Why would our heavenly Father command us to keep a day that could not be kept? The Fourth Commandment begins with these words: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work, but the seventh day is . . ."—Exodus 20:8-10.

Creation Week was seven literal days, not thousands of years. Here is why that is so:

The whole Scriptural account of Creation Week (and all of Genesis as well) is a simple narrative in man's language for man to understand. Each day is marked off by the "evening" (darkness) and the "morning" (daylight)—the two parts of a 24-hour period. Men that try to phantomize Scripture are really trying to destroy it. They do so because they do not want to obey it. If the days of Creation were thousands of years in length, then the plants brought into existence on the "third day" would all have died by the time sunlight appeared on the "fourth day." Plants cannot live without sunlight. We are clearly told in Genesis 1:16—in the middle of Creation Week—that the sun rules the day and the moon rules the night. This is obviously time as we know it—time with days that are twenty-four hours long, with daylight ruling half of it.

6 - "I WOULD BE AFRAID TO STEP OUT AND KEEP THE SABBATH."

(1) "If the seventh-day Sabbath were right, why do not more leading men keep it?"

Scriptural support: None.

In nearly every age of history the majority have been in the wrong, and the faithful few who have studied their Bibles have been in the right. At the time of the Flood, the majority made the wrong decision (Genesis 6). In the time of Paul, Athens was one of the most highly educated cities in the world—yet few accepted what Paul told them (Acts 17). They thought he just had "new doctrines" (Acts 17:19). The "leading men" in the days of the prophets and Christ and the Reformers—were generally on the wrong side. In reply to the words of Christ Himself, the people said, "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him?"—John 7:48. It was only "the common people" who heard Him gladly (Mark 12:37). The men of wealth and influence and high literary attainments generally were not the ones to confess themselves followers of the meek

and lowly Jesus. Remember the words of Paul to the Christians of his time: "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called."—1 Corinthians 1:26. It was the "leading men" who burned Huss and Jerome in the fifteenth century. It was the "leading men" who tried to burn Luther in the sixteenth century. And it was the "leading men" who, under the urging of the pope of Rome, in the fourth century decreed that all Christians must henceforth keep Sunday instead of the seventh-day Sabbath. Friend, even though no one kept the Sabbath, it would still be the Sabbath! If you really love God—why not honor HIM instead of man, by doing as He has asked.

(2) "If I kept the Bible Sabbath, all my friends would ridicule me."

Scriptural support: None.

And what if they do ridicule you? Would you want the praise of men more than the praise of God? It is a fact that the individual who can be conquered by ridicule is an easy mark for Satan; for it is the devil who inspires all ridicule, and he is very willing to use it to erase Bible principles from our lives. The Bible has never tried to hide the fact that those who obeyed God would often have to face reproach and false accusation from those around them.

"Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division. For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."—Luke 12:51-53.

Men of God in past ages have had to suffer persecution, ignominy and death. And shall we today refuse obedience to God in the face of ridicule?

From his dungeon cell, Paul wrote to young Timothy, "Be not thou ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner. But be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God."—2 Timothy 1:8. If God has reserved for you the Eighth Blessing (Matthew 5:10-12), then thankfully receive it, remembering the promise that will come with it:

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake. For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad,—for great is your reward in heaven. For so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."—Matthew 5:10-12.

Paul could look back over his life as he neared its end, and say, "I am not ashamed." And then he added, "For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."—2 Timothy 1:12. "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day,—and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing."—2 Timothy 4:7-8. Looking down to the end of time, Christ's suffering ones follow their Master up new Calvaries and, in the ever-nearing distance, view the homeland prepared for them. "They desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He hath prepared for them a city."—Hebrews 11:16.

And we do well to recall the warning of Jesus in Mark 8:38: "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

Would you rather be on good terms with your neighbor than with God? Would you rather do what others think is right or what God says is right? Would you not rather have them ashamed of you in this day than to have Christ ashamed of you in the last great day?

The Bible describes the people of God living in the last days, the final remnant of history. "And the dragon [Satan through his organization] was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed [the true church at the end of time] which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus."—Revelation 12:17.

And two verses before the second coming of Christ, we are told: "Here is the patience of the saints: Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus."—Revelation 14:12. Some would like to change this to "Here are they that keep nine of the commandments—or none of the commandments—and the faith of Jesus." But this is not as God would have it. He wants a people who will fulfill this prophecy of an obedient people down at the end of time.

And He will empower them, by the enabling grace of His Son Jesus Christ, to keep His Moral Ten Commandment Law. It takes a miracle of grace to accept and keep the faith of Jesus, just as it does to accept and keep His commandments. But in Christ we are enabled to obey. Hidden in the cleft of the Rock, you will find that all the biddings of God become enablings