

[Back](#)

WHY "KEEP SATURDAY FOR SUNDAY"?

You and I live in a "Sunday-keeping world." Hundreds of denominations; thousands of churches, observe Sunday as their day of worship, which they call "The Lord's Day." Saturday is one of the busiest days of the week.

From the earliest days of America, Saturday has been the "market" day; the day when throngs of people descend upon the shops; when truck farmers take their produce to town for sale. It seems odd that anyone would "keep Saturday for Sunday." Yet, millions do, the world over. All religious Jews keep the "Old Testament Sabbath." So do "Seventh-Day Adventists," Seventh-Day Baptists, and dozens of other "Sabbatarian" churches, some of which are quite large.

Are they all merely "cults," with a strange belief, out of step with the "mainstream"?

Or can they PROVE why they do what they do? Have you ever looked into it for yourself, or have you always just taken your religious beliefs for granted, without proof?

Surely, since the gigantic Catholic Church and her hundreds of protestant daughters "keep Sunday," there must be ample proof from the Bible which proves they are correct. You will be astonished at the answer!

by Garner Ted Armstrong

I grew up in a Sabbath-keeping home. I grew to dread the "Sabbath day." Because he believed in the seventh-day Sabbath, my father was an outcast. All around me, my schoolmates and neighbors went to church on Sunday. Every exciting, interesting event at school was geared to a Sunday-observing world.

I could not participate in many school activities for the simple reason that most important football and basketball games were played on Friday night. Our Sabbath began, my father said, on sunset Friday. That meant sports events, parties, practices, dances—a host of school and social events were taking place on the Sabbath. I was forbidden to attend or participate.

As a boy, I grew up deeply resenting my parent's practice of observing the Sabbath, instead of Sunday.

My father, Herbert W. Armstrong, was a preacher. He spoke each Saturday to a group of about fifty or so in a small, clapboard church outside the city limits of Eugene, Oregon,

which featured outdoor his and her facilities, a wood-burning stove near the small alcove, and hard, hand-made wooden benches.

On the right hand wall beside the small stage with its little railing and pulpit hung a large scroll of the Ten Commandments. Each Sabbath, the entire congregation recited, in unison, the commandments.

It was easy to learn them by heart, what with hearing them fifty-two times each year.

Public School and the Sabbath

In the 1930's, the U.S. Supreme Court had not yet made it a criminal act to recite the Bible, or to pray, in school. Students were not then expelled, nor teachers or principals fired from their jobs for allowing the free exercise of religion in public schools.

Even further than that, about once each month, a volunteer Sunday school teacher from one of the prominent Sunday-keeping churches would take an hour's class, teaching us to memorize certain parts of the Bible. I remember a contest she initiated.

She drew up a large chart with each pupil's name to the left, marking off about ten squares to the right. She then assigned various Bible verses, or short chapters, which we were required to memorize. As we were able to stand up before the class and recite our memorized verses successfully, we saw her paste a brightly-colored paper star in one of the squares.

It was of course the little girls who seemed to have more stars opposite their names, rapidly building toward the finish line. This caused a feeling of competition. How could I let those little girls receive more stars than I did?

I remember telling my mother of my elation one day. The Sunday school teacher had inadvertently assigned me to memorize the Ten Commandments!

I said, "Mom, I won't even have to study. I know them by heart already!"

She asked if I was supposed to recite them all, and I said yes. Then, she cautioned me, "If you recite *all of the fourth* one, you'll probably *see* stars!"

Somehow, she seemed to know that the Sunday school teacher would not take it kindly if this little black-headed boy should stand before the class and chirp, "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; thou, nor thy son nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it."

If memory serves, she did not hit me up alongside the head when I recited the entire passage, but she did caution me, "Teddy, it is not necessary to recite the whole thing. Just 'Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy,' is enough." Sure enough, I got a star by my name, instead of a lump on the head.

Gradually, as I grew up, I learned that other people thought we were very strange to be "keeping Saturday for Sunday."

Then, in the late 1930's or early 1940's, my father began to become convinced he should be observing the *annual* Sabbaths of God, as well! In the early years of the observance of the Feast of Tabernacles, only my own family paid it any attention. Eventually, his patient teaching and preaching convinced the Eugene congregation they should be observing the holy days. Finally, they began traveling up the McKenzie River to an old resort called "Belknap Springs," remaining there for the entire eight days of the Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day.

How embarrassing it was, as a young boy, to go down to the Vice Principal's office with a small piece of paper in my hand upon which my mother had written, "Please excuse from school on Thursday our son, Teddy Armstrong, for it is a holy day of our church." It might have been the Feast of Trumpets or the Day of Atonement; an annual Sabbath.

"What kind of a strange church is it which believes *Thursday* is holy?" She would ask.

Ashamed and embarrassed, I didn't know how to explain.

My youthful years were punctuated with many embarrassing and shameful experiences. My family didn't keep Christmas or Halloween, or Easter, but they *did* keep the Sabbath, and the feast days of the Bible.

In order to shed some of my embarrassment, I would go to a Sunday-keeping church on a rare occasion with one of my school friends. When a church league basketball tournament was formed, I went with my friends to a "First Christian" Church one Sunday each month to qualify to play on their basketball team.

I so wanted to be *like everybody else*. I didn't want to be singled out as "different" because of my father's religion.

After high school, I left home and joined the Navy. My primary goal was to get away from my father, who was autocratic. But behind this primary urge was the entire panorama of all his teachings; my resentment of the Sabbath, and other teachings.

In the Navy I could blend in. I wore the same uniform, slept in the same barracks, or, later, aboard the same ship. I ate the same food, including pork chops about once each week, had the same haircut. I was one with the others. I didn't stand out. At last, I was conforming to the world around me. With that conformance came acceptance. No one

thought me "different" in any way. I was just one more sailor, which was exactly the way I wanted it.

For four years, I ignored the Sabbath and the annual holy days. I had no idea when they fell during the year, except letters from home might inform me when the major festival of the year, the "Feast of Tabernacles," occurred.

I hitchhiked to Oregon over a long weekend late in 1949 to visit old school friends in Eugene and Springfield. The feast was being observed up in Belknap Springs, even though my family had moved to Pasadena, California, in 1947. I went to Belknap in my Navy uniform, remaining only a couple of hours to say hello, and promptly went back to Eugene. I am sure my father was embarrassed by having his uniformed young son, standing around with a cigarette in his mouth, with all those tattoos.

No one could have undergone a more complete rejection of the Sabbath—both weekly and annual—than I did. I had dreaded it as a child. As a man, I rejected it entirely.

How could the whole world be out of step except my dad? Who gave him the right to be right? How could all those huge churches, with millions of members, be wrong? Didn't the Roman Catholic Church, and the Methodist Church, and the Baptist Church, keep Sunday? Didn't dozens of others, like the Church of Christ, the Assembly of God, and Pentecostal churches?

You couldn't tell me those huge churches didn't know what they were doing—that they didn't have any *authority* for what they believed and practiced!

Then how did it come to happen that I was to become, from about age twenty-three, such a strong advocate for Sabbath observance?

No matter what you think about the Sunday-Saturday controversy, I want you to know that I *did not* merely "grow up keeping the Sabbath," or blindly accept Sabbath-keeping because it was ingrained in me from childhood. I resented it, as stated above. Later, as a man, I would have *dearly loved* finding absolute *biblical proof* for Sunday! If I could have done that, I could remove one of the *major obstacles* most people deal with when they begin discovering God's truth!

Vaunted Authorities

I had heard my father recite almost endlessly his early experiences with religion. He had been brought up by a Quaker family. My mother's family were Methodists. Both believed there was a God, but neither one of them had ever been Bible students; neither one had ever studied the essential doctrines of their family's religions.

Then, my mother became grievously ill, with both blood poisoning and lockjaw. She went down to less than ninety pounds in weight; could not eat or drink. This was in the days long prior to intravenous feeding.

A friendly neighbor lady, a Mrs. Ora Runcorn, suggested to my mother that their minister, who happened to be a Sabbath-keeper, was a man of faith, who believed God could heal the sick. She asked my mother if she and my father would want this minister to anoint my mother, and pray for her.

Both my father and mother believed God *could* heal, but they did not know if He *would* heal. The complete story was written by my mother to a nonreligious school chum in a letter she sent in 1927, three years before I was born.

She was instantly, miraculously healed! Long prior, she had been told she could never have any additional children. Eight years and six months had passed since she gave birth to her second daughter. Then, following her miraculous healing, my brother, Richard David, was born in 1928, and I was born in 1930. My brother died following an automobile accident in the summer of 1958, while on a baptizing tour in central California.

Because my mother had become very friendly with Mrs. Runcorn, and was obviously hugely thankful, humbly grateful, and spiritually elated over her healing, she wanted to know more about Mrs. Runcorn's religion—about her minister.

One of the most obvious points was the fact that the Runcorns "kept Saturday for Sunday."

My mother asked about it.

Mrs. Runcorn did not reason, or attempt to teach. Instead, she asked my mother to read several passages of scripture. She pointed to one, and then to another, without any comment or explanation, and asked my mother to read them.

But let my father tell you about it, for, after all, I had not yet been born, and she told him all about it. He wrote, in his autobiography, "She asked my wife to turn to a certain passage and read it. Then a second, then a third, and so on for about an hour.

"Mrs. Runcorn made no comment—gave no explanation or argument—just asked my wife to read aloud a series of biblical passages.

"Why!" exclaimed Mrs. Armstrong in amazement, "do all these Scriptures say that I've been keeping the wrong *day* as the Sabbath all my life?"

"Well, *do* they?" asked Mrs. Runcorn. "Don't ask *me* whether you have been wrong—you shouldn't believe what any *person* tells you, but only what GOD tells you through the Bible. What does He tell you, *there*? What do you see *there* with your own eyes?"

"Why, it's as plain as anything could be!" exclaimed Mrs. Armstrong. "Why this is a *wonderful* discovery. I must rush back to tell my husband the good news. I know he'll be overjoyed!"

"A minute or so later, Mrs. Armstrong came running into my parent's home, with the 'good news.'

"My jaw dropped!

"This was the *worst* news I had ever heard! My wife gone into religious fanaticism!

"'Have you gone CRAZY?' I asked, incredulously... 'Loma,' I said sternly, 'this is simply too ridiculous to believe! I am certainly not going to tolerate any such religious fanaticism in our family! You'll have to give that up right here and now!'

"But she wouldn't!" (*The Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong*, vol. 1, p. 288, 289).

The last thing in the world my father wanted to hear was that the *Sabbath* should be kept! As he explained, he thought my mom had taken up with religious fanaticism. They argued, and the argument grew so heated, he even threatened to divorce her over the issue.

Many years later, when I had come home after four years in the Navy, including operating offshore Korea during the Korean war aboard an aircraft carrier, I began to face some of the same questions.

At first, I had no intention whatsoever of having anything to do with my father's religion. I was still smoking. My life's desire was to become a singer.

I began looking into religious literature, wondering if they could substantiate their doctrines. I picked up tracts and booklets at supermarkets, published by various religious organizations.

I remember a tract I read by a protestant radio preacher about "law and grace." He quoted a scripture to support his theory that there was no "law-keeping" involved in the Christian life. Unfortunately for him, I decided to look up the scripture he quoted.

He had written how the Bible said, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.

"Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8,9).

This certainly seemed to say we could not be saved by any *works* we might perform, such as keeping the Sabbath or holy days!

But wait a minute! What was this? In the entire *context* of this statement, Paul had written, in the very next verse, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus *unto good works*, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10). The obvious meaning of the passage was that we should be accomplishing *good works*.

God had ordained that we should *walk* [the word means "live," as in "walk of life"] in them!

This passage showed that we are saved, not by "works," which would *earn* salvation, but by God's *grace*, which is unearned, undeserved forgiveness for sin. On the other hand, once forgiven, God wants us, in Christ, to accomplish *good works!*

Yet, the entire thrust of his little pamphlet was that we were to *avoid* such things as Sabbath-keeping, or feeling under any obligation to obey any laws. It was all love, and grace, and faith. Just *believe*, and profess Christ, and, presto! You're saved. There was no *obedience* toward God in the view of this radio preacher.

My earliest reading into the doctrines of other churches did not begin to compare with the in-depth *research* I would accomplish in the months and years later.

If vaunted authorities, who represented a major excuse of mine against my father's teachings (surely all these huge churches can't be wrong?) were proved wrong *from the bible*, then I was no longer pitting my father against other churchmen, but pitting other churchmen and my father against the *Bible*. I was not biased. I would have been elated if I could have found *biblical proof* for Sunday; found absolute biblical proof that my father was *wrong* to observe "Saturday for Sunday."

The Catholic Encyclopedia — The Greatest Authority For Sunday Observance

Later research astounded me. Like eroding sand, the basis for my resistance toward Sabbath-keeping, and my assumption that "surely all these big churches can't be wrong," simply disappeared. I felt betrayed; left high and dry, without any foundation.

Is there any greater "authority" for Sunday observance than the Pope in Rome; the Roman Catholic Church? For, after all, the only authority by which Protestants justify Sunday observance is old mother Rome, and the writings of the so-called "church fathers" of the second, third, and fourth centuries, as well as various church councils, which took place hundreds of years after Christ.

Here is what the highly respected *Catholic Encyclopedia* says about Sunday, and Sunday observance.

"SUNDAY, (day of the sun), as the name of the first day of the week, is derived from Egyptian Astrology...Sunday was the first day of the week according to the Jewish method of reckoning [note: the Jews never called it 'Sunday'], but for Christians it began to take the place of the Jewish Sabbath in Apostolic times as the day set apart for the public and solemn worship of God. The practice of meeting together on the first day of the week for the celebration of the Eucharistic Sacrifice is indicated in Acts xx,7; I Cor., xvi, 2; in Apoc. 1, 10, it is called the Lord's Day" (*Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XIV, p. 335).

What is the "Eucharistic Sacrifice?" It is the "Sacrament of the Lord's Supper," or "Communion."

But Jesus Christ did not command the disciples to observe the ceremony of foot washing, wine and bread every week. He made it a *memorial* occasion (Luke 22:19). Like all other memorials, such as birthdays, anniversaries, national holidays, or "memorial" day, it was to be celebrated *once each year*, on the same day as the original event.

Notwithstanding these plain indications of scripture, and the practice of Christ Himself, the Roman Catholic Church began celebrating the so-called "Eucharistic Sacrifice" each *Sunday*.

Now, note well that this vaunted authority says that you and I, when we turn to the three scriptures referred to, will find Christians gathered "for the celebration of the Eucharistic Sacrifice."

Let's see if we can find any reference to Sunday observance, or Christians observing the "Eucharistic Sacrifice" in the scriptures listed by the *Catholic Encyclopedia*. Get your own Bible, and look them up. Study each word, and each verse carefully.

Read up to the passage referred to in Acts 20. Commencing with verse 6: "And we sailed away from Philippi after the Days of Unleavened Bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days, where we abode seven days."

Luke, who was the journalist, naturally included in his diary the fact that they had sailed just after the Days of Unleavened Bread. Why? For the simple reason that this annual holy day period immediately following the Passover, or Lord's Supper, was *still being observed*. Paul had written to the Corinthian church, "But I will tarry at Ephesus until *Pentecost*" (I Cor. 16:8). He also said, as Luke wrote a little later than this account of his trip to Troas, "...I must by all means *keep this feast* that cometh in Jerusalem" (Acts 18:21).

Repeatedly in Paul's writings, and in those of Luke, who chronicled the deeds of the early apostolic church, careful note is taken of the occurrence of God's Sabbath days and the *annual* Sabbaths, or holy days. These words were written in Luke's journal approximately *thirty years* after the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ; *thirty years* after that first Pentecost; *thirty years* after the founding of the apostolic church. Remember, Paul was the apostle to the *Gentiles*, not the Jews. Yet, we see him continually keeping God's Sabbath days, and observing God's *annual* Sabbaths as well.

Now, continuing in Acts 20, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his speech until midnight [nighttime on our "Saturday night"].

"And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together.

"And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down from sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.

"And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him.

"When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and *eaten*, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed" (Acts 20:7-11).

Notice that the expression "breaking bread" merely means *eating a meal*. It does not connote a religious ceremony, or a "Eucharistic Sacrifice!" "Breaking bread" could include eating an entire meal, including meat and vegetables.

Following the Day of Pentecost about thirty years earlier, the people "...continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house [Margin: "at home"], did *eat their meat* with gladness and singleness of heart" (Acts 2:46). This view into the *custom* of the people of that time shows they were "breaking bread and eating their meat" from home to home in joyous fellowship together.

Sliced bread was unknown in those times. Bread was baked in whole loaves, like "French Bread" today. Even in American frontier days, the expression, "Let us break bread together" connoted *eating a meal*, and had nothing to do with a religious ceremony. The Bible plainly says they had "broken bread, and *eaten*," not that they had broken bread ceremonially.

Notice too that this meeting took place sometime after sundown on our "Saturday night." But the new days began at *sunset* then. "Saturday night" back then was the beginning of the first day of the week. Paul's preaching began at the *evening meal* on what would have been our Saturday night, and *continued until midnight*. This was *on* the "first day of the week," but the meeting continued through the night, until the morning, which would be our Sunday morning.

On that day, the first day of the week, our "Sunday," during the daylight part, what did Paul do? Remember, their breaking bread and eating a meal had taken place at supper time about twelve hours previously. Now, it was what we commonly call Sunday morning. Was this a time for *worship* for Paul? Was it a time for rest, or for abstaining from any work?

"And we went before to ship [writes Luke], and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed [decided], minding himself to go afoot" (Acts 20:13).

Assos was around a narrow peninsula from Troas. By ship, it required hours of sailing, and the prevailing winds would have required much tacking back and forth. Knowing this, Paul decided to remain with those Christian people as long as he could, speaking to

them right on through the night, (which is *hard work!*), and then *walking nineteen miles* during the daylight hours of that Sunday.

Talk about *work!*

This was no "Eucharistic Sacrifice," as the vaunted *Catholic Encyclopedia* would have you believe. It was a meeting which took place from about Saturday sundown until nearly dawn the next morning. Since the Bible always begins the days at sundown, the *beginning* of the "first day of the week" commenced at sunset on Saturday.

Paul then *worked* all night. Then he *walked* an incredible *nineteen miles* from Troas to Assos, to meet Luke and the others aboard ship.

Did *you* read anything there about Christians meeting for the purpose of conducting the "Eucharistic Sacrifice"? The word "Eucharist" is nowhere in the Bible. No, there is no "Eucharistic Sacrifice" mentioned here. Instead, this was an informal "Bible study," except Paul was preaching from personal experience and his own knowledge of the scriptures (the Old Testament represented the only "scriptures" that existed then), since the people did not possess Bibles as we do today.

But, surely, we shall find Christians meeting on the first day of the week, Sunday, to celebrate the "Eucharistic Sacrifice" in the *second* scripture listed in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, won't we? Let's see.

"Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye" (I Cor. 16:1). Read Acts 11:27-30. Agabus had prophesied of a terrible drought to strike Palestine. The church rallied, gathering stored nuts, dates, grains, and dried meats and fruit, to send relief to people who might otherwise have starved.

Paul, eager to help, wanted the Corinthian church to generously devote a *full day of work* each week prior to his arrival in famine relief. Here is how he stated it, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings [harvesting, collecting, gleaning] when I come.

"And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters [to me], them will I send to bring your liberality [your generous gifts of foodstuffs] unto Jerusalem" (I Cor. 16:1-3).

What do you do when you "lay by yourself in store"? Why, you *store up*, or you *save* something. You place it close to hand, like in a storage shed, or your garage, or in your home.

Did you read one single word about a "Eucharistic Sacrifice" here? No? But the vaunted *Catholic Encyclopedia* said you would find Christians conducting a religious ceremony

on Sunday! It said this was a meeting by Christians to celebrate the "Eucharistic Sacrifice."

This had absolutely nothing to do with worship one way or the other. Paul urged the brethren to go out and accomplish *hard work* on the first day of the week, which is our Sunday, so they would have gathered their produce and stored it prior to his arrival.

But *surely*, then, we shall find at least ONE correct reference out of the three scriptures the *Catholic Encyclopedia* quoted which allegedly show Christians keeping the "Eucharistic Sacrifice" on Sunday?

Let's see. John, the apostle, was given many visions by Jesus Christ to *reveal* to God's people what would come to pass down into the time near the end of man's civilization on earth.

The very first vision John saw was that of a being who spoke with a voice like a powerful trumpet blast. John wrote, "I was in the spirit [as in a spiritual trance—seeing a vision] on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,

"Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest [in the visions to follow], write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches..." (Rev. 1:10, 11).

Do you read of any meeting of Christians here? No.

Do you read of a "Eucharistic Sacrifice"? No. Instead, you read of how John was transported in spiritual vision *into* the "Day of the Lord," or the "Lord's day." In his mind's eye, he was experiencing a *vision*. His vision concerned a great time of world cataclysm called "The DAY OF THE LORD" in the Book of Revelation. This was not some "Eucharistic sacrifice," but a *vision* given John of an impending time of God's intervention in human affairs, as the following chapters of Revelation prove.

What "day" is "the Lord's day"? Notice, "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him,

"That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the *Day of Christ* [Christ is the *Lord*, so this is the *Day of the Lord*, or the "Lord's day"] is at hand.

"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed..." (II Thessalonians 2:1-3).

The book of Revelation reveals three major divisions of events which shall usher in the time of God's divine intervention in human affairs: The Great Tribulation, the heavenly signs, and the Day of the Lord.

The entire period is called the "Lord's day" by John in his first chapter.

The Greek word for "on" means "into," or "within."

The Diaglott translates directly from the Greek, which says, "I was in spirit *in the Lord's day*." John was transported in vision *into* the future "Day of the Lord," or the "Lord's day." This had nothing to do with any day of the week, but with the whole period of time, of about three and one-half years duration, of the Tribulation, Heavenly Signs, and the Day of the Lord, which will end in the second coming of Christ. The "Lord's day" of which John wrote is still in the *future*, and remains to be fulfilled.

A number of other translations as well as the Diaglott make it clear that John was saying he had been transported, mentally, as in a vision, *forward in time* INTO the time of the DAY OF THE LORD. The *Day of the Lord* spoken of by Paul to the Thessalonians is the *same time period* in prophecy that is revealed in detail in the Book of Revelation.

John's statement about his vision of the Day of the Lord comes as a part of the *introduction* to the awesome prophecies of the book of Revelation, which gives details of the coming time of Tribulation, Heavenly Signs, and the terrible wrath of God which will be poured out upon the earth during the Day of the Lord.

It is obvious this has *nothing whatsoever to do* with a religious service of any kind. John was *alone*. There is no "Eucharistic Sacrifice" mentioned here! No one else was present. John was given a startling vision of awesome future events which will take place during the Day of the Lord.

Which Day Is "The Lord's Day"?

Millions of professing Christians commonly refer to Sunday as "The Lord's day." *Some* people here and there have brazenly transferred the name of God's *Sabbath* day to *Sunday*, and refer to it as "The Sabbath." But it is neither the Sabbath, nor is it the "day of the sun." It is, simply, the "first day of the week," which is a *work* day to God.

But which day is the day of which Christ is Lord?

Notice, "And He said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath:

"Therefore the Son of man is *Lord also of the Sabbath*" (Mark 2:27, 28). Which day is the "Lord's day"? Jesus Christ said He was (and is) the Lord of the Sabbath! Then the *Sabbath* day is the true "Lord's day," and *not* Sunday, or the day of the sun.

Notice carefully what Christ said.

He said the Sabbath was "made for man." The Sabbath is something which was *made*—created—at the end of creation week. God had finished His *work* of creating, but He had not finished *creating*. The Sabbath was made for *man*, not the Jewish race, and it was made when man was made—during creation week.

God created the Sabbath day, put His presence into it, *blessed* it and *hallowed* it, which means He made it *holy*.

"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

"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 [set it apart as holy]: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God had created and made" (Genesis 2:1-3).

The Sabbath was made when man was made. It was made *for* man, as Jesus said, not as a yoke of bondage, or a rigorous, legalistic burden. It was made for man's *rest*; for his relaxation, his enjoyment, his time for introspection, meditation, study, prayer, and for his worship toward God.

The Sabbath was created to give *joy* to mankind; a welcome, desirable respite from his work week—time for his family, and his brethren in God's church—time to look back upon creation, and to look forward toward God's kingdom.

The Sabbath is a *memorial of creation*, and its observance acknowledges the Creator. It is also a shadow, or a foretaste, of the coming world-ruling kingdom of God!

The true "Lord's day," or the day over which Christ is said to be *Lord*, is the *Sabbath* day, which He created.

The Sabbath Pictures Millennial Rest

God has allotted six thousand years for man to learn the hideous, blood-drenched lesson that man cannot govern himself apart from God. At the end of those six thousand years, Jesus Christ will come in the power and glory of God to put down all human rule and authority, establish His great kingdom on this earth, and *rule* it with a rod of iron for one thousand years.

This is the millennial *rest* of Christ.

When ancient Israel ended their forty years of wandering in Sinai and crossed Jordan into the promised land, Joshua (whose name in Hebrew is exactly the same as "Jesus" in the Greek) was said to have given them "rest."

As they settled down in the promised land, the *new generation* of Israel typified God's people entering into the kingdom of God.

"Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, Pass through the host, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for within three days ye shall pass

over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which the Eternal your God giveth you to possess it.

"And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, spake Joshua, saying, Remember the word which Moses the servant of the Eternal commanded you, saying, The Eternal your God hath given you REST, and hath given you this land

"Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle, shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side Jordan; but ye shall pass before your brethren armed, all the mighty men of valor, and help them;

"Until the Eternal have given your brethren REST, as he hath given you, and they also have possessed the land which the Eternal your God giveth them..." (Joshua 1:10-15).

The Israelites, led by Joshua, crossed through Jordan dry shod (Josh. 4:18) but a short Sabbath day's journey *on the Sabbath* day, which was the tenth day of Abib (Josh. 4:19), and then *kept the Passover* which was on our Wednesday, on the fourteenth of Abib in the evening (Josh. 5:10).

Now, notice carefully the rich type God reveals concerning the Sabbath, picturing Christ's millennial *rest*, as the Israelites were given *rest* after forty years in Sinai.

"Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest [His kingdom—the millennial rest], any of you should seem to come short of it.

"For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: [the Israelites under Joshua; see Heb. 3] but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

"For we which have believed *do enter into rest*, as He said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest, [or, shall they enter into my rest]: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world" (Heb. 4:1,2).

When did God rest from His works at the time of the creation of the world? On the *Sabbath* day (Gen. 2:1-3).

The Sabbath day is here being explained as a type of the promised land during the time of Joshua, and a type of the Kingdom of God in the millennial reign of Christ.

"For He spake in a certain place [The scripture just referred to; Genesis 2:1-3] of the *seventh day* on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all His works." (Heb. 4:4). The subject being addressed is the *Sabbath* day, as a *type* of both the promised land, and the millennial reign of Christ!

Paul continues, "And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest" (Verse 5). This is a quotation from Psalm 95, which says, "Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

"When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work.

"Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways:

"Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest" (Psalms 95:7-11). And they *didn't!*

The generation of Israel that came out of Egypt *died in the wilderness*, not being permitted of God to enter into the promised land of Palestine because of *sin*, which included *Sabbath-breaking*.

God had said, "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and *keep all my commandments always* that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!" (Deut. 5:29).

When God first revealed His Sabbath to the Israelites who had been in Egypt, He ordered them to gather twice the amount of food on the "preparation" day, our Friday, so they would not be working on the Sabbath.

God was raining down *manna* to provide them life-giving sustenance. In spite of God's commands, "...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 Eternal [*JHVH*, or *Jehovah* always rendered "LORD" in capital letters in the KJV] said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to *keep my commandments and my laws*? See, for that the Eternal hath given you the Sabbath, therefore He giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day" (Ex. 16:23-30).

The person of the divine sovereign Godhead who made this command is the One who became Jesus Christ. One has only to read John the first chapter to absolutely *prove* this.

Notice that this command to observe God's Sabbath day was given *before* the giving of the Ten Commandments from Mount Sinai, which is found two chapters later!

Now, notice again the special *subject* matter of Hebrews 4: "Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief [margin: disobedience]:

"Again, He *limiteth a certain day* [that is, He sets apart, or points out, a *certain DAY*], saying in David, Today, after so long a time; as it is said, Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb. 4:6,7).

David's Psalm is quoting from *Joshua's Sabbath-day message*, just as Hebrews is in turn quoting from David's Psalm.

The exact Hebrew equivalent for the name "Jesus" is "Joshua." As the margin correctly renders it, the following verse should read, "For if *Joshua* had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of *another day*" (Heb. 4:8).

A *day* is being singled out in these passages. "Today," always placed in capital letters by the translators, refers back to Joshua's oration on that Sabbath long ago, when the second generation of young Israelites were warned not to harden their hearts, as their parents had done, as they entered into the promised land, which the Sabbath depicted, across the river Jordan.

David then refers to the same event, and depicts the Sabbath day as a picture of "rest," which is a type of the promised land, and the shadow of the millennial rest of Christ.

Now, notice an astonishing truth. So far, we have read again and again the word "rest" in God's word. At least *seven times*, we have read the English word "rest," referring to God resting; to the "rest" of the promised land, or the "rest" in the millennium with Jesus Christ.

The Greek word is *katapausis*, or, twice, *katapauo*, which mean: "reposing down; abode; rest," or, "to settle down, to colonize, or figuratively, to cause to cease or desist—cease, give, rest."

But then comes verse nine of this fascinating passage of scripture, where a *completely different Greek word* was used in the original. Some Bibles, like my own large "studio" Bible, which I have used on the radio and television studio desk for decades, published by Philadelphia Press, has a marginal note about this word. It says, "A *keeping of the Sabbath!*" Notice the scripture: "There remaineth therefore a *rest* [Greek: *Sabbatismos*] to the people of God" (Heb. 4:9). *Sabbatismos* means, "A Sabbatism; the repose of Christianity, rest." It means "A Sabbatizing," or a "Sabbath rest."

The translators of 1611 had been subjected to centuries of church tradition. They had "learned" in their studies of the ancient church councils; of actual legislation effected by popes and emperors concerning Sunday observance. Even though they had *clear evidence* before them that the word *katapausis* meant a "down pausing," or a "reposing down," and *Sabbatismos* meant "a *keeping of the Sabbath*," they chose to *conceal*, as much as they could, the true meaning of verse 9!

Yet, it is only when one understands the true meaning of verse 9 that the entire passage from Hebrews 3:7 to Hebrews 4:11 makes sense!

Again and again, we are reminded of Joshua's orations; of how he urged the Israelites "*Today*, harden not your hearts!"

We are reminded that the older generation of Israelites did not attain to the "rest" in the promised land, and warned that we, as Christians, might not attain to the "rest" in the millennium with Jesus Christ if we harden our hearts against God's laws.

We are told that David *specifically set apart, or pointed out, a certain DAY* in this regard (Heb. 4:7), speaking of the *Sabbath* day.

Then, we are told that, if the true "rest" of God had been given under Joshua, God would not "have spoken of *another day*."

Then we are told, "There remains therefore a *keeping of the Sabbath* to the people of God!" (Heb. 4:9). Look it up in the margin of some King James Bibles, or in the Diaglott, or in an exhaustive concordance! This is the *truth* of God from your own Bible, not the ideas of any man, or the twisted misinterpretation of scripture that we have seen in attempts to justify Sunday observance.

Now, one can far more clearly understand the exhortations given in Hebrews 3: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

"But *exhort* one another daily, *while it is called Today*, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

"For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;

"While it is said, *Today* if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation" (Heb. 3:12-19).

This is nothing short of urging God's people to fellowship together; to *exhort* one another "while it is called *Today*," meaning *on the Sabbath* days, lest any become hardened of heart, and draw back from God's laws, and His way of life.

The Sabbath BEFORE the Ten Commandments Were Given

God's Sabbath Day was created long before the giving of the Ten Commandments, or the "declogue," as it is called, at the foot of Mount Sinai.

God created Adam on the *sixth* day of creation week, and He created the Sabbath day on the *seventh* day of creation week.

While God had finished *working*, He had not finished *creating*.

God *rested* from all His works on the seventh day of creation week, and by the act of *resting*, He created the Sabbath. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

"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" (Gen. 2:1-3). The Ten Commandments were not codified, or written in stone, until many centuries later; long after the flood of Noah's time; long after Abraham! That is why the Ten Commandments look *back* to the time of the creation: "*Remember* [think back, and never forget!] 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, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

"For in six days the Lord [*JHVH*, or "The Eternal," sometimes called *Jehovah*] made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Eternal *blessed* the Sabbath day, and *hallowed* it [made it *holy!*] (Ex. 20:8-11).

The Sabbath is the only day of the week God ever dignified with a *name*. Today, our days of the week bear completely *pagan* names: Sunday is the "day of the Sun," or *Solis invictus*, which means, "the day of the invincible sun." Monday is the "day of the moon." Tuesday is the "day of Theus," while Wednesday is "Woden's day." Thursday is the "day of Thor," and Friday is "Fria's day," all named after *pagan gods* which are nothing but the figment of the imagination of heathens long in the past.

The knowledge of the weekly cycle was given to Adam, and to all the patriarchs, long prior to the flood of Noah. When God called Israel out of hundreds of years of slavery, He revealed to them His *Sabbath* days, and His annual holy days, or festivals. It was by the means of the *first Passover* and Days of Unleavened Bread that God brought them out of slavery; out of Egypt, and into the land of wandering for a time of *testing*; forty long years.

One of their great tests was the Sabbath. It is the "*test*" commandment; the one which requires our *doing* something—by *resting* on that day—worshiping God as our Creator, looking back to creation, and looking forward to the Kingdom of God.

Study again the 16th chapter of Exodus, four chapters *before* Sinai, and the delivery of the Ten Commandments on two tablets of stone, and see how God reminded Israel of His Sabbath day! When they broke His law concerning the Sabbath, God demanded, "How long refuse ye to *keep my commandments and my laws?* (Ex. 16:28).

The Ten Commandments of God define *what is sin*. Notice, "What shall we say then? Is the law *sin*? Nay. I had not *known* sin, but *by the law*: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet" (Romans 7:7). God's law points out what *sin is*.

If a policeman were to ask you, "Do you know what it means to break the law?" you might think he were either jesting, or crazy. You would wonder why he would ask such a ridiculous question. If you break the law, you break the *law*—you act contrary to written legislation, or do something *illegal*.

Can you run a stop sign where no stop sign exists? Can you exceed the speed limit where there *is* no speed limit? Of course not!

Now, notice, "Because the law worketh wrath: for where *no law is*, there is *no transgression*" (Rom. 4:15). How plain!

Where there is no law, there is no law to break. Sin is defined as the breaking of God's Ten Commandments—His righteous *law*:

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the *law*: for SIN IS THE TRANSGRESSION OF THE LAW" (I John 3:4). Therefore, when the Bible says people *sinned* from the time of Adam to the time of the giving of the decalogue at the foot of Mount Sinai, it is obvious the Ten Commandments were already in place; that they were *known* by the ancients; that it was a *sin* to violate them.

The Ten Commandments includes the *fourth* command, "Remember the Sabbath day, to *keep it holy*." It carries the same *penalty* as murder. It carries the penalty of *death* for breaking it!

John wrote, "And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we *keep His commandments*."

"He that saith, I know Him,' and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (I John 2:3, 4).

Just as it is impossible to run a non-existent stop sign, it is impossible to commit a *sin* if there is *no law that points out what sin is*.

Yet, *sin* was committed by human beings from the moment following Satan's deception of our first parents, and that clearly means that *God's laws were being broken*. God did not "think up" and produce His Ten Commandments at Sinai. He revealed His perfect laws to our first parents, and to all the patriarchs long prior to the flood; to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. His laws were known, not only to His own godly patriarchs, but known by *pagan* kings in many countries in the Mideast, long before Sinai.

When Adam and Eve sinned against God, they broke several major points of God's Ten Commandments. First, they *lusted* after the forbidden fruit; they *coveted* what God had forbidden. That broke the tenth commandment. They disobeyed and dishonored their

only Parent, God Almighty, when they did exactly what He had forbidden them to do, thus breaking the fifth commandment. They took what was *not theirs*, which was *stealing*. That broke the eighth commandment!

James wrote that if we break *one* commandment, we are guilty of breaking *all* of them. "But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (James 2:9, 10). This plainly shows that Sabbath-breaking is on a par with idolatry, or stealing, or murder; that breaking *one point* of God's law is the same as breaking them all. Because Adam and Eve *sinned*, they were driven out of their fabulous garden. Their children grew to young adulthood. Then occurred the *first murder* recorded in the Bible. Cain murdered his own brother because of resentment and jealousy.

The Creator God of the Old Testament *warned* Cain about his attitude. Abel had appropriately brought the *firstlings of his flock* as a sacrifice. God had already shown the first family that the commission of sin requires the shedding of *blood*; that the wages of sin is *death*, and that there was need for an atoning sacrifice for sin. This was many long centuries before the flood of Noah; many, many centuries before the giving of the law at Sinai; many centuries before there was ever a nation called Israel; many centuries before there was a Levitical Priesthood.

Yet, the knowledge of an atonement for sin by offering the *firstling* of a flock, such as a lamb or a goat, had been revealed to the first family. Abel *obeyed* God's instructions, and his offering was looked upon favorably with God.

Cain decided to offer vegetables; the "fruit of the ground" instead (Gen. 4:2-7). He should have bartered with Abel, offering his produce in return for an animal, and then offered the animal in sacrifice.

God's word says, "And the Eternal had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

"But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

"And the Eternal said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

"If thou doest well, shall thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, *sin* lieth at the door; unto thee is its desire, but thou shouldst rule over it" (Gen. 4:4-8). God showed Cain that *sin* was right at the door because of Cain's angry *attitude*. He explained that, once human *emotion* is involved; bitterness, resentment, anger, jealousy, hatred—self pity—*sin* is not far behind.

And what *is sin*? What is the *Bible* definition of sin? We already read it: "Sin is the transgression of the *law*." But there can be *no sin* where there is no law which points out *what sin is*! "Where no law is, there is no transgression." But there was a *law* in place—God's holy Ten Commandments, which say, "Thou shalt do no murder!"

God's Laws Were In Full Force BEFORE Sinai

Now, notice how long ago, and how early on in the Bible *sin* is mentioned. God Himself warned Cain that *sin* lay at the door.

Cain, in spite of the warning, plunged right ahead with his bitterness toward his brother, and murdered him!

What is sin? It is the transgression of the *law*.

The law of God was revealed to our first parents. God's law is truth. It is righteousness (Ps. 119:172). It is holy. It is perfect, just, and good (Rom. 7:12). God's law shows us, through the first four commandments, *how to love God*. It shows us, through the last six commandments, *how to love our fellow man*. God's law did not *come into existence* at Sinai. It was, and is, an expression of God's *will* toward His human creation—telling us *how to live* in peace, prosperity, and happiness.

Notice how God characterized the sickening, depraved homosexuality of the Sodomites and people of their neighboring city Gomorrah: "But the men of Sodom were wicked and *sinner*s before the Eternal exceedingly" (Gen. 13:13).

In order for those Sodomites to be labeled as wicked and *sinner*s, there had to be a *law* that was being broken!

God destroyed the pre-flood world because of *sin*. The whole world had become filled with violence and murder. Cannibalism was rampant. It grieved God to the heart that He had made man. God found only *one man* whose heart was right with God in that generation, and because of him, and him alone, God spared Noah's family, and destroyed the entire human race except eight persons (Gen. 6, 7).

The wages of sin is *death*. The ancients knew this; they knew about God's laws.

When God made His covenant with Abraham, it was because Abraham was a man of righteous character. God showed that all nations of the earth would ultimately be blessed through Abraham, "Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, *my commandments*, and my laws" (Gen. 26:5).

But Abraham was not "justified" through keeping God's laws. He is called the "father of the faithful" because He *believed* God, and because he had absolute *faith* in God. This does not mean he was perfect. He was capable of sin; of making mistakes.

When Abraham had used human reasoning to protect his wife Sarah from Abimelech, God intervened, so a *sin* would not be committed.

Abraham was traveling toward the south, and was sojourning in a land called "Gerar." Abimelech was the king. Afraid Abimelech would kill him and take his wife, Abraham said "she is my sister." This was a partial lie, but a lie, nevertheless. Abraham was using human reason, and not trusting in God to protect Sarah. Abimelech had large forces. Abraham was a traveller in his country. Seeing the beauty of Sarah, Abimelech took her, and added her to his harem.

But God "...came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a *dead man* [the wages of sin is *death*], for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife.

"But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation?

"Said he not unto me, She is my sister? and she, even she herself said, He is my brother: in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this.

"And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from *sinning against me*: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her.

"Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet... Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? and what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and my kingdom a *great sin*? thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done" (Gen. 20:1-9).

God Almighty told Abimelech He had withheld Abimelech from *sinning against God*. Abimelech himself acknowledged that if he had taken Sarah as a wife, it would have been a *great sin*, for she was already married. What is sin? You have read it! Sin is the transgression of the *law*. And where *no law exists*, there can be *no sin*.

Therefore, it is plain that God's law was in full force and effect *long before Sinai*.

The codifying of God's Ten Commandments on stone did not bring those laws into existence. The tables of stone delivered to Israel through Moses merely provided Israel with a *written record* of God's laws; written with the finger of God on *stone*, the most durable of all writing materials.

But God had revealed His laws to the ancient patriarchs. He had revealed them to Adam and Eve; to Cain and Abel; to Enoch, and to Noah. He revealed them to Abraham. They were known and understood by the kings of small city states all over the Mideast centuries before Moses led Israel to the foot of Sinai.

***The One Who Became Christ Wrote
the Ten Commandments!***

Millions of nominal Christians in the various "mainstream" churches assume God the Father gave the Israelites the Ten Commandments, and then Jesus Christ, the Son, appeared on earth to "nail them to His cross." Millions assume the Son *did away* with the Father's laws. To them, the Ten Commandments are harsh, rigorous, unfair!

But *which* laws are so "unfair"? Which ones of the ten are so harsh and unreasonable they are a terrible "legalistic" burden? Is it the law against stealing that people detest? No, all church-goers would agree it is wrong to steal. Do they hate the commandment that says "Honor thy father and thy mother"? No, all church-goers agree that the family is the most important unit in society; that we should love, and honor our parents. Is it the commandment against adultery the one they hate? Perhaps, in "gay" churches, or some which are so liberal they preach total licentiousness, but these are extremely rare. The mainstream fundamentalist churches all believe premarital or extramarital sex is wrong; that it is a sin, leading to illegitimacy, abortion, venereal disease, and forced marriages. Just because certain kinds of sins are commonplace in society does not mean the churches condone them.

Do they hate the commandments which Christ summarized, saying, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy mind"? No, they all agree that we should love God, because He first loved us. Few know that the love of God is *defined* in the Bible as keeping His Ten Commandments: "For this IS the love of God, that we *keep His commandments*, and His commandments are not grievous" (I John 5:3).

Then which commandment is it which people resent?

Think of it, and *be honest* with yourself. If the fourth commandment said, "Thou shalt keep Sunday," there would be *no argument* in the professing "Christian" world! But it says we should remember the *Sabbath* day, to keep it holy! And there's the rub! Because you and I live in a Sunday-observing, nominal "Christian" world with centuries of tradition of Sunday observance, any discussion about keeping God's *Sabbath* day causes *instant argument*!

It does not matter to many whether they can *prove* that Sunday-observance was *imposed* upon professing Christians by a church council which did not take place until about *three hundred years* after Christ! It does not matter to them if they can read Catholic documents which cheerfully admit the Roman Catholic Church changed the day of worship to Sunday solely on the *authority of the popes*! It does not matter if they can prove, by overwhelming, voluminous proofs from history, that it took *centuries* for Sunday observance to be gradually *forced* upon nominal Christians.

No, to most people, *tradition* is more important. To most, they reason, "Surely all these big churches can't be *wrong*"?

Since they live in a Sunday-observing society, and since it is human nature to want to *conform*, and to avoid standing out, or being thought of as a "religious nut" of some kind, many cling to Sunday observance, even though their conscience nags at them about the

Sabbath. I know and understand this feeling, for I myself reasoned this way in my resentment against Sabbath-keeping as a teenager. I didn't *want* to prove my father *right* about the Sabbath day, I wanted to *prove him wrong!* But I couldn't! I cannot obliterate the plain scriptures in my bible which make me *responsible* for keeping the Sabbath today!

Little do millions know that the member of the Godhead who wrote the fourth commandment with His own finger is the very same person who was born of the virgin Mary; who became Jesus Christ of Nazareth! This is an astonishing truth, and yet very easy to prove.

All you need do is read, carefully and slowly, with no one there to twist or distort the meaning; no one there to tell you it doesn't mean what it says; the entire first chapter of John's gospel. Here are major excerpts:

John wrote, "In the beginning was the Word [Greek: *Logos*, meaning, "Spokesman"] and the Word [notice that the translators knew they need to show respect by capitalizing the letter "W"] was with God, and the Word was God [The *Logos* was *Theos*; Greek].

"The same was in the beginning with God.

"*All things were made by Him*: and without Him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:1-3). So the One who said "Let there be Light;" who said, "Let the dry land appear;" who said, "Let US make man in OUR image," was the One Who became *Jesus Christ of Nazareth!*

Continue, "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

"And the light shineth in darkness: and the darkness comprehendeth it not.

"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

"The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

"He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

"That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

"He was in the world, and the *world was made by Him*, and the world knew Him not.

"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.

"But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.

"Which were born [Greek: begotten], not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

"And the *Word was made flesh*, and dwelt [the Greek word is "tabernacled" and has great significance!] among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1:1-14).

The Creator God of the Old Testament is the member of the divine Family called *Elohim* who *did the creating*. Not that He was the *sole* Architect of the universe, for the Bible clearly tells us He said "Let US create man in OUR image." The Father *and* the Son were involved in the creation—they did it together!

Jesus said "I and my father are one," and said that the Father Who dwelt in Him produced the works He performed, and gave Him the message He should speak.

Nevertheless, your Bible clearly tells you it was the one you and I know as Jesus Christ of Nazareth who gave the Ten Commandments; who was the "Word," who spoke and said, "Let there be light;" who rested on the seventh day, and hallowed it.

It was *This* member of the divine *Elohim* who dealt with Cain, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He allowed Moses to see His back parts (Ex. 33:11-23). He wrote the Ten Commandments with His own hand! It was He who *created the Sabbath* day, and carried out the *death* sentence on those who broke it!

You need to deeply inculcate this fact down into your mind, and never forget it! It helps you understand *the whole Bible!*

Millions who profess Jesus Christ; who "believe on Jesus," would be *astonished* to know that the person who became Jesus Christ is the *same person* who wrote the Ten Commandments! Yet it stands absolutely *proved* in your own Bible!

Now, *why* would the divine sovereign *Elohim*, whom we know of as Jesus Christ, *write a law He knew He was going to destroy?*

Why would He give Israel a law He knew "wouldn't work," and then *put them to death* for disobeying it?

Is it logical to suppose the Great *JHVH*, sometimes called Jehovah, or the great "I AM," the One who is called the "Word", and who is Jesus Christ, would deliver a law to Moses and the Israelites He knew He would soon *rescind*? Would He put people to death for disobeying it then, but allow *millions* to break it today?

Nonsense! He says, "For I am the *Eternal*, I CHANGE NOT, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed" (Malachi 3:6).

"Jesus Christ *the same* yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Heb. 13:8).

Jesus Christ told His disciples, "Think NOT I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am *NOT COME TO DESTROY* but to fulfill.

"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 least in the Kingdom of Heaven: but whosoever shall *do and teach* them, the same shall be called *great* in the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matt. 5:17-19).

When you fulfill an obligation, you do or perform it. When the obligation is *lifelong*, you continue to fulfill it for so long as you live. Christ did not say "I am not come to destroy but to destroy," which would be a blatant, direct contradiction.

He said He did *not* come to destroy the law; He said not the crossing of a "t," or dotting of an "i" would pass from the law until all of its intent were fulfilled. The intent of the law is that *all mankind* finally live within its holy, perfect precepts; that the world become a place of *utopian beauty*, with *no sin*; no crime, no violence, no war!

It is absolutely nonsensical to think Jesus Christ, as the *Logos*, or "Spokesman" of the divine *Elohim* would give His perfect law to His people when He knew He would eventually come into this world as a fleshly human being, to *destroy* the same holy and righteous law He wrote with His own finger!

Jesus said, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have *kept my Father's commandments*, and abide in His love" (John 15:10).

"But That's Legalism!"

Millions have heard my voice over the past four decades, and the voice of my father before me, preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God. We have always emphasized that the Kingdom of God is the coming world-ruling *government* of God, and shown that God will not save a single person who is not willing to *obey* Him. We have upheld God's Ten Commandments, and shown that the Sabbath is to be observed.

"But that's legalism," some scoff. Thousands of sermons are preached each week in Sunday-observing pulpits, and over religious radio and television programs *against* God's Sabbath day; *against* any "legal" requirements to *obey God*! Much of this preaching, and a large number of books, articles and tracts have been written to *combat* thousands of these radio and television programs; my father's booklets and mine.

"Just come to the cross," they say. "Only believe on Jesus," they say. "You can't be saved by *works*," they say.

But there is more to salvation than *only belief*! We must believe what Jesus Christ preached; what He taught; believe and obey His *example*, as well as believe "on" Christ.

It is true that neither you nor I can be *saved* by *works*! You can only be saved by the sacrifice of Jesus' life in your stead, to atone for *sin*, which is the breaking of God's law. We are saved by the *life* of Jesus Christ, who rose from the dead to sit at the right hand of the Father in heaven. We are *reconciled* to God by Christ's death, but we are *saved* by *His life*, as you will soon see.

By clever speeches, and quoting beautiful verses about love and forgiveness, many preachers *deceive* their listeners into believing they *do not have to obey God's Ten Commandments!*

When you go to a real-estate agent and decide to purchase a home, do you want it done *legally*? Do you want a legal appraisal? A legal title search? A legal document saying the home does not sit on a flood plain, or has no termite damage? Do you want a *legal* document that fixes an interest rate you can live with? Do you want a First Trust Deed, and a legal mortgage, with both parties *promising*, in writing, to fulfill their obligations? Of *course* you do! When you purchase a home, you want it done *legally!*

When you buy a car, do you want everything done *legally*? Do you want a *legal* paper that states the odometer has not been wound back; a legal paper that tells you the exact price, and the interest rate; a legal paper that says you are the "registered owner"? Of course you do!

You can apply this analogy to anything you do in life; whether applying for a job, going to school, or purchasing a pair of slacks! You want things to be done *legally!*

Then how is it that religious teachers can instill in their followers the concept that the *last thing in the world* they want is LEGALISM when it comes to their relationship with God?

Do you want God to fulfill His promise to you of GIVING you eternal life if you repent of sin, and surrender to Him?

Do you want God to keep His word? To fulfill His promises? God makes promises about healing us when we are sick; about delivering us from terrible troubles; about taking our spirit unto Himself, and then bringing us back from the dead at the resurrection! He makes many wondrous promises! You and I hope God will FULFILL His promises, just like we hope a car or home we purchase will be delivered to us lawfully—LEGALLY!

The Old Testament is just that: a testament between God and His people, like a will. God promised to be Israel's God; to be their protector, provider, and faithful "husband," if they would *obey His laws*, which were given for their *good*.

Israel, like a potential bride answering the proposal of a suitor, said, "*All that the Eternal hath spoken we will do*" (Ex. 19:8). Israel *accepted* God's proposal. He said He would give them rain in due season, healthy crops, protection from their enemies, healthy, happy babies, solid, long-lasting marriages; that he would lay none of the diseases of

Egypt on them; that they would inherit a wondrous land, flowing with "milk and honey." He promised them good health, and long life. He promised them *peace* in the land, and *prosperity*! Is there anything *wrong* with all those fabulous promises?

God said, "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would keep all my commandments always, that it might be *well* with them, and with their children for ever!" (Deut. 5:29). God's Ten Commandments, including the fourth commandment about observing the Sabbath, were for their *good*; for their great benefit. The same is true of us today.

God said to them, "The Eternal shall establish thee an *holy people* unto Himself, as He hath sworn unto thee, if thou shall keep the commandments of the Eternal thy God, and walk in His ways.

"And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord; and they shall be afraid of thee.

"And the Eternal shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Eternal sware unto thy fathers to give thee.

"The Eternal shall open unto thee His good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.

"And the Eternal shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the Eternal thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them" (Deut. 28:9-13).

When the people of Israel heard the fabulous proposal of God, they *accepted* His proposal with alacrity! This was the *covenant* between God and His people. This was an agreement on the part of Israel to *obey God's laws* and be faithful to Him, so that He would *bless* them with full, rich, abundant lives. The covenant was *about* something. The covenant is not the law, but an *agreement about* the law; an agreement that Israel would *keep* the law, and that God would keep His promises. The word covenant means "an agreement between two parties" about something.

God promised to bless and protect them, and the people promised to observe His laws for their own good.

The "Old Covenant" was characterized as a *marriage* agreement. God said, "Behold, the days come, saith the Eternal, that I will make a *new* covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

"Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt: which my covenant *they brake*, although I *was an HUSBAND* unto them, saith the Eternal" (Jer. 31:31,32).

The covenant, or the "Old Testament," or the "Old legacy," or "Old Will," was like a *legal agreement* between God, as the Suitor, and Israel, as the potential bride. It was like a "prenuptial agreement," or a *contract*.

The laws Israel promised to keep included the *Sabbath* day, as well as the annual Sabbaths, tithing, and many laws concerning how to love God, and how to love neighbor. They were *good* laws; laws which would produce every benefit; every blessing! You have read how God said He wished their *heart* were such that they would keep all His commandments, that it "might be WELL with them and with their children."

But the people broke their part of the agreement. When one party to a contract fails to keep his part of the agreement, the contract is useless.

God had warned them, "Observe thou that which I command thee this day: behold, I drive out before thee the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite.

"Take heed to thyself lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee:

"But ye shall destroy their altars, break their asherah [upright, pagan images—phallic symbols], and cut down their groves:

"For thou shalt worship no other god: for the Eternal, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:

"Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice;

"And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods.

"Thou shalt make thee no molten gods.

"The *feast of unleavened bread* thou shalt keep...six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest: in earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest.

"And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks [Pentecost], of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering [Tabernacles] at the year's end" (Ex. 34:11-22).

The pagans worshiped the *sun*. They worshiped pagan gods of all descriptions, including "Malcom," and "Molech," and "Baal." The features of such worship were perverted adoration of procreation; of life! The pagans did not know the Creator God, who gives us the seasons. Instead, they worshiped symbols of life and fertility, like phallic symbols, rabbits, eggs, and the sun itself, just as millions of professing "Christians" continue to observe purely *pagan* "holidays" today, with the *very same symbols* used by ancient Babylonians, Egyptians, Greeks and Romans!

But God commanded His people to continue to *keep His Sabbaths* which look back to creation, and remind us of God as the *Creator* of everything that is. He commanded them to observe His annual Sabbaths, which are rich with types of Christ, and which remind us *seasonally* of God's great plan.

But the *people* broke their part of the agreement!

Millions are deceived into thinking the new Covenant *does away with the law*, when in fact it is intended to write God's laws in the innermost parts of our hearts and minds; lift His laws to a *spiritual plane*.

As an example, remember that Jesus Christ said the law against murder had said, "Thou shalt not kill [do no murder]," but Jesus said if we *hate* our brother in our heart, we have *broken the law against murder!* Which is the more *binding*, the literal interpretation of the law, or the *spiritual* interpretation of the law, which reaches into the human *mind*?

The new Covenant can also be viewed as analogous to a *legal document*. Now, instead of promising *physical*, material blessings such as rain in due season, healthy children, and protection from enemies, God promises *eternal life* in the Kingdom of God if we will repent of sin, accept His Son as our personal savior, and allow Christ to live His life within us. Salvation is His free, loving *gift*, but God does not give precious gifts to people who hate Him, and who hate His laws! He *loves* us, and He wants us to *return* His love by being obedient to Him; by honoring His Sabbath day; by following the example of Christ.

Then, they did not have the *heart* to obey. Now, God promises to *change our hearts and minds* by placing His Holy Spirit within us, to make it *possible* to be acceptable to Him!

***Salvation is the GIFT of God Through GRACE,
and Cannot Be Earned!***

Make no mistake! You could not qualify to inherit the Kingdom of God by keeping the Ten Commandments perfectly for one hundred lifetimes of one hundred years each! Salvation is the free, loving GIFT of God through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We can never *earn* salvation.

Keeping the Sabbath day will not "earn" anyone justification from past sins, or "earn" anyone an entrance into the Kingdom of God! But Sabbath-breaking is a *sin*, just like stealing or murder is a sin.

We must *repent of sin* in order to be *justified*; to have our guilty past removed! We have already seen that sin is the transgression of the *law* (I John 3:4). When we break God's law, we are under the sentence of *death*, for the wages of sin is *death* (Rom. 6:23).

When we *repent of having broken God's law* (Acts 2:38), God forgives us of having *sinned*. Now, we are *justified*; redeemed, made right in God's sight. Now, God has *forgiven* us for the sins we committed, and has applied the blood sacrifice of His Son and our Savior, Jesus Christ of Nazareth, who died in our stead, thus paying the *penalty* for sin!

Now, we are under God's merciful *grace*! What is "grace"? It is undeserved, unmerited *pardon* for our past sins. It is not *license* to continue to live in sin; to thumb our noses at God's Ten Commandments; to ignore His Sabbaths!

Paul wrote, "What then? shall we *sin* [break God's laws], because we are not under the law [the law no longer holds the penalty of death over our heads], but under grace? God forbid!

"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of *obedience* unto righteousness?" (Rom. 6:15,16).

Now, think! If you are arrested for a crime, and the judge sentences you to a year in prison, but you are *forgiven* for that crime, and allowed to go free, are you now free to go out, and commit the *same crime*? Of course not!

Forgiveness of sin does not mean we are now free to sin!

Repentance and baptism "*justifies*" us in the sight of God, but the forgiveness of sins that are past, believe it or not, *does not save us!* Millions think that if they "only believe" that they have sinned; that Christ died to save sinners; that Christ will forgive them of sin—they are *saved!*

But there is more.

Notice it, in your own Bible: "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

"Much more then, being now *justified* by His blood, we SHALL BE saved from wrath through Him.

"For if, when we were enemies, we were *reconciled* to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, *we SHALL BE SAVED BY HIS LIFE!* (Rom. 5:8-10).

If Christ's death could save us, why did He need to be resurrected? No, by His *death* is the atonement for *sins that are past*. This is "justification." This is "reconciliation."

If you and a beloved family member are at odds; if you have fought and argued over something, and have been estranged, and if you are then *reconciled*, does this mean you continue to fight and argue over the same things that divided you?

No, reconciliation is being "brought back" to the previous state! It has to do with *removal of past guilt*, but is not a stamp of approval for future sins!

Jesus Christ is our *living* High Priest, at the right hand of God the Father, to make *daily* reconciliation for us when we go to Him in broken-hearted repentance for sins that we all commit virtually every day! We are reconciled by His death, but we are saved by His *life!*

No judge would give you a legal document that says you have received a pardon for murder, so now you are free to go out and kill anyone you wish.

Now, a vitally important question: Because you are free as a result of a pardon, and you decide never to commit such a crime again, does living a crime-free life *earn* the pardon you received? Of course not! It was a free gift! You didn't earn it.

No American *earns* his right of citizenship and his precious freedoms by *obeying the law* and staying out of prison! His rights and liberties are a *gift*, given by right of *birth* or by legal immigration and citizenship. When we break the law, our liberties and freedoms can be taken away.

If we break the law, and are given a *pardon* because a judge was merciful, this does not mean we are now free to *break the law* again and again!

As Paul wrote, "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

"Being then made *free from sin* [because Christ's blood atoned for sin], ye became the *servants of righteousness* (Rom. 6:17,18).

"All thy Commandments are righteousness," God says (Ps. 119:172). To become the servants of righteousness is to begin living *within* God's laws, by allowing Jesus Christ to dwell in your hearts and minds through the power of the Holy Spirit.

***The Sabbath is A Perpetual SIGN — A "Mark"
Between God and His People***

God established the Sabbath day as a *perpetual sign* between Himself and His people! *Who* did this? As you have read, the divine member of the Godhead who *became Jesus Christ* did this!

"And the Eternal spake unto Moses, saying,

"Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, 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 Eternal that doth sanctify you.

"Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be *put to death* [the wages of sin is death]: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people.

"Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Eternal: whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.

"Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant.

"It is a *sign* between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the Eternal made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.

"And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God" (Ex. 31:12-18). Are there any end-time remnants of the "Children of Israel" existing today? You know there are, even if you believe they are "Jews," which only a small percentage of them are. If you have not yet read my book, *Europe And America In Prophecy*, which clearly sets forth the identity of the United States, Britain, and Europe in the light of Biblical history and prophecy, please write, or call for it immediately.

God does not have *two different standards* by which He judges human beings. This was a *perpetual covenant*; a *perennial sign*; one which would last *so long as the two parties exist!*

You have read that God *never changes*. You have read that Jesus Christ is the *same*, yesterday, today, and forever. You have read that the One who *wrote the Ten Commandments* with His own finger is the One who *became Jesus Christ!*

Notice that it was the *Sabbath*, the great *test* commandment, which was especially *emphasized* by the Creator when He gave Moses the two tables of stone!

The Sabbath is a *sign* between God and his people. A sign is an identifying label, or a "mark." For astonishing insight into the true meaning of the infamous "Mark of the Beast," write, or call for my booklet entitled, *The Mark Of The Beast?*

***God Promised Great Blessings
For Sabbath-keeping***

Almighty God promised His people they would be *greatly blessed* if they would only keep His laws! Specifically, He pointed to His *Sabbath* days as a great blessing.

"Thus saith the Eternal, Keep ye judgement, and do justice:

"My salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed,

"Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that *keepeth the Sabbath* from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.

"Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the Eternal, speak, saying, The Eternal hath utterly separated me from His people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree.

"For thus saith the Eternal unto the eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant;

"Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off,

"Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Eternal, to serve Him, and to love the name of the Eternal, to be His servants, every one that *keepeth the Sabbath* from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer..." (Isa. 56:1-7).

An *everlasting* name? This is nothing short of a promise of *salvation*.

Notice, "If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath; from doing thy pleasure [doing as you please] on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Eternal, honorable: and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:

"Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Eternal; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob [Israel] thy father: for the mouth of the Eternal hath spoken it" (Isa. 58:13,14).

The heritage of Jacob is *the Kingdom of God*. God promised *eternal* inheritance of this earth!

Jesus Christ told the Pharisees, "Ye shall *see* Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of God, and you yourselves cast out" (Matt. 8:11,12).

Again, *who said this?* God does not lie. His word is *truth*, and He does not change. You have read the words of *your own Bible*, which absolutely prove that the divine Savior of the world, the Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth, is the person of the Godhead who *wrote the Ten Commandments* with His own finger!

Millions of professing "Christians" are simply *deceived*. They do not *know* these biblical truths. Their eyes are blinded by tradition. They have never truly *studied* to discover the truth of God's word about His holy Sabbath day.

Paul's "Custom" of Sabbath-keeping—and What He Taught the Gentiles

God raised up Paul as His apostle to the *Gentiles* all over the Mediterranean world. As Saul, he had terribly persecuted the church, hailing men and women into prison. He was struck down on the road to Damascus, blinded, and so frightfully shocked that he was made ready to obey Jesus Christ, be baptized, and receive God's Holy Spirit (Acts 9:1-22).

Saul called himself an "Hebrew of the Hebrews." He had been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, one of the greatest teachers of rabbinical law. There was never a question in Paul's mind about God's laws; about the Sabbath day, or the annual holy days. They were a vital part of his life, as they were a part of the lives of all the apostles. He had been brought up from an infant by parents and teachers who kept God's weekly and annual Sabbaths.

As he traveled about, he continually preached *on the Sabbath* day. Nearly every town and city had a Jewish synagogue. Paul went to the synagogues, preaching on the Sabbaths. However, there were many *Gentiles* living all over Asia Minor, and they outnumbered the Jews in nearly every case.

Notice some examples: "Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem.

"But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and sat down" (Acts 13:14-41). Paul was invited to speak, and preached powerfully about Christ's resurrection from the dead, concluding, "Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets: Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you" (Acts 13:40-42).

Now, notice what happened! The Jews *left* the synagogue, and only Gentiles remained. "And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the *next Sabbath*" (Vs. 42).

What an opportunity for Paul and his men! Here were only *Gentiles*, asking the apostle to the *Gentiles* about coming together again for worship, and hearing the word of God

preached, on the *next Sabbath* day! All Paul had to do was to explain to them that they didn't need to wait a whole week—they could come back the *very next day*, our *Sunday*, to celebrate the "Eucharistic sacrifice!" Did Paul do this? Remember, Luke wrote these words about *thirty years* after Christ had ascended to heaven. There would have been plenty of time for the "custom" of "Christians meeting together on Sunday in commemoration of the resurrection" in those thirty years.

What happened? "And the *next Sabbath day* came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God" (Vs. 44). These Gentile believers were *not* counseled to come back the next day. Not one word was said about Gentile Christians observing *Sunday* as the day for worship. Instead, they all came together the following *Sabbath* day. Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, was certainly not observing the first day of the week, nor was he teaching Gentile Christians to do so. No, he continually taught them *on the Sabbath* days.

During the Jerusalem conference, as the apostles were wrestling with the false teaching from the Jews that all the new converts should be circumcised, James summed up the speeches and gave his final decision: "Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God:

"But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.

"For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues *every Sabbath day*" (Acts 15:19-21). James did not remotely suggest that this custom be changed, nor did any of the other apostles. The Sabbath simply never came up as a *question*. It continued to be observed for *centuries* by the early Church Jesus founded.

Shortly thereafter, Paul and Silas were summoned of God in a dream to go into Macedonia. They went from Troas to Philippi. "And on the *Sabbath* we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither" (Acts 16:12-14).

As the *Diaglott* shows, this word for "Sabbath" is in the *plural*, and should be rendered "Sabbaths." It was on the "Feast of Sabbaths" or "Feast of Firstfruits" that Paul and Silas spoke to Lydia and her household. Since the birth of the church, the Feast of Sabbaths, or Firstfruits, has been called "Pentecost," which means "fiftieth."

Now, notice, "Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews:

"And Paul *as his manner was* [this was His custom; his way!] went in unto them, and *three Sabbath* days reasoned with them out of the scriptures [the only "scriptures" extant were those of our Old Testament!],

"Opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ" (Acts 17:1-3). The city disintegrated into a riotous uproar, and Paul and Silas had to leave at night, and travel to Berea. In passing, notice, "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and *searched the scriptures daily* [The Old Testament—the only "scriptures" extant at that time!] whether these things were so.

"Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few" (Acts 17:11, 12).

Later, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth, where he found Aquila, who was a tentmaker. Paul, who knew the trade, stayed with Priscilla and Aquila, because the emperor Claudius had ordered all Jews out of Rome, and they were dispersed in all directions.

"And because he was of the same craft, he [Paul] abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.

"And he reasoned in the synagogue *every Sabbath* and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks" (Acts 18:1-4). Again, a group of the Jews rebelled and vehemently opposed him. Paul said, "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will *go unto the Gentiles*" (verse 6).

Paul remained in Corinth for a "year and six months, teaching the word of God among them" (verse 11).

Later, taking Priscilla and Aquila with him, Paul journeyed to Ephesus, where "he himself entered into the synagogue [on the Sabbath days—the only days when the synagogue was attended], and reasoned with the Jews.

"When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not;

"But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means *keep this feast* that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus" (Acts 18:18-21). Here Luke records how Paul was urgently wanting to be *in Jerusalem*, to be with others of the apostles and the brethren, on the upcoming *Feast*, one of God's *annual holy days*! Luke wrote these words, remember, about *thirty years* after the resurrection of Christ. This allowed ample time for any *changes* in the custom, practice, and worship of God's apostles and His early church. They would have had over three *decades* to put any such changes in doctrine or custom in place. Obviously, the apostles and the early church continued to keep God's Sabbaths and His annual holy days.

Much later, in Paul's defense before the governor, Felix, he said, "But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they [the Jews] call heresy, so *worship* I the God of my fathers, *believing all things* which are written in the *law* and in the prophets" (Acts 24:14). Paul believed *all things* written in the "*Old Testament*" of your Bible! That

includes every scripture concerning God's Ten Commandments, and Gods Sabbath days, as well as the annual Sabbaths, and all the many prophecies about Jesus Christ.

Do *you* believe all things written in the law and the prophets? Does most of professing Christianity? Do most of the Sunday-observing preachers and religious teachers believe them?

You know that they do *not*! Most of them teach *against* the Old Testament; against any obligation to observe God's Sabbath days or His annual holy days.

Later, before Agrippa, Paul said, "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come:

"That Christ should suffer, and that He should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and unto the Gentiles" (Acts 26:22, 23). Notice His belief. Notice His custom.

In the next chapter, Luke again makes mention of one of God's *annual holy days*, the "Day of Atonement," as a logical and important date on the calendar, having to do with the seasons: "Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the *fast* was now already past, Paul admonished them..." (Acts 27:9). The margin says: "The fast was on the tenth day of the seventh month: Lev. 23:27; Num. 29:7," which refers to the *Day of Atonement*. Remember, Luke was writing in about 59 to 61 AD, approximately *thirty years* after Christ's resurrection!

Paul Loved God's Ten Commandments, and Strove to Keep Them

For centuries, gainsayers have attempted to use the writings of the apostle Paul to do away with any requirement to observe God's Sabbath days, annual holy days, or any other of God's laws! Peter warned about this, saying, "...account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation: even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you:

"As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things *hard to be understood*, which they that are unlearned and unstable *wrest* [twist out of shape], as they do also the *other scriptures*, unto their own destruction" (II Pet. 3:15, 16). Did Paul contradict Himself? Notice what He said about the *law of God*: "Because the law worketh wrath, for where *no law* is, there *is no transgression*" (Rom. 4:15). This is a simple principle with which we have already dealt. Sin is the transgression of the *law*.

Paul wrote, "Wherefore, as by one man *sin* entered into the world, and *death by sin* [the wages of sin is death]; and so death passed upon all men, for that *all have sinned* (Rom. 5:12).

Paul was explaining what you have already read; how the law of God, though not yet *codified* on stone, was nevertheless in full force and effect, and was *known* by the ancients.

Notice how many times Paul upholds God's Ten Commandments: "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid, nay, I had *not known sin* [known what it was; how to avoid it], but *by the law*: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet... Wherefore the law is *holy*, and the commandment *holy, and just, and good*" (Rom. 7:7-12).

Paul did not blatantly contradict himself by continually upholding the law; saying it was "holy, and just, and good," and then turn around and teach Christians they did not have to obey it!

He wrote, "For we know that the law is *spiritual*: but I am carnal, sold under sin" (Rom. 7:14). Then follows one of the most moving and *encouraging* passages of scripture. Read, in your own Bible, all of Romans 7, especially verses 14 through 25. After explaining how Paul, with the innermost intent of his heart, wanted to *obey God's laws*; to do that which is *good*, he said, "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

"But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin [the pull of carnal human nature] which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

"I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord, so then with the mind *I myself serve the law of God*; but with the flesh the law of sin" (Rom. 7:22-25).

Paul explained only a few verses later, "Because the carnal mind is *enmity against God*: for it is not subject to the *law* of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7).

The average human being possesses a carnal, physical, human mind, which is *antagonistic* against the law of God!

God shows it is *human nature* to resent God's authority; to resent His laws. Thousands of would-be "Christian" teachers are perfectly willing to "believe on" Jesus Christ, so long as they feel they are under no obligation to *obey* Him!

Millions say they *love* the Lord Jesus Christ, but they will not *do what He said!*

When many who *claim* to be "Christian" are passionately opposed to God's law, it is obvious they are yet *carnal*, and are not truly converted. An instant test to determine whether one is indeed carnal minded instead of spiritually minded is to simply ask whether one believes one should keep God's Ten Commandments. If people are antagonistic toward God's laws, they are *carnal*; not yet converted. If they *love* God's laws, the chances are they are converted.

One of the best Bible definitions of a Christian is found a few verses later: "For as many as are *led* by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:14). The only way to receive the Spirit of God is to "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). But God will only give His Holy Spirit to those who will *obey* Him (Acts 5:32).

What is repentance? It is the deep remorse over having *broken God's laws*; over having *sinned*, which is the transgression of the law (I John 3:4).

Therefore the definition of a Christian is one who has been deeply sorry for having broken God's laws; has repented of having broken them, been baptized, and received God's Holy Spirit. Such a person will then want to *live a life of obedience to God* as best he or she can, going to God in prayer for every human failing, mistake, or sin.

Paul, who wrote so feelingly to the Romans about how holy, and just and good was God's law; who said he *served* the law of God; who said it was *spiritual*; would never have turned around and written to a different Gentile church that they did not have to keep it!

The "Weak and Beggardly Elements"

True to Peter's warning, there are those who *wrest* Paul's writings; who select certain "proof texts" which are "hard to be understood," in order to "prove" to people they do not have to observe God's laws.

Of course, they are not attempting to set aside the laws against idolatry, or covetousness, or adultery, or murder! No, they are only interested in getting rid of the *Sabbath* days and the annual holy days, so they can remain a PART of a Sunday-observing world! They desperately want to CONFORM to the world around them, looking to the great Catholic Church, or their own protestant denomination, saying to themselves "surely, all these churches can't be wrong." But they ARE wrong, as you have seen with your own eyes, and from your own Bible!

Paul's letter to the Galatians is a prime example of how false teachers WREST the writings of Paul in their attempts to do away with the Sabbath and the annual holy days. These Gentile people in the area of Iconium, Lystra and Derbe were being heavily influenced by "Judaizers"; Pharisaical Jewish "believers" who, while they accepted Jesus Christ, just could not let go of dozens of "do's and don'ts" of the "book of the law." One of the primary controversies that arose in the early church was the insistence of many Jewish converts that the Gentiles needed to be circumcised and observe ceremonial laws, such as those found in the Torah and the Talmud.

Acts the 15th chapter is an important historical document, which proves how widespread was this teaching. Paul learned that the Gentile Christians in the region of Galatia were being seriously affected by those who wanted them to embrace all the laws of Moses. The *Ten Commandments* were simply not a question among these people. Rather, Judaizing

teachers wanted them to become deeply involved with *all the laws of the Torah*, including many additional man-made ordinances, rules and regulations.

Paul introduced the subject by writing, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

"Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ [false teachers, who were insisting there must be many physical works; outward show and manifestation, to salvation].

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:6-9). Paul then *repeated* this ominous statement, making it a *double* curse.

The first and second chapters are written to prove that Paul was specially called of God; that he was not "Peter's messenger," and that he was *equal* in every way to the other apostles. He related how Peter, giving in to racist leanings, was eating with a group of Gentiles, but when Jewish leaders from Jerusalem came to Antioch, Peter "withdrew and separated himself [shunning the Gentiles with whom he had been fellowshiping], *fearing them which were of the circumcision*" (Gal. 2:12).

Read Paul's impassioned rebuke in Galatians 2:14-21.

A much misunderstood verse is Galatians 2:16: "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

Paul sums up the same thought when he says, "...for if righteousness come *by the law*, then Christ is dead in vain" (Gal. 2:21).

Paul is speaking of the "Torah" to the Galatians; the *whole law* as contained in the first five books of the Bible. He makes it clear that Israel could *never* have attained to salvation by living within the terms and conditions of the Law of Moses, *including the Ten Commandments*. The law cannot save us! The law points out *what is sin*.

Justification, or the *forgiveness of sins* (sin is the breaking of God's laws) can only come *through faith* in the sacrifice of Christ to atone for sins. It cannot come through performing rituals, ceremony, or through rigorously abstaining from proscribed food, drink, or clothing.

Yet, even though God's Ten Commandments are not the specific subject of Paul's letter to the Galatians, he makes it clear that the *Old Covenant*, including the rituals and sacrifices, was *added* because God's laws were *being broken*.

When Paul writes of the "book of the law," he includes the *Torah*, or Genesis through Deuteronomy.

When God brought Israel out of Egypt, He commanded them to *obey His voice!* But they *disobeyed*. They continually broke His laws. We have read how God *imposed the death penalty* for Sabbath-breaking *before* the Ten Commandments were written on stone on Mount Sinai. *Sin* occurred throughout the period of time from the creation of Adam until the giving of the law on Sinai, and sin is not imputed when there is no law (Rom. 4:15). God's Ten Commandments were *being broken*, which was *sin*.

The *added* laws, including the rituals and sacrifices, could *never bring them salvation*. They were added as a "schoolmaster," to teach those people that it requires the *shedding of blood* to atone for sin.

God said, "For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices:

"But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be *well* with you" (Jer. 7:22).

Burn that truth down deep into your mind, and understand it! As already proven, God's laws were in full force and effect *from creation to Sinai*. They did not come into existence at Mount Sinai, they were *codified*; written down with the finger of God, and eventually contained twice within the Torah, in Exodus 20, and Deuteronomy 5.

Speaking of the codification of God's laws, including the rituals, Paul writes, "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was *added* because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator [Moses]" (Gal. 3:19). If one has a broken leg, and a splint is placed upon it, or a cast, the cast or splint is *added* to the leg because it has been *broken*. A "transgression" is a *sin*. Sin is the "transgression of the law" (I John 3:4). Because these stiff-necked Israelites were *breaking God's law*, committing sin, God *added* the "book of the law." As Paul explained, "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

"But after faith is come [faith in the efficacy of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who died for our sins!], we are no longer under a schoolmaster" (Gal. 3:24).

The Greek word for "schoolmaster" is *paidagogus*. You will recognize the English word "pedagogue" in the Greek. A *pedagogue* is a *teacher*, or a *headmaster*. Today's modern school systems do not usually feature a "headmaster" in the fashion of 17th century Britain. The law was like a "headmaster," or a head *teacher*, to keep the Israelites in a disciplined, orderly mode of *learning*.

The headmaster of old was not only an instructor, he was a *strict disciplinarian*. Paul is showing the Gentiles that the law was a *strict disciplinarian*; as an headmaster of a school, who had the power to *punish* for infractions.

God's laws given to Israel not only *taught* the people the terrible consequences of sin, they prescribed the *punishments* for infractions! Thus, one could be banished from the community; forced to restore something stolen; perhaps restore it double, or suffer the *death* penalty inflicted by the civil community for breaking various points of the law.

One of the primary outward manifestations of that "headmaster," or "schoolmaster" was circumcision. It is one of the primary subjects Paul addressed in his letter to the Galatians: "Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.

"For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law [observe all the other rites and ceremonies]" (Gal. 5:2,3).

Again, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature" (Gal. 6:15).

Remember, these people in Iconium, Lystra and Derbe were *Gentiles*, with pagan, polytheistic backgrounds. They had been reared in a culture which taught dozens of superstitions. From the time they were children, their parents had taught them about false gods, taboos, ominous signs in the heavens, "lucky" or "unlucky" days. They were "dismayed" at the seasons; at astrological phenomena. They thought certain months, or days, or seasons, were propitious or unpropitious.

As new converts, these Gentile Christians were only too eager to listen to intelligent, gifted teachers and speakers who wanted to cause them to be *circumcised*, as well as to encourage them to accept all the various *added* "do's and don'ts" of the law of Moses. Whether or not they should *break the Ten Commandments* was simply not part of the subject matter.

Paul told them that they had been "in bondage under the rudiments of the world" from their childhood: "Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;

"But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father.

"Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements [Greek: "rudiments"] of the world" (Gal. 4:1-3).

The word "rudiments" means elemental, fundamental, basic; something roughly formed. Notice that Paul speaks of the *bondage of the world*, and is not speaking at all about God's Sabbath days, or God's Ten Commandments. He is speaking about man-made religious taboos and requirements which made one's daily life a rigorous, continual

annoyance; burdened down by dozens of detailed little things to do, including manner of dress, hair styles and the like.

Only when one has studied the incredible lives led by people from Tibet to Haiti, and from the jungles of the Amazon to the streets of Beijing, can one understand how many people are *in bondage* to various superstitions and ritualistic performances. I doubt that anyone reading this book lights a "joss" stick and places it at his door each morning when leaving for work, or prays to a *tree*, apologizing to its "spirit," before cutting it down. Neither are you cautioned to avoid killing a flea on the Sabbath unless it bites you first!

Now, notice a passage of scripture that is one of the *favorites* of those who would insist that keeping God's Sabbath is "bondage!"

"Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods [pagan idolatry; worshiping non-existent deities].

"But now, after that ye have known God, how turn ye again [notice! These were Gentiles, and some of them were *turning back again* into their pagan past] to the weak and beggarly elements [rudiments], whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?"

"Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.

"I am afraid of [for] you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain" (Gal. 4:8-11).

Never did God command His people to observe *months*! He *condemned* those who were "observers of times."

When Israel drove out the inhabitants of the promised land, God told them to avoid adopting any of their abominable, pagan practices, such as "observing *times*." "There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth *divination* [dealing with demons, or "familiar spirits"], or an *observer of times* [those who believe certain positions of the planets; certain months, or seasons, or years, are either specially propitious, or unlucky], or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a necromancer [one who claims to foretell the future by communicating with the dead].

"For all that do these things are an *abomination* unto the Eternal: and because of these abominations the Eternal thy God doth drive them out from before thee" (Deut. 18:9-12).

The people of Galatia were brought up in a completely *pagan* world. Their parents and their grandparents believed in many different pagan myths and superstitions. On the other hand, they were aware of Jewish synagogues in their midst; of the different dress mannerisms, and habits of the Jews. Both elements were at work among them when Paul wrote his letter.

The early Christians of Galatia were being pulled this way and that way by different teachers. Some were *Judaizers*, attempting to cause the Galatians to become involved in all the outward ritualistic show of "righteousness," such as circumcision, prescribed fasts, habits of dress—a plethora of "do's and don'ts" which would dominate their every waking hour. Others were teaching pagan astrology; encouraging them to become "observers of times."

Nowhere does Paul tell them to *abandon God's Sabbath day*, or His annual Sabbaths! Paul wrote to the *Gentiles* in Corinth, "Let us therefore *keep the Feast*," referring to the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread (I Cor. 5:8).

Now, notice how the Gentiles at Colossae were also being affected by false teachers, who were insisting that they observe various outward, physical, sensual rites, taboos, and requirements: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the *tradition of men*, after the rudiments [elements] of the *world*, and not after Christ" (Col. 2:8)

Paul was teaching against man-made traditions; against the vain "rudiments" of the *world*, not the laws of God, or God's holy Sabbath day. Returning to the "rudiments of the world" would be as if an advanced English major, studying to receive a doctor's degree, would be required to learn his "ABC's." It would be like *turning away* from real knowledge; from advanced study and understanding.

After these Gentiles had been *delivered* from superstitions, taboos, belief in pagan deities, myth and idolatry, false teachers were attempting to influence them to become *enslaved* to various ritualistic customs; not only circumcision, but many other "taboos."

Paul showed how Jesus Christ had made all these "rudiments" of the world totally unnecessary.

"And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened [made alive] together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

"Blotting out the *handwriting of ordinances* that was *against* us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross [Greek: *stauros*, meaning upright pale, stake, or tree]" (Col. 2:13,14).

Never are God's Ten Commandments referred to as "the handwriting of ordinances." These "ordinances" were humanly-devised restrictions, such as abstaining from certain kinds of foods on certain days, avoiding business dealings on "unlucky" days, or being married during a certain month. There were dozens of them, of which "Friday the 13th," and things like walking under a ladder, breaking a mirror, or having a black cat walk across your path are carryovers to modern times.

Never are God's Ten Commandments spoken of as "against" us. Instead, God shows they are for our *good*. Read Deuteronomy 5:29 again, "O that there were such an heart in

them, that they would fear me, and *keep all my commandments always*, that it might be *well* with them, and with their children for ever!"

Now, continue with the next verse in Colossians: "And having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it [or, "Himself"]."

Christ triumphed over death! He triumphed over Satan the devil; over the Sanhedrin; over the Roman government. His triumph was that *death could not hold* Him; that God resurrected Him from the dead, thus completing the wondrous plan of saving mankind from sin. Because Christ had done this—because of His *triumph* over the wages of sin, Paul urges these gentiles not to allow anyone to judge and condemn them in minute, unimportant, ritualistic symbolism, like various taboos. He instructed them not to worry about what other *people* would say, but to live their lives for Christ: "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" (Col. 2:14,15).

Notice this says not to let any *man* judge, or condemn you; it says nothing about God judging. Why would *men* be judging, criticizing, or condemning the people at Colossae? Simply because, from either extreme of Judaism or paganism, false teachers wanted them to become enslaved by many and varied restrictions! The Judaizers wanted them to become circumcised, and the "observers of times" wanted them to rigidly observe various "times," and other superstitions.

Other men were judging them because they were eating *meat*, or because they violated certain *drink* restrictions. Some were judging and condemning because of the *manner* in which these people were observing God's holy days; the *manner* in which they were observing God's Sabbath days. Six of the seven annual Sabbaths are *feast* days, in which food and drink play an important part. The only exception is the Day of Atonement, which is a fast day.

Paul was not saying *God* was judging or condemning—but that *man* was.

The margin says "Let no man therefore judge you *because of your eating and drinking!*"

Do *you* know of any "eating and drinking" taboos that are urged upon religious people today? Who has not heard of the American experiment with *total prohibition* in the twenties? Who is not familiar with "blue laws"? Who does not know about some churches which absolutely forbid certain kinds of beverages, in some cases, even coffee and tea? Who does not know about tens of thousands of restaurants offering *clam chowder* on Fridays as their "soup of the day"? How strange it is that tens of thousands of restaurants honor the *Catholic* religion of eating fish on Friday, and totally ignore the Jewish and Arab (Islamic) proscriptions against pork products. Such practices are a clear violation of the principal of the separation of Church and State, but the various civil rights activists, such as the ACLU, have yet to protest!

Many religious groups observe many different "written ordinances" today, which are *enforced* upon their people; oftentimes used as cause for disfellowshipment if they are broken. Most Baptists eschew any alcoholic beverages; Mormons eschew any stimulants, including tea and coffee; Catholics believe one must eat fish on Fridays.

Paul continues the thought, "Let no *man* judge you [because of] meat, or in drink, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days, which are a *shadow of things to come*, but the body is of Christ" (Col. 2:16,17). The word "is" has been placed in *italics* by the translators, which confuses the meaning of the verse. On its face, the verse seems to say that the *substance* of the things foreshadowed is Jesus Christ. However, merely noting the cycles of the moon, and therefore knowing whether it is the first month or the seventh month in determining God's annual holy days hardly foreshadows Christ. Neither does meat foreshadow Christ.

The point is, that understanding a *shadow*, while important, is not as important as the object that *casts* the shadow, in this case, Jesus Christ. People then as now were making a religion of *minutia*; little, unimportant rites and rituals, taboos, and various prescribed ways of doing things.

The implication may be that it is the "body of Christ," meaning the *church*, to whom Christ gave the power of "binding and loosing" that should be discerning the manner in which God's people observe God's holy days and Sabbaths, not self-appointed teachers who attempt to impose various "rudiments of the world."

Think back into your own religious background. Do you know of any relatively unimportant things which were either imposed as requirements, or proscribed as things to avoid? I do. I well remember many restrictions involving hair lengths, men's facial hair such as beards and mustaches, makeup; even whether or not simple quiet visiting was to be allowed in some church services.

If unchecked, it will not be long until "spiritual" religious leaders will begin to enforce an incredible number of "do's and don'ts" upon their followers. Let's face it. People LOVE RITUAL! It is so EASY to perform certain RITES, such as avoiding certain foods or drink, or wearing certain garb, as opposed to *loving one's enemies*, or "*doing good to those that hate you*." An outward show is much, much easier than control of one's emotions and innermost thoughts.

Paul also condemned the outward show of "spiritual humility" which some people love to portray, and which some religious leaders urge upon them.

Notice, "Let no *man* beguile you of your reward in a *voluntary humility* and *worshiping of angels*, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind" (Col. 2:18).

"Voluntary humility" is not true humility, but an *outward show* of pretended humility! How do people enter into "voluntary humility"? By effecting certain stark, drab, dark,

unattractive clothing; by abstemiousness to an extreme, like required fasts which are not commanded by God; by effecting certain headgear, like veils, or certain haircuts, or the lack thereof.

Even today, some religious groups enforce outward signs of "voluntary humility" upon their members. This is not the true humility of the *heart* which Jesus Christ taught, but merely the "tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world" (verse 8).

Paul wrote, "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ [through repentance and baptism (Rom. 6:1-4)] from the rudiments [base elements] of the *world* [not of God, but the *world*], why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to *ordinances*, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using;) after the *commandments and doctrines of men*?" (Col. 2:20-22).

Read this verse slowly and carefully, and see what it does *not* say, as well as what it *does* say. It does *not* call the Ten Commandments of God, or the Sabbath day, "ordinances of men." There is no commandment which says "touch not, taste not, handle not." These are humanly-devised proscriptions; religious taboos.

There *are* many, many restrictions imposed on the members of various religious groups which fit this description exactly! One has only to research the incredible number of "written ordinances" in the Talmud, and in the Judaism of the time of Paul, to understand how *rigorous* was the daily life of an adherent. The same is true today in various Catholic orders; in the rigorous lives of Tibetan monks, and among many cults.

Paul is condemning the "commandments and doctrines of MEN," not of God! In modern times, these commandments and doctrines of men include everything from facial hair and hair styles to skirt lengths and makeup; from the kinds of cloth one may use in clothing to the ingredients in soda crackers.

As astonishing as it may seem, religious "taboos" can become so all-pervasive that they dominate virtually every personal choice in life, including whether to see a professional physician when one is sick to whether or not to use dietary supplements. Various habits of dress, hats and headgear; even the kinds of conveyances one may ride in are either specifically forbidden or allowed by some religious groups. One of the most destructive of such "commandments and doctrines of men" is when religious leaders interfere in the choosing of one's mate.

Paul is dealing with a combination of oriental theosophy, asceticism, and Judaism. For "oriental theosophy," read: *Middle Eastern Gentile Polytheistic Paganism*, or the belief in many pagan "gods," which were nothing but the imagination of Gentile philosophers.

If one were to *paraphrase* verses 14 through 18, it would read, in modern English, "Blotting out the humanly written ordinances that were so burdensome to us, and took them out of the way, nailing them to His tree:

"And having demolished principalities and powers [those that judged Him and condemned Him, as well as Satan himself, who was the Lord of the dead], He openly showed them for what they are, and triumphed over them.

"Therefore, don't let anyone criticize or condemn you in your eating of meat, or in your drinking, or in the manner in which you observe the holy days, or the new moons, or the Sabbath days, which are shadows of things to come; rather, concentrate on Jesus Christ."

In modern English, "Don't let anyone beguile you out of your reward by outward affectations of humility, like various dress habits, hair styles, fastings and the like, or worshipping of *angels*, because such teachers are intruding into things of which they know nothing, vainly puffed up by their carnal minds.

"They are not concentrating on the *Head*, Jesus Christ, from which all the body [of the church] by joints and bands [individual members] having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increases with the increase of God.

"Wherefore if you are considered 'dead with Christ' through repentance and baptism; dead to any obligation to go back to the base, rough-hewn, rudiments of the world, why is it, though you must still live in this world, you are subject to man-made ordinances, such as 'touch not taste not handle not,' all of which are utterly useless, after humanly devised commandments and doctrines?"

This is the sense of what Paul was conveying. *Never* is God's Sabbath day referred to as one of the "rudiments" or "elements" of *this evil world*! Those who use these scriptures to argue against the law and the Sabbath are utterly ignoring the *many* plain statements by Paul that he *loved* and *served* the law of God.

The Sabbath Day From Creation Week to the Kingdom of God

God *created* the holy Sabbath day, setting it apart for mankind as a wonderful *rest* from his labors; a day which looks back at the awesome miracle of creation itself; a day which acknowledges God as Creator; a day which looks forward to the millennial "rest" of Jesus Christ.

God put His presence into the Sabbath, "sanctifying" it, which means setting it apart for an *holy* purpose. He revealed His Sabbath to the first family, and to all those who followed. Enoch "walked with God," and spoke of the coming Kingdom of God (Jude 14, 15). Enoch could never have been so described had he been a Sabbath-breaker. He *kept* God's laws.

God's Sabbath day was kept by the ancient patriarchs, including Noah. Abraham kept it, as did Isaac and Jacob. Moses and Israel kept it, and when some rebelled and broke God's Sabbath, they were meted out the *death* penalty on the spot! It was the one whom we know of as Jesus Christ who did this! The Sabbath day was always the *test*

commandment, more than any other. When Joshua warned the second generation of Israelites to avoid idolatry and to remain faithful to God's laws, he spoke *on the Sabbath* day, just before crossing over Jordan.

Every time ancient Israel was plagued by God and allowed to be smitten before their enemies, it was because of two main sins; *Sabbath-breaking and idolatry*. The great restoration under Hezekiah featured observance of the *Passover* in the second month. They observed an entire seven days of Unleavened Bread, and then, because the king and the nation so rejoiced in restoring the holy Sabbaths of God, they "took counsel to keep other seven days, and they kept other seven days with gladness" (II Chron. 30:23).

Hezekiah was *restoring the true worship of God* which his predecessor, Ahaz, had abandoned. God said, "And their voice was *heard*, and their prayer came up to His holy dwelling place, even unto heaven" (II Chron. 30:27). Read the entire chapter, for it is very inspiring.

Jesus Christ, your savior and mine, *kept the Sabbath*. He called Himself "Lord of the Sabbath day" (Mark 2:27). All the apostles kept the Sabbath. Paul kept the Sabbath day, and preached to the gentiles on the Sabbath. The early church *kept the Sabbath* day, and continued to observe the Passover on the 14th of Nisan down through history.

It was not until more than *three centuries* after the time of Christ that Constantine convened the council of Nicaea, and an *apostate* church began setting dates for "Easter" (Ishtar, or Astarte, a pagan goddess of fertility), and began trying to abolish the Sabbath. It required *centuries* for the apostate church to *force* those who were continuing to observe the Passover on the fourteenth of Abib to desist from doing so. Even so, the apostate church never succeeded in completely stamping out Sabbath observance. There have been small, scattered groups all down through history who have tenaciously clung to the "faith once delivered to the saints," keeping God's weekly Sabbath days, and observing the Passover on the 14th of Nisan.

There is a vast amount of literature available to any serious student of the Bible to *prove* that the Roman Catholic Church was the "sole authority" for changing the practice of the large, visible church from observing the Sabbath to observing the "day of the sun," or *Sunday*.

God's true church is described as but a *remnant* during the coming Great Tribulation and Day of the Lord. What will that persecuted *remnant* church be doing? "And the dragon [Satan] was wroth with the woman [the true church], and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which *keep the commandments of God*, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 12:17).

The "testimony" of Jesus Christ is the *message He brought*" to this earth. It is *what he said*, or testified. He gave the GOSPEL to His disciples, and commissioned them to preach it to all the world. The two main identifying signs of the true church which Christ

built are, (1) They are striving to KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD, and, (2), they are holding fast to the GOSPEL of Christ, and striving to preach it to all the world!

At the very beginning of the Bible, God shows us He *created the Sabbath*. At the very *end* of the Bible, notice the description of those who are allowed entry into the Holy City, which symbolizes salvation, and God's kingdom: "Blessed 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" (Rev. 22:14).

Soon, now, the time when men and women may read, and study, and ponder, and research various doctrines and points of truth will be over. Soon, now, Jesus Christ will establish His righteous kingdom on this earth, and *enforce* His Sabbath days, and His annual holy days (Zech. 14:16-19). Soon, now, the *work* that Jesus Christ is accomplishing through His church as a *human instrument* in His hands will be a thing of the past. Soon, now, the "window of opportunity" for people to read, and research, and think, and become convinced of God's truth a point at a time will be *over*!

Soon, now, God will rend the heavens and *reveal His mighty power* to all mankind!

In the time to come; the time of the Great Tribulation and the heavenly signs (Rev. 6,7); the time of the great *Day of the Lord* (Joel 2; Micah 4; Rev. 16-19) there will be no need for a human teacher to present God's truth over television, or radio, or on the printed page, or out of a pulpit.

Soon, now, God will *show all mankind* His glorious power, and there will be no longer a single human being who doubts God!

John wrote, "And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake: and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood.

"And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, and she is shaken of a mighty wind.

"And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

"And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

"And said to the mountains and the rocks, *Fall on us! and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:*

"For the great day of His *wrath* is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Rev. 6:12-17).

When Christ reveals His great power and glory, the time for arguments against God's word; the time for expressions of personal "opinions" about the Sabbath and God's laws will be *over!*

Christ will establish His Kingdom on this earth, and begin to RULE it with a rod of iron! He offers you and me a place *with Him* in ruling this world! "To him that overcometh will I give *power over the nations* and he shall RULE them with a rod of iron..." (Rev. 2:26).

Notice the picture of life on this earth shortly after Jesus Christ returns; life on this earth even before the bodies of all those who rebelled against God have been consumed by fire:

"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.

"And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die [maggots do not die—they hatch into flies], neither shall their fire be quenched [Gehenna fire!]: and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh" (Isa. 66:23, 24).

Yes, it will be an *abhorrent* sight! A *horrible*, stinking, abominable sight of bloated, dead, burning physical bodies who will be thrown into *Gehenna fire*, to become *ashes* under the feet of those who have received Jesus Christ, repented of sin, been baptized and begotten as children of God, and who have learned to *obey God* (Mal. 4:1-3).

Such a fate need not occur to any human being. God Almighty pleads with all of us, urging us to *obey His laws* that it might be *well* with us, and with our children and grandchildren.

God *loves* sinners! He hates the *sin*, but He loves the *sinner* who was enslaved by sin! Even as Ezekiel pleaded with Israel, "Turn ye [repent ye!], turn ye, for why will you *die*, O Israel?" So God pleads with all mankind today, "*Repent*, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

Remember, "For God *so loved* the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not *perish* [as the abhorrent picture of Isaiah illustrates], but have *everlasting life*" (John 3:16).

Your Savior and mine is the one who *created* the Sabbath day. He blessed it; set it apart; hallowed it—made it *holy time* for our great blessing, week by week. He will *enforce* His Sabbaths and His annual Sabbaths on all mankind during His reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. The only ones who will *share* in His millennial rule over this earth are those who will *surrender* to Him; who will not only believe on Him, but who will *believe Him*, and obey Him! In a very few years now, YOU will be keeping God's Sabbath day

with enthusiasm, joy, thanksgiving, and happiness, as will every other person on this whole earth!

Further, believe it or not, the members of the very divine Family of God; as co-heirs with Christ, will be responsible for seeing to it that the *whole world* obeys God's Sabbaths for one thousand years!

Finally, this sin-sick world of squalor, poverty, sickness and disease; of crime, drug abuse, violence and war will know *peace*. Finally, all mankind will have entered into one thousand years of God's "rest"; the glorious, wondrous, abundant, happy, joyous Kingdom of God under the loving, merciful rule of Jesus Christ.

May the loving, merciful God lead *you* to surrender to Him; to honor and obey Him; to enter into His Sabbath days with joy and thanksgiving.

-End-

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