

# THE SABBATH & SUNDAY

by Pastor J. Mark Martin

**WHEN THE COUNSEL OF ACTS 15 CONVENED** to determine what Gentile Christians must observe, **SABBATH KEEPING IS CONSPICUOUSLY ABSENT**. Peter exhorts the leadership of the Church not to place the Gentiles under the Law:

***Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are." Acts 15:10-11.***

The final judgment of the Jerusalem Council contains no reference to Sabbath keeping. Circumcision was discussed and deemed unnecessary (vss. 5-6; 19-20). If Sabbath keeping were to be an essential part of the New Covenant relationship with God it would have been mentioned in the discussion because it would have been an unfamiliar practice to the Gentiles. Sabbath keeping was not even discussed because it is not a requirement for New Covenant believers:

***"For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these essentials; that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication; if you keep yourselves free from such things, you will do well. Farewell." (Acts 15:28-29).***

**NOTICE** that the Holy Spirit told them NOT to lay upon the Gentiles any greater burden than **THOSE ESSENTIALS**. **OBVIOUSLY THE HOLY SPIRIT DID NOT THINK SABBATH KEEPING WAS AN ESSENTIAL THING ANYMORE!**

**The 7 post-resurrection appearances of Christ** show that Jesus purposefully chose the first day of the week to meet with His disciples to encourage and exhort them. The evidence shows that five of these appearances occurred on a Sunday, the first day of the week. We do not have a record of what the actual day on which the other appearances (John 21 and Acts 1:6-10) occurred to His disciples. What we can say with accuracy is this, after Jesus' resurrection whenever He met with His disciples and the day is identified, it is NOT the Sabbath, it is the first day of the week!

**1). To Mary, On the morning of the resurrection** - Matthew 28:8-10; Mark 16:9; John 20:11-18

**2). To two disciples going to Emmaus** - Luke 24:13-33; Mark 16:12-13

**3). To Simon (Peter)** - Luke 24:31-35.

**4). To the eleven disciples on the evening of Resurrection Sunday** - Mark 16:14-18;

Luke 24:36-44; John 20:19-23

**5). To the Eleven disciples "Eight days later"** - John 20:26-29

**Pentecost happened on the first day of the week!** The Church was born on the first day of the week! That doesn't make Sunday the Sabbath, it just tells you that after the resurrection of Jesus, the Sabbath is not emphasized.

When a day is mentioned in connection with the appearances of the risen Lord Jesus, it is always the first day of the week. Look at the extremely important events that occurred in the life of the first followers of Christ on the first day of the week.

1). Jesus startled them by appearing to them on the first day (John 20:19).

2). Jesus received worship from Thomas (John 20:27-28).

3). Sunday evening Jesus took bread and blessed it and broke it and gave it to His disciples evidently like He had in instituting the communion meal (Luke 22:19) and their "eyes were opened and they recognized Him" (Luke 24:31).

4). Sunday evening Jesus blessed His disciples twice saying "Peace be with you" (John 20:20; 26).

5). That same Sunday evening Jesus "...breathed on them and said, 'receive the Holy Spirit'" John

20:22.

6). On Sunday evening Jesus gave His disciples the ecclesiastical authority to proclaim forgiveness to those who believe in Him through the Gospel (John 20:23).

### **NOTE: Why did the Disciples meet on Sunday?**

- 1). Because it now carried a special symbolic/anti-typical significance for them
- 2). Even if it didn't and was by chance, --Jesus still chose to reveal Himself to them only on Sunday, when we know what day it is. That must also hold some kind of Divine significance.
- 3). Jesus could have chosen to meet with His disciple on the Sabbath. This would have clearly set a New Covenant precedent. He did not chose to do this. The Sabbath was the sign of a fulfilled covenant (see Exodus 31:17 & Hebrews 8:13).

### **THE NINE "MORAL" COMMANDS OF THE 10 COMMANDMENTS ARE REITERATED in the New Testament:**

- 1). To worship the Lord God only (1st commandment): no less than 50 times
- 2). Idolatry (2nd commandment): condemned 12 times
- 3). Profanity (3rd commandment): condemned 4 times
- 4). Honoring parents (5th commandment) is taught 6 times
- 5). Murder (6th commandment) condemned 6 times
- 6). Adultery (7th commandment) condemned 12 times
- 7). Theft (8th commandment) condemned 4 times
- 8). False Witness (9th commandment) condemned 4 times
- 9). Covetousness (10th commandment) condemned 9 times

**Why is it that the duty to keep the Seventh day as Sabbath is not mentioned ONCE in the New Testament?**

### **WHEN THE NEW TESTAMENT LISTS SINS, SABBATH BREAKING IS CONSPICUOUSLY ABSENT:**

In Mark 7:21-22 **13** sins are listed. Jesus did not mention breaking the Sabbath.  
In Romans 1:29-32 **20** sins are listed and not one of them is Sabbath breaking.  
In Galatians 5:19-21 a list of **15** sins are given,  
In 2 Timothy 3:1-4 there's a list of **18** sins, but not once is Sabbath breaking mentioned!

### **WHY IS IT THAT NOWHERE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT IS IT TAUGHT THAT THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT MUST BE OBSERVED?**

**-Why is it that nowhere in the New Testament is failure to keep the Sabbath day condemned as sin?**

**-Why is the fourth commandment itself not repeated even ONCE in the New Testament?**

**-If the Sabbath keeping is so important for a disciple of Christ, why was it not mentioned in His sermon on the Mount or in ANY of His teachings?**

**-Why didn't Jesus command Sabbath keeping?**

**-Why didn't any of the Apostles command Sabbath keeping?**

**-Why didn't the Jerusalem counsel command Sabbath keeping or condemn Sabbath breaking? (Acts 15)**

Some answer that the Jews already knew about the Sabbath so it was taken for granted that they would continue to keep it, but then why were the other nine commandments reiterated? Would they not be taken for granted as well? It would also seem that with so many Gentiles coming into the Church, that if keeping the Sabbath was so important

there would be instruction in the New Testament Epistles somewhere concerning it. There are instructions for them concerning morality, ethics, worship, Church order and family lifestyle. Why would something as important as Sabbath keeping be ignored? Circumcision, which predates the Law and the Sabbath commandment was an issue in the New Testament Church and is addressed repeatedly in the New Testament Epistles and by the Jerusalem Counsel.

### **Sabbath keepers argue that it is the example of Jesus that gives us the reason for keeping the Sabbath.**

"He kept the Sabbath, so I must keep the Sabbath. Jesus is my example," they say. Well this kind of reasoning is flawed because it only chooses Jesus' Sabbath keeping and rejects the rest of His Jewish lifestyle. Jesus also kept Kosher laws. He kept the Passover, Sukkot, Hanukkah, and worshipped in the temple. Are we to follow everything He did?

Galatians 4:4-5 says that Jesus lived under the Law to redeem us from the Law.

***"But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons." (NIV)***

**JESUS WAS ALSO ACCUSED OF SABBATH BREAKING.** Why, if He wanted to be our "example" in Sabbath keeping didn't He make it clear that He was not breaking the Sabbath? Instead He clearly admits to it. He also admits that His disciples were breaking the Sabbath and He defends them. **Read Matthew 12:1- 14 carefully.** Jesus is clearly saying that His disciples are like the priests who may work in the temple every Sabbath and be innocent of breaking the Sabbath. When Jesus says that He is "Lord of the Sabbath" He is declaring that He is above the Sabbath. He may do what He wishes on the Sabbath and therefore His disciples may do whatever they wish as well.

**Apparently Jesus did break the Sabbath:** ***"Therefore some of the Pharisees were saying, "This man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath."..." John 9:15.*** If Jesus did not want us to understand that He was breaking the Sabbath why did He not speak against these accusations. It's because Jesus had the right and the authority to break the Sabbath because He is Lord of the Sabbath. The Sabbath does not bind Him. Think about this, if it does not bind Him, are we not "in Christ"? Why would it be any more binding upon us. (Again Read Matthew 12:1-14 carefully).

One of the issues that needs to be honestly faced is the fact that Jesus never commanded anyone to keep the Sabbath and none of His apostles ever commanded anyone to keep it either. Not once in the New Testament are we told to keep the Sabbath. Those commands to the Church are conspicuously absent from the teachings of the New Testament.

**EVERY MENTION OF THE SABBATH IN THE BOOK OF ACTS** without a single exception is in connection with Jewish worship on that day and not Christian celebration. Paul's evangelistic strategy was to go to the Jews first in a community and share the Gospel with them. Sabbath is the day when he knew he would find the most Jews gathering for worship. He knew he would have his best opportunity of sharing the good news of the Messiah to the Jews on Sabbath. It was not because he was meeting with a group of believing Christians. He was meeting with non-Christian Jews.

### **IS THE TEN COMMANDMENT LAW ETERNAL?**

No, the Law is not eternal. Galatians 3:19 gives the purpose of the Law. It says: ***"What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come."***

The law was given 430 years after Abraham. ***"What I mean is this: The law, introduced 430 years later, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise. For if the inheritance depends on the law, then it no longer depends on a promise; but God in his grace gave it to Abraham through a promise."*** Galatians 3:17-18.

**The Law had a definite beginning time** (430 years after Abraham) **and a definite ending time**, -- When the promised Seed (Christ, vs. 16) came.

**Other Scriptures such as Romans 5:12-14 indicate that there can be sin in the world, even BEFORE the Law was given.** ***"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned -- for until the Law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of Adam's offense, who is a type of Him who was to come."***

## **CREATION & THE SABBATH: The Scriptures are very clear that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment was not given before Moses:**

The Ten Commandments was not made with the fathers. Deuteronomy 5:2-3 says

***"The Lord our God made a covenant with us at Horeb. The Lord did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us, with all those of us alive here today."***

Nehemiah 9:13-14 says: ***"You came down on Mount Sinai; you spoke to them from heaven. You gave them regulations and laws that are just and right, and decrees and commands that are good. You made known to them your holy sabbath and gave them commands, decrees and laws through your servant Moses." (NIV).***

## **WAS THE SABBATH GIVEN FOR ALL MANKIND TO KEEP PERPETUALLY?**

No, - Though Genesis 2:1-3 says that after the Lord had ended all His work He rested on the seventh day and blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, there is not a word about it being given to Adam and Eve as a commandment. You don't hear another word about the Sabbath in the entire book of Genesis. *All fifty chapters are silent about the Sabbath.*

You do not hear that the righteous Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob kept the Sabbath. There is a conspicuous silence for 2,500 years after the Fall of man. It is not until after the redemption of God's people Israel out of Egypt when they are safely on the other side of the Red Sea that you read in the Book of Exodus that the Sabbath is mentioned again. (Exodus 16:22-30). Abraham was given commandments and ordinances, but the Sabbath is never mentioned as one of them.

**Then the Sabbath is given to Israel and Israel alone.** The Sabbath is a covenant sign between God and the nation of Israel. ***"And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "But as for you, speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'You shall surely observe My sabbaths; for this is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the Lord who sanctifies you. Therefore you are to observe the sabbath, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a sabbath of complete rest, holy to the Lord; whoever does any work on the sabbath day shall surely be put to death. So the sons of Israel shall observe the sabbath, to celebrate the sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the sons of Israel forever; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day he ceased from labor, and was refreshed." Exodus 31:12-17***

**Notice that the reason why the Lord links the Sabbath to creation** is that He is identifying Himself to Israel as the true and living Creator God. He is separate and apart from all of the other gods of Egypt and of the Gentile world. *"Keep the Sabbath, worship Me, for I AM the true, living Creator of the Universe."*

**Notice also that this Sabbath "SIGN" (Exodus 31:13) is between God and "the sons of Israel" (Exodus 12:15,17) and not for all of mankind.**

**Nehemiah 9:13-14 indicates that the Sabbath was not given to be kept by anyone** until it was given to Israel in the wilderness. ***"You came down on Mount Sinai; you spoke to them from heaven. You gave them regulations and laws that are just and right, and decrees and commands that are good. You made known to them your holy sabbath and gave them commands, decrees and laws through your servant Moses." (NIV).***

## **DOESN'T THE BIBLE SAY THAT THE SABBATH WAS MADE FOR MAN?**

***"And He was saying to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." Mark 2:27.*** Sabbatarians often use this verse to say that the Sabbath was made for all mankind, but the text doesn't say that. It doesn't say, "The Sabbath was made for "mankind", it says, "the Sabbath was made for man". When the Scripture is meant to be inclusive of all mankind it is clear. See Matthew 28:19; John 3:16; Acts 2:17; I Timothy 2:4; Titus 2:11. These verses clearly indicate that when God offers something to all mankind He clearly offers it to all.

The Sabbath was not offered to all the nations. It was given only to the nation of Israel. Look at Deuteronomy 5:1-

15 which gives the commandments to Israel. It is clearly stated that God did not give the Sabbath or other commandments to the fathers before (see verses 2-3).

**One writer has brought up the point that this text shows that the Sabbath was not a part of the "moral" Law to be kept by all mankind from the beginning, for it had to be made. It was made in Exodus 16-20. Notice also that this text does not say it was made for man from the "beginning," as was marriage (cf Matthew 19:4ff). WHICH OTHER OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS HAD TO BE MADE? --NOT ONE!** (Gerald N. Wright, *Sabbatarian Concordance & Commentary*, Star Bible & Tract Corp., 1977, pp. 78-79).

Wright commenting on this passage says: "The other nine [commandments] were (and are) inherently right from the beginning, reflecting God's righteous nature and being naturally a part of man's moral character, who was made in the image of God (cf Romans 2:14). Which command other than the sabbath is lower than man--subject to being set aside under certain circumstances? When, or under what circumstances, can man lawfully commit adultery? Obviously, never! Man's life is not above God's holy and moral laws. Yet even a sheep's life is more important than rigid enforcement of the sabbath (Matthew 12:10-12)!"

**NO "BURGER KING" SABBATHS - You can't "Have It Your Way" with the Sabbath. God specifies how it was to be kept.**

- It was to be kept from sunset to sunset (Lev. 23:32)
- No burden was to be carried (Jer. 17:21)
- No fire kindled (Ex. 35:3)
- No Cooking done (Ex. 16:23)
- The penalty for doing any of these things during the Sabbath was DEATH (Numbers 15).

**NO "INSPIRED" WRITER MAKES ANY DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE "MORAL" LAW & THE "CEREMONIAL" LAWS.**

"(2) The Sabbath in its nature, is itself a ceremonial law: the moral law is all law which appeals to the conscience, and needs no written revelation; but as to which day to observe, or whether to observe any day at all, conscience is silent. If we are to distinguish between the moral and the ceremonial law, on the ground that one is passed, and the other still in force, then--as the Sabbath is purely ceremonial law--*it is passed*. But the most important point still remains. (3) I, as a Christian, obey all law that is moral in the Decalogue, not because it is in the Law, *but because it is in the Gospel*. Worship of God only is enjoined fifty times in the New Testament; idolatry is forbidden twelve times; profanity four times; honor of father and mother is commanded six times; adultery is forbidden twelve; theft six; false witness four; and covetousness, nine times. "The Ten Commandments," as Luther says, "do not apply to us Gentiles and Christians, but only to the Jews." So the Sabbath--except in a single passage where, classing it with the entire law, he declares it has been totally abolished. So the early Church held."

--D. M. Panton, cited in *Heresies Exposed*, Compiled by Irvine, pp. 164-165.

**SOME SABBATARIANS CLAIM THAT THE SABBATH IS THE SEAL OF GOD**

The Seal of God is NOT the Sabbath! The Bible tells us clearly that the Seal of God is the Holy Spirit indwelling the believer the moment he is saved.

Ephesians 1:13 says, "***And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of his glory.***"

Ephesians 4:30 warns, "***And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.***"

2 Corinthians 1:21-22 states "***Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.***"

**IS A SABBATH KEEPING CHURCH THE "REMNANT" OR COMMANDMENT KEEPING CHURCH THAT IS SPOKEN OF IN REVELATION 12:17?**

Rev. 12:17 says, "***And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.***"

In the New Covenant, what are the "Commandments" of God? Does this mean Ten Commandments? NO! The Greek word used for the Ten Commandments is "NOMOS". That word is not used here. The word used here is "ENTELE" and means "**teachings**".

John clarifies this and actually tells us what the "commandments" are that we are to keep:

***1 John 5:1-3 says, "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome."***

These verses are often used to teach people that they must keep the Ten Commandments, especially the Sabbath. However, the Apostle John defines the "commandments" for us. In the prior chapter he defines them explicitly. ***"Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight. And this is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us. And the one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him..."***

*1 John 3:21-24a.*

## **THE ASSERTION BY SABBATARIANS THAT AT THE COUNCIL OF LAODICEA THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH changed the Sabbath from the Seventh day to the First day is not true. The Sabbath was not changed at that Council.**

What did take place at that Council was an anti-semitic move to make it illegal for a Christian to worship on Saturday. But one needs to note that there were thousands of Christians already worshipping on Sunday, the first day of the week. Many in the early Church worshipped on Sunday:

**"Anti-Judaism played its part in second-century Christian polemic against Jewish Sabbath observance, but it does not follow that it motivated the introduction of Christian Sunday worship. For we have already argued that Sunday worship dates back to the first century, while few second-century writers compare and contrast the Jewish Sabbath and the Christian Sunday. Derogatory discussions of the Jewish Sabbath do not usually refer to the Christian Sunday. If Sunday were a recent substitute for the Jewish Sabbath, we should expect far more discussion of the superiority of Sunday to the Sabbath." R. J. Bauckham, *From Sabbath to Lord's Day*, p. 271, edited by D.A. Carson.**

## **EVIDENCE THAT THE EARLY CHURCH WORSHIPPED ON SUNDAY FROM THE EARLY CHURCH FATHERS**

**THE EPISTLE OF BARNABAS about A.D. 100** - "Wherefore, also we keep the eighth day with joyfulness, the day also on which Jesus rose again from the dead."

**THE EPISTLE OF IGNATIUS - A.D. 107** - "Be not deceived with strange doctrines, nor with old fables, which are unprofitable. For if we still live according to the Jewish Law, we acknowledge that we have not received grace....If, therefore, those who were brought up in the ancient order of things have come to the possession of a new hope, no longer observing the Sabbath, but living in the observance of the Lord's Day, on which also our life has sprung up again by Him and By His death."

**THE WRITINGS OF JUSTIN MARTYR: A.D. 145-150** - "And on the day called Sunday all who live in cities or in the country gather together in one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read....But Sunday is the day on which we all hold a common assembly, because it is the first day of the week on which God...made the world; and Jesus Christ our Savior on the same day rose from the dead."

**APOSTOLIC CONSTITUTIONS: Church life in the 2nd Century** - "On the day of the resurrection of the Lord--that is, the Lord's Day--assemble yourself together without fail, giving thanks to God and praising Him for those mercies God has bestowed upon you through Christ."

**IRENEAEUS: A.D. 155-202** - "The Mystery of the Lord's Resurrection may not be celebrated on any other day than the Lord's Day, and on this alone should we observe the breaking off of the Paschal Feast."

## WHO CHANGED THE SABBATH FROM SATURDAY TO SUNDAY? WAS IT THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH?

"Often the question is asked, "Isn't it paying homage to the Roman Catholic church to worship on Sunday because didn't Constantine change the day of worship?"

It is claimed that Constantine's edict of March 7, 321 changed the day. Constantine's edict reads:

"On the venerable Day of The Sun [venerabili dei Solis] let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed. In the country, however, persons engaged in agriculture may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits *Codex Justinianus*, book 3, title 12,3, trans. in *Schaff, History of the Christian Church* 5th ed. (New York: Charles Scribner, 1902), vol. 3, p. 380, note 1.

### PLINY'S LETTER, AD 107

Pliny was governor of Bithynia, in Asia Minor, from AD 106-108. He wrote in AD 107 to Trajan, the emperor, concerning the Christians. This is what he said:

They were wont to meet together, on a stated day before it was light, and sing among themselves alternately a hymn to Christ as God....When these things were performed, it was their custom to separate and then to come together again to a meal which they ate in common without any disorder."

We know the day the early church broke bread on was Sunday. "Upon the first day of the week when the disciples came together to break bread" Acts 20:7.

### IN AD 120 THE EPISTLE OF BARNABAS says in chapter 2:

"Incense is a vain abomination unto me, and your new moons and Sabbaths I cannot endure. He has, therefore, abolished these things.

When he speaks of the first day of the week, Barnabas says: "Wherefore, also, we keep the eighth day with joyfulness, the day, also, on which Jesus rose again from the dead" Chapter 25.

### JUSTIN MARTYR (140 AD)

Justin's 'Apology' was written at Rome about the year 140, only 44 years after the apostle John received the vision of The Revelation at Patmos.

The *Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* says this about Justin's works:

"In these works Justin professes to present the system of doctrine held by all Christians and seeks to be orthodox on all points. The only difference he knows of as existing between Christians concerned the millennium. Thus Justin is an incontrovertible witness for the unity of the faith in the Church of his day, and the fact that the Gentile type of Christianity prevailed." Quoted by Canright in *The Complete Testimony of the Early Fathers*, Fleming H. Revell, 1916, pp. 24-25.

**NOTE:** At this early date, AD 140, the *only major* difference among Christians was concerning the millennium. At that time they had no disagreement in keeping Sunday, and as you will see, Justin says that was the day on which all Christians worshipped.

In chapter 67 of his first *Apology*, entitled, "Weekly Worship of the Christians," writing to the pagan emperor, Justin states:

"...we bless the Maker of all through His Son Jesus Christ, and through the Holy Ghost. **And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place**, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things. Then we all rise together and pray, and, as we before said, when our prayer is ended, bread and wine and water are brought...**But Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common**

**assembly**, because it is the first day on which God, having wrought the change in the darkness and matter, made the world; and Jesus Christ our Savior on the same day rose from the dead." *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 1, pp. 185-186 (emphasis added).

#### **DIONYSIUS, BISHOP OF CORINTH IN GREECE, (AD 170)**

Dionysius was Bishop of Corinth, the Church which Paul raised up and to which he gave the command about Sunday collections, in I Corinthians 16:1-2. He says:

"**We passed this holy Lord's Day**, in which we read your letter, from the constant reading of which we shall be able to draw admonition." *Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History*, Bk. 4, Chapt. 23 (emphasis added).

#### **CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, in Egypt, (AD 194)**

Clement, writing around AD 194 says:

"**He**, in fulfillment of the precept, **keeps the Lord's day** when he abandons an evil disposition, and assumes that of the Gnostic, glorifying the Lord's resurrection in himself" Book 7, Chapter 12 (emphasis added).

#### **IGNATIUS, the third bishop of Antioch, who died in AD 108, wrote:**

"If, therefore, those who were brought up in the ancient order of things have come to the possession of a new hope, **no longer observing the Sabbath, but living in the observance of the Lord's Day**, on which also our life has sprung up again by Him... **Let us therefore no longer keep the Sabbath** after the Jewish manner, and rejoice in days of idleness; for "he that does not work, let him not eat."...**let every friend of Christ keep the Lord's day as a festival**, the resurrection-day, the queen and chief of all the days [of the week]" "Epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians," *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1, pp. 62-63 (emphasis added).

#### **TERTULLIAN of Africa, wrote around AD 200:**

In his Apology, Chapter 16, Tertullian says:

"We solemnize the day after Saturday in contradistinction to those who call this day their Sabbath, and devote it to ease and eating, deviating from the old Jewish customs, which they are now very ignorant of."

"Others, with greater regard to good manners, it must be confessed, suppose that the sun is the god of the Christian, because it is a well-known fact that we pray towards the east, or because **we make Sunday a day of festivity**" *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 3, p. 123 (emphasis added).

**NOTE:** The early church explained why they prayed toward the east. It was because, "as the lightning which lighteneth from the east and is seen even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of man be:" that by this we might know and understand that He will appear from the east suddenly" Ancient Syriac Documents, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 8, p. 668.

#### **DO WE EVEN KNOW THE REAL SABBATH?**

In 1582 Gregory XIII found a miscalculation in the calendar and decreed to drop October 5-14 and to drop 3 leap years in every century. In England 11 days (September 3-13) were dropped in 1752, in addition to other changes. (See *Heresies Exposed*, p. 167).

#### **NEW LIGHT ON CEREMONIAL SABBATHS AND COLOSSIANS 2:16**

An unbiased reading of Colossians 2:16 will show that this is talking about not just "ceremonial Sabbaths." The words "ton sabbaton" or "sabbath days"; are the same words translated "Sabbath day" in **Exodus 20:8** in the Septuagint (the Jewish translation of the Old Testament into Greek).

Look at Paul's reasoning, "Let no one judge you regarding a,

- **festival** - yearly Sabbaths,
- **a new moon** - monthly Sabbaths,



- or a **Sabbath day** - weekly Sabbaths (or if you wish Sabbath days)"
- **CHRIST**, he goes on to say is the "Substance", these things were shadows.

When this passage is compared with Galatians 4:9 an obvious connection in Paul's teaching is revealed:

***"But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again? You observe days and months and seasons and years."***

Verse 10 flatly states, "you observe...",

- **days** (weekly Sabbaths, corresponding to "Sabbath days in Colossians 2)
- **months** (new moons, corresponding to "a new moon" in Colossians 2)
- **seasons** (the 7 feasts, corresponding to "festivals" in Colossians 2)
- **and years** (the sabbatical year and the 50th year of Jubilee)

Obviously Paul is clearly speaking about the observances of all Jewish holy day, including the Sabbath.

**SABBATARIANS have long challenged, "Find one verse in the Bible that shows the day of worship has been changed from Sabbath to Sunday."**

Well, that statement is part of building a straw man. It is not the issue. The New Testament makes that a moot point because it says it doesn't matter what day you worship on.

Romans 14:5

*"One man regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Let each man be fully convinced in his own mind."*

Galatians 4:9-11 *"But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again? You observe days and months and seasons and years. I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain."*

Colossians 2:16-17 *"Therefore let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day--things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ."*

**SABBATARIANS ASK FOR ONE TEXT IN THE BIBLE THAT COMMANDS SUNDAY WORSHIP, HERE IT IS:**

**LEVITICUS 23:5-11 - Look at verse 11: *"And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord for you to be accepted; on the day after the sabbath the priest shall wave it."*** The day after the Sabbath is Sunday.

**Read on specifically looking at Leviticus 23:15 - *"You shall also count for yourselves from the day after the sabbath, from the day when you brought in the sheaf of the wave offering; there shall be seven complete sabbaths. You shall count fifty days to the DAY AFTER THE SEVENTH SABBATH; then you shall present a new grain offering to the Lord."*** This is the Feast of Pentecost. It was one of the compulsory feasts of Israel.

Note on the day of Pentecost, a Sunday God's people were commanded to worship. God says, ***"On this same day you shall make a proclamation as well; you are to have a holy convocation. You shall do no laborious work. It is to be perpetual statute in all your dwelling places throughout your generations."*** Leviticus 23:21.

**If you think this is only applying to "ceremonial" days**, Leviticus 23 starts out talking about the weekly Sabbath (see Lev. 23:1-4). It is called an appointed time and a holy convocation, along with all the other feast days of Israel. No distinction is made by God between these holy days and the weekly Sabbath. He includes them as being equally holy. This would mean that under the Old Covenant the First Fruits Sunday and the Pentecost Sunday were as holy and sanctified as Saturday.

**If you think this only applies to Israel**, that's our point. The Ten Commandment Covenant, --the Old Covenant

was made with Israel, and NOT with the Gentiles.

Look at Exodus 31:13, 16 and 17: ***"But as for you, speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'You shall surely observe My sabbaths; for this is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the Lord who sanctifies you....So the sons of Israel shall observe the sabbath, to celebrate the sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the sons of Israel forever;..."***

**References for the 9 "moral" commandments reiterated in the New Testament:**

1st - Worship God -

(53 times) Matthew 2:2; 2:8; 2:11; 4:9; 4:10; 14:33; 15:9; 28:9; 28:17, Mark 7:7, Luke 4:7; 4:8; 24:52, John 4:20,21,22(x2),23,24(x2); 9:38; 12:20, Acts 7:43; 8:27; 16:14; 17:23(x2); 18:7; 18:13; 19:27; 24:11, Romans 1:25; 12:1, 1 Corinthians 14:25, Philippians 3:3, Colossians 2:18, Hebrews 1:6; 9:1; 9:6; 10:2; 11:21, Revelation 4:10; 5:14; 7:11; 9:20; 11:1; 11:16; 14:7; 15:4; 19:4; 19:10; 22:8; 22:9

2nd - No Idolatry -

(20 times) Acts 15:20,29, Romans 1:25, 1 Corinthians 6:9; Chapter 8; 10:7,14; 12:2, 2 Corinthians 6:16, 1 Thessalonians 1:9, Galatians 5:20, Ephesians 5:5, Colossians 3:5, 1 Peter 4:3, 1 John 5:21, Revelation 2:14, 20; 9:20; 21:8; 22:15

3rd - No Profanity -

(4 times) Matthew 12:36, Ephesians 5:4, Romans 2:24, Revelation 16:9

5th - Honor Parents -

(6 times) Matthew 15:5, Matthew 19:19, Mark 7:10; 10:19, Luke 18:20, Ephesians 6:2

6th - Murder -

(7 times) Matthew 5:21; 19:18, Mark 10:19, Luke 18:20, Romans 1:29; 13:9, James 2:11

7th - Adultery -

(12 times) Matthew 5:27,28,32; 19:9,18, Mark 10:11,19, Luke 16:18; 18:20, Romans 13:9, James 2:11, 2 Peter 2:14

8th - Stealing -

(6 times) Matthew 19:18, Mark 10:19, Luke 18:20, Romans 2:21; 13:9, Ephesians 4:28

9th - Lying -

(4 times) Matthew 15:9; 19:18, Mark 10:19, Luke 18:20

10th - Don't Covet -

(9 times) Mark 7:22, Luke 12:15, Romans 1:29; 7:7; 13:9, Ephesians 5:3, Colossians 3:5, Hebrews 13:5, 2 Peter 2:14

Unless otherwise indicated,  
Scripture taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE(R),  
Copyright The Lockman Foundation 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968,  
1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977.  
Used by permission.

© Copyright 1999, all rights reserved  
**Grace Upon Grace**  
**12612 N. Black Canyon Hwy.**  
**Phoenix, AZ 85029**  
web: [www.sdaoutreach.org](http://www.sdaoutreach.org)  
e-mail: [sda@sdaoutreach.org](mailto:sda@sdaoutreach.org)