

Sabbath Confessions

This booklet presents an extensive case from the Bible and other pages of history for the validity of the only genuine weekly Sabbath—against which there is no legitimate rebuttal.

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The Sabbath From the Beginning

And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made (Genesis 2:2-3).

Assuming, as do most reputable critics, that the narrative in the first chapter of Genesis which divides the work of creation into six days is comparatively late, it follows that the Sabbath could not have been founded as a reminiscence of the completion of the Creation. The author must have been familiar with the institution of a seven-day week ending in a Sabbath. Its chief characteristic was then that of a day of rest as appears from the fact that without mentioning the Sabbath by name he seeks to glorify it by placing the hallowed character of the seventh day at the beginning of the world. The sanctity of the seventh day is in reality antedated (*The University Studies of the University of Nebraska*, vol. XI, 1911, Rest Days; A Sociological Study, pp. 123-124).

The Sabbath was binding in Eden, and it has been in force ever since. This fourth commandment begins with the word “remember,” showing that the Sabbath already existed when God Wrote the law on the tables of stone at Sinai. How can men claim that this one commandment has been done away when they will admit that the other nine are still binding? (Weighed and Wanting, Dwight L. Moody).

“Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws” (Gen. 26:5). This verse indicates that Abraham kept God’s mandates of God long before they were declared at Mount Sinai.

The ancient Arabians observed a sabbath before the era of Mahommed. The mode of reckoning by “seven days,” prevailed alike amongst the Indians, the Egyptians, the Celts, the Sclavonians, the Greeks and the Romans. Josephus then makes no groundless statement when he says, “there is not any city of the Grecians, nor any of the barbarians, nor any nation whatsoever,

whither our custom of resting on the seventh day hath not come!" Dion Cassius deduces this universal practice of computing by weeks from the Egyptians, but he should have said from the primitive ancestors of the Egyptians, who were equally the ancestors of all mankind. Theophilus of Antioch states as a palpable fact, that the seventh day was everywhere considered sacred; and Philo declares the seventh day to be a festival, not of this or of that city, but of the universe. This practice deduced, at least, from the Deluge, could not have been borrowed from the Jews; but, the heathen have derived this knowledge, "by tradition from the first fathers, who lived before the dispersion" (*Notes and Queries on China and Japan*, volume 4, Canon McClatchie, July, 1870, pp. 99-100).

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the LORD your God. *In it* you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who *is* within your gates. For *in* six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that *is* in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it (Exodus 20:8-11).

God felt so strongly about the need for work, and the sanctity of the Sabbath, that He declared "Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death" (Exodus 31:15).

Israel was sustained for 40 years in the wilderness with manna as their primary source of food. Gathering manna for food was allowed six days a week, and prohibited on the Sabbath. "This is what the LORD has said: 'Tomorrow is a Sabbath rest, a holy Sabbath to the LORD. Bake what you will bake today, and boil what you will boil; and lay up for yourselves all that remains, to be kept until morning.'" Then Moses said, "Eat that today, for today is a Sabbath to the LORD; today you will not find it in the field. Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, the

Sabbath, there will be none. See! For the LORD has given you the Sabbath; therefore He gives you on the sixth day bread for two days. Let every man remain in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day” (Exo. 16:23-26).

To the Levites, priests of the Tabernacle, God declared “Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work on it; it is the Sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings” (Leviticus 23:3).

Forty years after declaring the Ten Commandments before Mount Sinai, Moses reiterated “Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you” (Deuteronomy 5:12-14).

God’s Sabbaths Are a Sign

Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: “Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it *is* a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that *you* may know that I *am* the LORD who sanctifies you. You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for *it is* holy to you... It *is* a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for *in* six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed’ (Exodus 31:13-17).

Note: The word “sign” used in verse 17 is the Hebrew *oth* and can be translated as a signal, a flag, or a mark.

And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes (Deuteronomy 6:6-8).

God's revelation about the end of the age indicates that He will unleash plagues on those who have the mark of the beast. That mark is contrary to the mandates established by God (Rev. 14:9-10). For more about this subject, read our booklet—*Understanding the Mark of the Beast*.

The Sabbath is for Everyone Who Reveres God

Thus says the LORD: “Keep justice, and do righteousness, for My salvation is about to come, and My righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man who does this, and the son of man who lays hold on it; who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, and keeps his hand from doing any evil” (Isaiah 56:1-2).

Also the sons of the foreigner Who join themselves to the LORD, to serve Him, And to love the name of the LORD, to be His servants—Everyone who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, And holds fast My covenant (Isaiah 56:6).

Israel Polluted the Sabbath and God Punished Them

Yet the house of Israel rebelled against Me in the wilderness; they did not walk in My statutes; they despised My judgments, which, *if* a man does, he shall live by them; and they greatly defiled My Sabbaths. Then I said I would pour out My fury on them in the wilderness, to consume them. But I acted for My name's sake, that it should not be profaned before the Gentiles, in whose sight I had brought them out. So I also raised My hand in an oath to them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land which I had given *them*, ‘flowing with milk and honey,’ the glory of all lands, because they despised My judgments and did not walk in My statutes, but profaned My Sabbaths; for their heart went after their idols. "But I said to their children in the wilderness, 'Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers, nor observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols. I am the LORD your God: Walk in My statutes, keep My judgments, and do them; hallow My Sabbaths, and they will be a sign between Me and you, that you may know that I am the LORD your God. Notwithstanding, the children rebelled against Me; they did not walk in My statutes, and were not careful to observe My judgments, which, *if* a man does, he shall live by

them; but they profaned My Sabbaths. Then I said I would pour out My fury on them and fulfill My anger against them in the wilderness. "But I said to their children in the wilderness, 'Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers, nor observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols. Nevertheless I withdrew My hand and acted for My name's sake, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the Gentiles, in whose sight I had brought them out. Also I raised My hand in an oath to those in the wilderness, that I would scatter them among the Gentiles and disperse them throughout the countries, because they had not executed My judgments, but had despised My statutes, profaned My Sabbaths, and their eyes were fixed on their fathers' idols (Ezekiel 20:13-24).

The Sabbath Was Observed by Christ and His Disciples

Then they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and taught (Mark 1:21).

And He said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27-28).

Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath (Luke 13:10).

So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read (Luke 4:16).

Then He went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and was teaching them on the Sabbaths. And they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority (Luke 4:31-32).

And when the Sabbath had come, He began to teach in the synagogue. And many hearing *Him* were astonished, saying, "Where *did* this Man *get* these things? And what wisdom *is* this which is given to Him, that such mighty works are performed by His hands!" (Mark 6:2).

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).

So when the Jews went out of the synagogue, the Gentiles begged that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath. Now when the congregation had broken up, many of the Jews and devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. On the next Sabbath almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God (Acts 13:42-44).

Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures (Acts 17:2).

And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks (Acts 18:4).

The Sabbath at the End of the Age

And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath (Matthew 24:20).

And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ (Revelation 12:17).

Blessed *are* those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city (Revelation 22:14).

The Sabbath in the Millennium

“And it shall come to pass *that* from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Me,” says the LORD (Isaiah 66:23).

Thus says the Lord GOD: “The gateway of the inner court that faces toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but on the Sabbath it shall be opened, and on the day of the new moon it shall

be opened. The prince shall enter by way of the vestibule of the gateway from the outside, and stand by the gatepost. The priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings. He shall worship at the threshold of the gate. Then he shall go out, but the gate shall not be shut until evening. Likewise, the people of the land shall worship at the entrance to this gateway before the LORD on the Sabbaths and the new moons” (Ezekiel 46:1-3).

The Sabbath Has Been Preserved

Nazarenes, an obscure Jewish-Christian sect... they dated their settlement in Pella from the time of the flight of the Jewish Christians from Jerusalem, immediately before the siege in A.D. 70... they recognized the new covenant as well as the old... They used the Aramaic recension of the Gospel according to Matthew, which they called the Gospel to the Hebrews, but, while adhering as far as possible to the Mosaic economy as regarded circumcision, Sabbaths, foods and the like, they did not refuse to recognize the apostolicity of Paul or the rights of heathen Christians (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th edition, vol. XIX, p. 319).

The gentile Christians observed also the Sabbath (*Gieseler's Church History*, vol. 1, p. 93).

Down even to the fifth century the observance of the Jewish Sabbath was continued in the Christian church (*Ancient Christianity Exemplified*, p. 527, Lyman Coleman).

And because they observed no other day of rest but the Sabbath days, they called them Insabbati... (*Luther's Forerunners, the History of the Waldenses*, Jean-Paul Perrin, book 1, p. 8, 1624,).

For centuries evangelical bodies, especially the Waldenses, were called Insabbati because of Sabbath-keeping (*Manuel d'Inquisiteur*, vol. 1, p. 37, Gui).

About the year 600, as we have seen, there was in the city of Rome itself a class of Sabbath-keeping Christians who were very strict in the observance of the fourth commandment. It has been

said of them that they joined with this a strict abstinence from labor on Sunday. But Dr. Twisse, a learned first-day writer who has particularly examined the record respecting them, asserts that this Sunday observance pertained to “other persons, different from the former.” These Sabbath-keepers were not Romanists, and the pope denounced them in strong language (*History of the Sabbath and First Day of the Week*, p. 400, J.N. Andrews, 1873).

The Primitive Christians had a great veneration for the Sabbath, and spent the Day in Devotion and Sermons. And ‘tis not to be doubted but they derived this Practice from the Apostles themselves (*A Discourse in Six Dialogues on the Name, Notion, and Observation of the Lord’s Day*, p. 189).

In 1310, two hundred years before Luther’s theses, the Bohemian brethren constituted one fourth of the population of Bohemia, and that they were in touch with the Waldenses who abounded in Austria, Lombardy, Bohemia, north Germany, Thuringia, Brandenburg, and Moravia. Erasmus pointed out how strictly Bohemian Waldenses kept the seventh day Sabbath (*A History of the Baptists*, p.313, Armitage).

The Sabbath played the most important part in their religion’s life... They called the Sabbath celebration a “spiritual marriage,” and adorned themselves for it in wedding attire. The Sabbath service consisted of prayers and hymns, introduced and concluded by the sermon or ‘instruction.’ ... they maintained that, in adhering to these observances, they were following the example and teaching of Jesus. “He who keeps not the Sabbath will have no portion in the inheritance of Christ” (*Jewish Quarterly Review*, July 1890, #4, vol. II, Abrahams and C.G. Montefiore, pp. 472-475).

Next to the Lord’s day the ancient Christians were very careful in the observation of Saturday, or the seventh-day which was the ancient Jewish sabbath... Anthanasius likewise tells us that they held religious assemblies on the sabbath, not because they were infected with Judaism, but to worship Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath. Epiphanius says the same, that it was a day of public

assembly in many churches, meaning the Oriental churches, where it was kept a festival (*Antiquities of the Christian Church*, Joseph Bingham, vol. II, book XX, pp. 1137-1138).

We have reason to fear that the growing demoralization in the public sentiment touching the sacredness of the Sabbath has crept in among us, and, especially in the larger towns and cities, is on the increase. The Sabbath instituted in the beginning and confirmed again and again by Moses and the prophets, has never been abrogated. A part of the moral law, not a part or tittle of its sanctity has been taken away. The Bible abounds in admonitions and exhortations and warnings concerning it. Nature and religion both teach that it is necessary to man's physical, intellectual and moral well being; and history shows that it is equally necessary to the well being of society and the permanent success of the Church (*New York Herald*, p. 4, Dec. 27, 1874).

We dwelt upon the Paulicians, Petrobrusians, Passagians, Waldenses, Insabbatati, as great Sabbathkeeping bodies of Europe down to 1250. We wrote of the Sabbatarians in Bohemia, Transylvania, England, and Holland between 1250 and 1600, as authenticated by Cox, Jones, Allix, and William of Neuburg. We have mentioned the innumerable Sabbath-keeping churches among the Greeks, Abyssinians, Armenians, Maronites, Jacobites, Scythians, and the great Church of the East (also from A.D. 1250 to 1600) with supporting evidence from competent authorities. The doctrines of all these Sabbath keeping bodies throughout the centuries were comparatively pure, and the lives of their members were simple and holy. They were free from the unscriptural ceremonies which arose from the following of tradition. They received the Old Testament, and the whole Bible was their authority (*Truth Triumphant – The Church in the Wilderness*, p. 456, B.G. Wilkinson).

But, the moral law contained in the ten commandments, and enforced by the prophets, He did not take away. It was not the design of his coming to revoke any part of this. This is a law which never can be broken... Every part of this law must remain in force upon all mankind, and in all ages; as not depending either

on time or place, or any other circumstances liable to change, but on the nature of God and the nature of man, and their unchangeable relation to each other (*Sermons on Several Occasions*, Vol. I, pp. 221- 222).

The weekly rhythm acquired social relevance where it became the ground-rhythm of a process of religious socialization. This applied first of all to the Jews, but then also to the *Christiaini* who sprang from their ranks. The religious differentiation of this group was very quickly reflected at the level of the calendar, not least in the shift of the day of assembly from the seventh day of the week, the Sabbath, to the first day, Sunday. In terms of the day's content, its central importance lay no longer in its indivisible essence, but in the sacred cult during the hours of leisure at the margins of the day, in the morning and evening, thus, until Constantine's Sunday legislation, no symbolic, identity-creating function, or soteriological exaltation, pertained to the day, as was the case with the Sabbath (*Roman Calendar from Numa to Constantine : Time, History, and the Fasti*, Jorg Rupke, translated by David M. B. Richardson, pp. 163-164).

There is much evidence that the Sabbath prevailed in Wales universally until AD 1115, when the first Roman bishop was seated at St. David's. The old Welsh Sabbath-keeping churches did not even then altogether bow the knee to Rome, but fled to their hiding places (*Seventh Day Baptists in Europe and America*, Vol. 1, p. 29).

The primitive Christians did keep the Sabbath of the Jews... therefore the Christians for a long time together, did keep their conventions on the Sabbath, in which some portion of the Law were read: and this continued till the time of the Laodicean council (*The Whole Works of Jeremy Taylor*, vol. IX, p. 416).

Sunday Confessions

If God by a positive moral and perpetual commandment does bind all men; in all ages to such a particular seventh day as himself appointed, then either thy must prove that God has made

His moral Law mutable by appointing some other day, or else the seventh day Sabbath must be restored to its primitive glory. Their first ground for change of the Sabbath to the first day is raised from Christ's resurrection, and apparition to His Disciples. But the very great difference between the Father's example at the world's creation, and the Sons action at His resurrection will soon discover the vanity of this argument. For upon the Creation of the World, God did solemnly sanctify the seventh day for His Sabbath and rested on it, giving as an example for the ground of our obedience, but upon the resurrection there's not the least syllable of a change, institution, sanctification, or celebration (*The Seventh-Day Sabbath Sought out and celebrated*, 1657, Thomas Tillman, pp. 119-120).

The festival of Sunday, like all other festivals, was always only a human ordinance, and it was far from the intentions of the apostles to establish a Divine command in this respect, far from them, and from the early apostolic Church, to transfer the laws of the Sabbath to Sunday (*Neander's Church History*, p. 186, translated by H. J. Rose).

There was and is a commandment to keep holy the Sabbath day, but that Sabbath day was not Sunday. It will be said, however, and with some show of triumph, that the Sabbath was transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week, with all its duties, privileges and sanctions. Earnestly desiring information on this subject, which I have studied for many years, I ask: Where can the record of this transaction be found? Not in the New Testament—absolutely not. There is no scriptural evidence of the change of the Sabbath institution from the seventh to the first day of the week. I wish to say that this Sabbath question, in this aspect of it, is the gravest and most perplexing question connected with Christian institutions which at present claims attention from Christian people; and the only reason that it is not a more disturbing element in Christian thought and in religious discussions is because the Christian world has settled down content on the conviction that somehow a transference has taken place at the beginning of Christian history. To some it seems unaccountable that Jesus, during three years' intercourse with His disciples, often

conversing with them upon the Sabbath question, discussing it in some of its various aspects, freeing it from its false glosses, never alluded to a transference of the day. Also, that during 40 days of his resurrection life, no such thing was intimated. Nor, so far as we know, did the Spirit, which was given to bring to their remembrance all things whatsoever that He has said unto them, deal with this question. Nor yet did the inspired apostles, in preaching the gospel, founding churches, counseling and instructing those founded, discuss or approach this subject. Of course, I quite well know that Sunday did come into use early in Christian history as a religious day; as we learn from the Christian Fathers and other sources. But what a pity that it comes branded with the mark of paganism, and christened with the name of the sun god, when adopted and sanctioned by the papal apostasy, and bequeathed as a sacred legacy to Protestantism! (Dr. Edward T. Hiscox, New York Minister's Conference, Nov. 13, 1893).

But they err in teaching that Sunday has taken the place of the Old Testament Sabbath and therefore must be kept as the seventh day had to be kept by the children of Israel... These churches err in their teaching, for Scripture has in no way ordained the first day of the week in place of the Sabbath. There is simply no law in the New Testament to that effect (*Sabbath or Sunday*, pp. 15-16, John Theodore Mueller).

At a service commemorating the 400th anniversary of the Church of England prayer book, Archbishop Carrington recalled that "the Bible commandment says on the seventh day thou shalt rest. That is Saturday. Nowhere in the Bible is it laid down that worship should be done on Sunday." Tradition, he said, had made it a day of worship (*Toronto Daily Star*, p. 3, Oct. 26, 1949).

The Bible is silent on Sunday observance, it speaks only of Sabbath observance. The Lord's Day—Dies Dominica—is the term used always in the Missal and the Breviary. It occurs in the Bible once (Apoc. 1:10) in Acts 20:7 and 1Cor. 16:2 there is a reference to "the first day of the week;" but in none of these is there the remotest intimation that henceforth the first day is to take place of the seventh (*The Catholic Record*, vol. XLV, p. 4, 1923).

Take the matter of Sunday. There are indications in the New Testament as to how the church came to keep the first day of the week as its day of worship, but there is no passage telling Christians to keep that day, or to transfer the Jewish Sabbath to that day (*Christian Advocate*, July 2, 1942, Harris Franklin Rall).

There is nothing in Scripture that requires us to keep Sunday rather than Saturday as a holy day (*Christianity Today*, Harold Lindsell, Nov. 5, 1976).

Catholic Confessions

Examining the New Testament from cover to cover, critically, we find the Sabbath referred to sixty-one times. We find too, that the Savior invariably selected the Sabbath (Saturday) to teach in the synagogues and work miracles. The four Gospels refer to the Sabbath (Saturday) fifty-one times. In one instance, the Redeemer refers to Himself as “Lord of the Sabbath” as mentioned by Matthew and Luke, but, during the whole record of His life, while invariably keeping and utilizing the day, (Saturday), He never once hinted at a desire to change it (*The Christian Sabbath*, p. 12, 1893).

Let us now, however, take a glance at our second proposition, with the Bible alone as the teacher and guide in faith and morals. This teacher most emphatically forbids any changes in the day for paramount reasons. The command calls for a “perpetual covenant.” The day commanded to be kept by the teacher has never once been kept (by Catholics and protestants), thereby developing an apostasy from an assumedly fixed principle, as self-contradictory, self-stultifying, and consequently as suicidal as it is within the power of language to express (*The Christian Sabbath*, p. 31, 1893).

Sabbath by Christians led to the special observance of Sunday in its place. Bishop Victorinus, about 290, betrays the real motive of the papacy in the introduction of the Sabbath fasting as follows: “Let the parasceve become a rigorous fast, lest we should appear to observe any Sabbath with the Jews.” Neander

also wrote: “While in the Western, and especially in the Roman Church, where the opposition against Judaism predominated, the custom, on the other hand, grew out of this opposition, “observing the Sabbath also as a fast day.” Archbishop Menezes, therefore, in harmony with the usual practice of imperial Christianity forced the decree which turned Saturday into a fast day through the Synod of Diamper. This put those St. Thomas Christians who in the future would observe the Sabbath as a festival, into the category of apostate Christians, and destined them for the stake at Goa (*Truth Triumphant – The Church in the Wilderness*, B.G. Wilkinson, pp. 326-327).

Question: Which is the Sabbath day? **Answer:** Saturday is the Sabbath day. **Q:** Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday? **A:** We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church in the Council of Laodicea, transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday. (*The Converts Catechism of Catholic Doctrine*, 3rd edition, Peter Geiermann, C.S.S.R.).

In the Old Testament reference is made one hundred and twenty-six times to the Sabbath, and all these texts conspire harmoniously in voicing the will of God, commanding the seventh day to be kept, because God Himself kept it, making it obligatory on all as perpetual covenant. Nor can we imagine any one foolhardy enough to question the identity of Saturday with the Sabbath or seventh day, seeing that the people of Israel have been keeping Saturday from the giving of the Law (*The Christian Sabbath*, p. 10, 1893).

Some theologians have held that God likewise directly determined Sunday as the day of worship in the New Law, that He Himself has explicitly substituted Sunday for the Sabbath. But this theory is now entirely abandoned. It is now commonly held that God simply gave His Church the power to set aside whatever day or days she would deem suitable as Holy Days. The Church chose Sunday, the first day of the week, and in the course of time added other days as holy days (*A Course in Religion for Catholic High Schools and Academies*, vol. 1, p. 51, John Laux, 1936).

We Catholics do not accept the Bible as the only rule of faith. Besides the Bible we have the living Church, the authority of the Church, as a rule to guide us. We say this Church, instituted by Christ to teach and guide man through life, has the right to change the ceremonial laws of the Old Testament and hence, we accept her change of the Sabbath to Sunday. We frankly say, yes, the Church made this change, made this law, as she made many other laws, for instance, the Friday abstinence, the unmarried priesthood, the laws concerning mixed marriages, the regulation of Catholic marriages and a thousand other laws (*Catholic Church Extension Society*, 1975, Chicago, Illinois, Peter R. Kraemer).

The Redeemer, during His mortal life, never kept any other day than Saturday (*The Christian Sabbath*, p. 6, 1893).

Which church does the whole civilized world obey? Protestants call us every horrible name they can think of—antichrist, the scarlet-colored beast, Babylon, etc., and at the same time profess great reverence for the Bible, and yet by their solemn act of keeping Sunday they acknowledge the power of the Catholic Church. The Bible says, ‘Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy,’ but the Catholic Church says, ‘No, keep the first day of the week,’ and the whole world bows in obedience (Thomas Enright, C.S.S.R., lecture at Redemptorist College, Kansas City, MO, Feb. 18, 1884).

The Protestant world has been, from its infancy, in the Sixteenth century, in thorough accord with the Catholic Church, in keeping “holy” not Saturday, but Sunday (*The Christian Sabbath*, p. 6, 1893).

Question: Have you any other way of proving that the Church has power to institute festivals of precept? **Answer:** Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her - she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scriptural authority (*A Doctrinal Catechism*, 3rd edition, Stephen Keenan, p. 174).

You may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we never sanctify (*Faith of Our Fathers*, p. 111, James Cardinal Gibbon).

Is Saturday the seventh day according to the Bible and the Ten Commandments? I answer yes. Is Sunday the first day of the week and did the Church change the seventh day - Saturday - for Sunday, the first day? I answer yes. Did Christ change the day? I answer no! Faithfully yours, James Cardinal Gibbons (letter written by James Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore, *The Catholic Press*, Aug. 25, 1900).

Nowhere in the Bible do we find that Christ or the Apostles ordered that the Sabbath be changed from Saturday to Sunday. We have the commandment of God given to Moses to keep holy the Sabbath day, that is the 7th day of the week, Saturday. Today most Christians keep Sunday because it has been revealed to us by the church outside the Bible (*Catholic Virginian*, p. 9, Oct. 3, 1947).

The effort of the papacy to disgrace the Sabbath by turning it into a fast day is attested by many authors. The historian Neander has stated that the early opposition to the honoring of the seventh-day And on the seventh day God rested from the work he had done... He blessed the seventh day and hallowed it. The shabbat, the biblical Sabbath, is tied to this mystery of God's rest. If we Christians celebrate the Lord's day on Sunday, it is because on that day the Resurrection of Christ occurred (Pope John Paul II, July 12, 1998).

Everyone knows that Sunday is the first day of the week, while Saturday is the seventh day, and the Sabbath, the day consecrated as a day of rest. It is so recognized in all civilized nations, I have repeatedly offered \$1,000 to anyone who will furnish any proof from the Bible that Sunday is the day we are bound to keep, and no one has called for the money (Thomas Enright, C.S.S.R., lecture at Redemptorist College, Kansas City, MO, Feb. 18, 1884).

Now in the matter of Sabbath Observance the Protestant rule of Faith is utterly unable to explain the substitution of the Christiah Sunday for the Jewish Saturday. It has been changed. The Bible still teaches that the Sabbath or Saturday should be kept holy. There is no authority in the New Testament for the substitution of Sunday for Saturday. Surely it is an important matter. It stands there in the Bible as one of the Ten Commandments of God. There is no authority in the Bible for abrogating this Commandment, or for transferring its observance to another day of the week. For Catholics there is not the slightest difficulty... The Church is above the Bible; and this transference of Sabbath observance from Saturday to Sunday is proof positive of that fact (*The Catholic Record*, vol. XLV, p. 4, Sept. 1, 1923).

The Jewish Sabbath and Christian Sunday are quite distinct and separate institutions... The Jewish Sabbath is not Sunday, the Lord's Day. Christians are all wrong in speaking of the Sabbath as Sunday (*The Catholic Record*, vol. XLV, p. 4, Sept. 1, 1923).

Because the third commandment (which is really the fourth commandment but Catholicism does away with the second commandment so they do not have to acknowledge their idolatry, which to them makes the Sabbath the third) depends upon the remembrance of God's saving works and because Christians saw the definitive time inaugurated by Christ as a new beginning, they made the first day after the Sabbath a festive day, for that was the day on which the Lord rose from the dead (Pope John Paul II, May 31, 1998).

But their muddle-headed confusion of the Lord's Day with the Jewish Sabbath—against which the Rev. Mr. Smith so vigorously protests—finds no sympathy amongst Catholics who receive the Lord's Day itself as well as its mode of observance from the Church and not from the Bible (*The Catholic Record*, vol. XLV, p. 4, Sept. 1, 1923).

They refer to the Sabbath Day, as having been changed into the Lord's Day, contrary to the Decalogue, as it seems. Neither is there any example whereof they make more than concerning the

changing of the Sabbath Day. Great, say they, is the power of the Church, since it has dispensed with one of the Ten Commandments! (*Augsburg Confession of Faith*, Article 28, approved by Martin Luther, 1530).

Some non-Catholics object to Purgatory because there is no specific mention of it in Scripture. There is no specific mention of the word Sunday in Scripture. The Sabbath is mentioned, but Sabbath means Saturday. Yet the Christians of almost all denominations worship on Sunday not on Saturday. The Jews observe Saturday. Nowhere in the Bible is it stated that worship should be changed from Saturday to Sunday... Now the Church which gave us the Bible, instituted, by God's authority, Sunday as the day of worship. This same Church, by the same divine authority, taught the doctrine of Purgatory long before the Bible was made. We have, therefore, the same authority for Purgatory as we have for Sunday (*Things Catholics Are Asked About*, Martin J. Scott, p. 136, 1927).

Note: The "church" that Scott spoke of is not the one established by Christ. In fact, there is much debate over who was responsible for canonizing the books of the Bible. While many believe it was canonized by the Catholic Church, there is evidence that "Early Church of God Christians, mostly all considered to be saints by the Greco-Roman-Protestants, including Papias, Polycarp, Melito, Polycrates, and Serapion essentially attested to the fact that the Church of God had the full canon in the 2nd century, and that knowledge was basically passed on from the original apostles, like the Apostle John" (*Who Gave the World the Bible?*, p. 220, Bob Thiel, PhD).

My brethren, look about you upon the various wrangling sects and denominations. Show me one that claims, or possesses the power to make laws binding on the conscience. There's but one on the face of the earth—the Catholic Church—that has the power to make laws binding upon the conscience, binding before God, binding under pain of hell fire. Take for instance the day we celebrate—Sunday. What right have the Protestant churches to

observe that day? None whatever. You say it is to obey the commandment, 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.' But Sunday is not the Sabbath according to the Bible and the record of time. Everyone knows that Sunday is the first day of the week, while Saturday is the seventh day and the Sabbath, the day consecrated as a day of rest. It is so recognized in all civilized nations. I have repeatedly offered \$1000 to anyone who will furnish any proof from the Bible that Sunday is the day we are bound to keep, and no one has called for the money. If any person in this town will show me any scripture for it I will, tomorrow evening, publicly acknowledge it and thank him for it. It was the holy Catholic Church that changed the day of rest from Saturday to Sunday, the first day of the week. It was the holy Catholic Church that changed the day of rest from Saturday to Sunday, the first day of the week. And it not only compelled all to keep Sunday, but at the Council of Laodicea, A. D. 364, anathematized those who kept the Sabbath and urged all persons to labor on the seventh day under the penalty of anathema (*The American Sentinel*, vol. 5, No. 6, p. 46, Thomas Enright, Feb. 6, 1890).

The Catholic Church for over one thousand years before the existence of a Protestant, by virtue of her Divine mission, changed the day from Saturday to Sunday (*The Christian Sabbath*, p. 29, 1893).

Sunday is a Catholic institution, and its claims to observation can be defended only on Catholic principles... From beginning to end of Scripture there is not a single passage that warrants the transfer of weekly public worship from the last day of the week to the first (*The Catholic Press*, Vol. IV, No. 251, p. 22, Aug. 25, 1900, Sydney, Australia).

It may be said that when the Sabbath was transferred to Christian ground, the observance on the seventh day should have been transferred with it, and that we have no formal announcement of any change in this respect. But any candid person will admit that the particular day cannot be of the essence of the law. There is indeed no formal notice of the change of day (*A Manual of Christian Doctrine*, p. 222, John Banks, 1893).

Protestant Confessions

The Lord's day (Sunday) did not succeed in the place of the Sabbath... The Lord's day was merely an ecclesiastical institution. It was not introduced by virtue of the fourth commandment, because for almost three hundred years together they kept that day which was in that commandment... The primitive Christians did all manner of works upon the Lord's day even in times of persecution when they are the strictest observers of all the divine commandments; but in this they knew there was none (*Ductor Dubitantium*, Jeremy Taylor, Part 1, Book II, Ch. 2, Rule 6, Sec. 51, 59).

The Primitive Christians had a great veneration for the Sabbath, and spent the Day in Devotion and Sermons. And 'tis not to be doubted but they derived this Practice from the Apostles themselves (*A Discourse in Six Dialogues on the Name, Notion, and Observation of the Lord's Day*, p. 189).

And where are we told in the Scriptures that we are to keep the first day at all? We are commanded to keep the seventh; but we are nowhere commanded to keep the first day... The reason why we keep the first day of the week holy instead of the seventh is for the same reason that we observe many other things, not because of the Bible, but because the church has enjoined it (*Plain Sermons on the Catechism*, Isaac Williams, vol. 1, pp. 334, 336).

The Lord's Day is not sanctified by any specific command or by any inevitable inference. In all the New Testament there is no hint or suggestion of a legal obligation binding any man, whether saint or sinner, to observe the Day. Its sanctity arises only out of what it means to the true believer (*The Sabbatic Question*, J. J. Taylor, p. 72).

I shall consider this answer as sufficient; especially, as the Christian Sabbath is not in the Scriptures, and was not by the primitive Church called the Sabbath; but the first day of the week (*Theology: Explained and Defended*, vol. 3, pp. 258-259, Timothy Dwight, 1850).

Lucian encountered the contradictory teachings concerning the binding obligation of the Ten Commandments. The same inconsistency is manifest in papal doctrine today, for The Catholic Encyclopedia says: “The Church, on the other hand, after changing the day of rest from the Jewish Sabbath, or seventh day of the week, to the first, made the Third Commandment refer to Sunday as the day to be kept holy as the Lord's Day. The Council of Trent (Session. VI, can. xix) condemns those who deny that the Ten Commandments are binding on Christians”. 29 This directly contradicts the teachings of Thomas Aquinas regarding the fourth commandment. 30 And it is to be remembered that the Roman Church ranks him first as an expositor of papal doctrine (*Truth Triumphant – The Church in the Wilderness*, B.G. Wilkinson, pp. 54-55).

There was never any formal or authoritative change from the Jewish seventh-day Sabbath to the Christian first-day observance (*The Lord's Day in Our Day*, p. 49, William Owen Carver).

The current notion that Christ and His apostles authoritatively substituted the first day for the seventh, is absolutely without any authority in the New Testament... As gradually the Christian Church lost its Jewish character, and its Jewish membership became merged in the world-wide membership, the historical associations which had given sacredness to the seventh day were forgotten, the associations which gave peculiar sacredness to the resurrection day became predominant, and thus Christian experience found its new expression, not only in a new day, but in a new and better method of observance (*The Christian Union*, Lyman Abbot, June 26, 1890, p. 908).

It is quite clear that however rigidly or devotedly we may spend Sunday, we are not keeping the Sabbath... the Sabbath was founded on a specific Divine command. We can plead no such command for the obligation to observe Sunday... There is not a single sentence in the New Testament to suggest that we incur any penalty by violating the supposed sanctity of Sunday (*The Ten Commandments*, pp. 106-107, Dr. R. W. Dale).

No Christian whatsoever is free from the obedience of the commandments which are called moral (*Methodist Church Discipline*, p. 23, 1904).

The Sabbath was made for MAN; not for the Hebrews, but for all men (*Pillars of Truth*, p. 88, E.O. Haven).

The first day of the week is commonly called the “Sabbath.” This is a mistake. The Sabbath of the Bible was the day just preceding the first day of the week... The first day of the week is never called the “Sabbath” anywhere in the entire Scriptures... It is also an error to talk about a “change of the Sabbath.” There never was any change of the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday. There is not, at any place in the Bible, any intimation of any such change (*Thirteen Chapters On First Day Observance*, pp. 17-18).

But, say some, it was changed from the seventh to the first day. Where? When? And by whom? No man can tell. No, it never was changed, nor could it be, unless creation was to be gone through again: for the reason assigned must be changed before the observance, or respect to the reason, can be changed!! It is all old wives’ fables to talk of the change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day. If it be changed, it was that august personage changed it who changes times and laws ex officio - I think his name is DOCTOR ANTICHRIST (*The Christian Baptist*, seven volumes in one, p. 44, Alexander Campbell, 1835).

Why do we worship on Sunday? Doesn’t the Bible teach us that Saturday should be the Lord’s Day? ... Apparently we will have to seek the answer from some other source than the New Testament (Is Sunday the Lord’s Day? *The Pentecostal Evangel*, David A. Womack, Aug. 9, 1959, No. 2361, p. 3).

We have seen how gradually the impression of the Jewish Sabbath faded from the mind of the Christian Church, and how completely the newer thought underlying the observance of the first day took possession of the church. We have seen that the Christians of the first three centuries never confused one with the other, but for a time celebrated both (*The Sunday Problem*, p. 36, 1923).

The reason we observe the first day instead of the seventh is based on no positive command. One will search the Scriptures in vain for authority for changing from the seventh day to the first (*Ten Rules For Living*, p. 61, Clovis G. Chappell).

The observance of Sunday in the Christian Church comes to us with quite a different sanction, based on different grounds, from that of the Jewish Sabbath. It rests upon no direct Divine command; no word is said about it in the New Testament (*The Ten Commandments: sermons preached at Holy Trinity, Chelsea*, p. 61, Robert Eyton, 1895).

There was and is a commandment to keep holy the Sabbath day, but that Sabbath day was not Sunday. It will be said, however, and with some show of triumph, that the Sabbath was transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week... Where can the record of such a transaction be found? Not in the New Testament absolutely not... (Dr. Edward T. Hiscox, New York minister's conference, Nov. 13, 1893).

The Sabbath is a part of the Decalogue - the Ten Commandments. This alone forever settles the question as to the perpetuity of the institution... Until, therefore, it can be shown that the whole moral law has been repealed, the Sabbath will stand... The teaching of Christ confirms the perpetuity of the Sabbath (*Theology Condensed*, pp. 474-475, T. C. Blake, D.D.).

Doctor Zahn says: "It never occurred to a Christian of the first three centuries to look upon Sunday as a continuation of the Jewish sabbath or to call the day the sabbath." A proof for this is found in the fact that the early Christians continued to call Saturday the sabbath. Proudhon, a French socialist of the nineteenth century, is wrong in saying that "we know that in the minds of the apostles there was no difference between the mosaic sabbath and the Christian Sunday other than that of twenty-four hours" (*The Sunday Problem*, p. 27, 1923).

To discuss then any questions about Sunday observance, in connection with the Fourth Commandment, is obviously to

discuss questions which cannot be settled in that fashion. Sunday comes to us as a great privilege, a magnificent possession; but it has no possible connection with the Jewish Sabbath, as regards its fundamental idea of observance or even as regards its Divine Sanction... The observance of Ash Wednesday or Lent stands exactly on the same footing as the observance of Sunday (*The Ten Commandments: sermons preached at Holy Trinity, Chelsea*, pp. 63-65, Robert Eyton, 1895).

Secular Confessions

The ancient Babylonians, a Sumerian people, are thought to be the first people to observe a seven-day week. The concept apparently was based upon the periods between the distinct phases of the moon, which roughly correspond to seven days... It should be mentioned, however, that evidence for an earlier Jewish calendar (from at least the 12th century B.C.) does exist, so the observance of a Sabbath may well antedate Babylonian influence (*Holidays and Anniversaries of the World*, introduction, p. ix).

Why is this particular weekly cycle so popular? – compared to other more natural or “rational” options like the 10-day week that was attempted in France during the bloody French revolution and “enlightenment”? ... Many living things, to include humans beings, experience seven-day, or “circaseptan” biological cycles (*The Origin of the Sabbath and the 7-Day Week*, Sean Pitman, <https://ssnet.org/blog/origin-of-sabbath-7-day-week/>, retr. 2/3/2025).

Franz Halberg (founder of modern chronobiology) proposes that body rhythms of about seven days, far from being passively driven by the social cycle of the calendar week, are innate, autonomous, and perhaps the reason why the calendar week arose in the first place... These circaseptan, or about weekly, rhythms are one of the major surprises turned up by modern chronobiology. Fifteen years ago, few scientists would have expected that seven day biological cycles would prove to be so widespread and so long established in the living world. They are of very ancient origin, appearing in primitive one-celled

organisms, and are thought to be present even in bacteria, the simplest form of life now existing (*Winston Churchill's Afternoon Nap*, Jeremy Campbell, 1986, pp. 75-79).

Recently chronobiologists have discovered that the seven-day cycle, like the sleep cycle of days and nights, may also have biological precedents. They say that certain biorhythms in the human body work on seven-day cycles, including variations in heartbeat, blood pressure, and response to infection. The potential for rejection of a transplanted organ seems to peak at seven-day intervals. Other organisms, including bacteria, share these basic biorhythms (*Calendar – Humanity's Epic Struggle to Determine a True and Accurate Year*, pp. 46).

At first glance, it might seem that weekly rhythms developed in response to the seven day week imposed by human culture thousands of years ago. However, this theory doesn't hold once you realize that plants, insects, and animals other than humans also have weekly cycles (*The Secrets Our Body Clocks Reveal*, Susan Perry and Jim Dawson, 1988, p. 20).

If the seven day week is an invention of culture and religion, as most historians would have us believe, how do we explain innate circaseptan rhythms in “primitive” algae, rats, plants, bees and face flies? These forms of life have no calendar and can't read the Torah. There is even evidence that being in or out of sync with the circaseptan cycle may have an affect on longevity. Consider, for example, that the life spans of the face fly *Musca autumnalis* or the springtail *Folsomia candida* are markedly longer when oviposition shifts are allowed to be carried out at intervals that are 7 days apart (*The Origin of the Sabbath and the 7-Day Week*, Sean Pitman, <https://ssnet.org/blog/origin-of-sabbath-7-day-week/>, retr. 2/3/2025).

In Franz Halberg's view, a central feature of biological time structure is the harmonic relationship that exists among the various component frequencies. A striking aspect of this relationship is that the components themselves appear to be harmonics or sub harmonics, multiples or submultiples, of

seven... Circaseptan and circasemiseptan rhythms are not arbitrary, even though they seem to lack counterpart rhythms in the external environment (*Winston Churchill's Afternoon Nap*, Jeremy Campbell, 1986, p. 30).

Jews, meanwhile, had been observing a week of their own in which six work days, numbered from 1 to 6, were followed by a rest day, or *shabbat*, in English 'Sabbath'. *Shabbat* coincided with the astrological Saturday, which was a day of ill-omen because Saturn was a baleful planet (*A Short History of Time*, Leofranc Holford-Strevens, p. 68).

There was an eventual confluence of the Sabbatarian week of the Israelites and the planetary or astrological week. The seven-day week, in place by the beginning of the Israelites' monarchical period, was unknown among the ancient Greeks, whose holidays were held on various days in various regions. The Babylonians had already spotted and named the seven heavenly bodies—the sun, moon, and five planets. In the second century BCE, the Egyptians assigned planetary names to the days of the week and Rome adopted the system after Julius Caesar conquered Egypt. Eventually the Jewish and astrological weeks were joined and spread through the world by Christianity. Constantine set the week in the Roman calendar; In 321 CE he made Sunday its first day. Despite its astrological undertones, the week exists oblivious to nature. The lunar cycle is 29.5 days, not 28 days or four weeks. The solar year is 365.25 days, not the 52-week year of 364 days. Only with a week that is seven days, rather than some portion of the lunar month or solar year, could humans have “the temporal regularity” that underpins civilization. Though other societies have weeks of three, five, six, and eight days, in the ancient world the Jews became known for their distinctive week defined by the Sabbath (*A Day Apart*, p. 38, Christopher D. Ringwald).

The Seventh Day Has Not Been Lost

The calendar now in use, a Roman calendar, has been changed, but that change did not break the weekly cycle. Prior to its change, it was called the Julian calendar, because it originated at the time of Julius Caesar, 45 B.C.—several years before the birth of Christ.

The one change was ordered by Pope Gregory, and since then it has been called the Gregorian calendar. The Julian Calendar was imperfect—it inserted leap years too frequently. Back in 45 B.C. they supposed the year was exactly 365¼ days long, and to take care of the extra one-fourth day each year, added a day to the month of February every four years. But it was found later the year was 12 minutes and 14 seconds shorter than this. Consequently, by the time of Pope Gregory, the calendar had drifted TEN DAYS away from the seasons. The spring equinox, consequently, fell on March 11th, instead of March 21st. To correct this, ten days were dropped from the calendar. But they were dropped only from the number of days in the MONTH not from the number of days in the WEEK (*Has Time Been Lost?* Herbert Armstrong, 1984, p. 2).

It is to be noted that in the Christian period, the order of days in the week has never been interrupted. Thus, when Gregory XIII reformed the calendar in 1582, Thursday, 4 October was followed by Friday, 15 October. So in England, in 1752, Wednesday, 2 September, was followed by Thursday, 14 September (*Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 3, p. 740).

In Russia, the calendar was never changed until just recently, in the present century. Consequently, in the year 1907, the day that we called the 14th of August, the Russians called the 1st of August. Our calendars were 13 days apart. Yet in both countries we both called that same day Saturday. In both countries, Saturday fell on the same day of the week. The calendar has since been changed in Russia. And still their Sunday is our Sunday—their Saturday is our Saturday (*Has Time Been Lost?* Herbert Armstrong, 1984, p. 6).

Protestants Honor Their Mother Church

If the Bible is the only guide for the Christian, then the Seventh-day Adventist is right in observing the Saturday with the Jew... Is it not strange that those who make the Bible their only teacher, should inconsistently follow in this matter the tradition of the Catholic Church? (*The Question Box*, Cardinal Gibbons, p. 179). Incidentally, there is no proof in scripture that God willed the Sabbath to be changed from Saturday to Sunday, so that those

non-Catholics who do not accept the value of tradition as a source of faith should logically still observe Saturday as the Sabbath (*This is the Faith; Catholic Theology for Laymen*, p. 176, Francis J. Ripley).

But since Saturday, not Sunday, is specified in the Bible, isn't it curious that non-Catholics who profess to take their religion directly from the Bible and not from the Church, observe Sunday instead of Saturday? Yes, of course it is inconsistent; but this change was made about fifteen centuries before Protestantism was born, and by that time the custom was universally observed. They have continued the custom, even though it rests upon the authority of the Catholic Church and not upon an explicit text in the Bible. That observance remains as a reminder of the Mother Church from which the non-Catholic sects broke away--like a boy running away from home, but still carrying in his pocket a picture of his mother or a lock of her hair (*The Faith of Millions--The Credentials of the Catholic Religion*, p. 473, John A. O'Brien, 1955).

From this we may understand how great is the authority of the church in interpreting or explaining to us the commandments of God - an authority which is acknowledged by the universal practice of the whole Christian world, even of those sects which profess to take the holy Scriptures as their sole rule of faith, since they observe as the day of rest not the seventh day of the week demanded by the Bible, but the first day. Which we know is to be kept holy, only from the tradition and teaching of the Catholic church (*Catechism Made Easy*, #2, 9th edition, vol. 1, p. 341-342, Henry Gibson).

The observance of Sunday by Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the [Catholic] church (*Plain Talk About The Protestantism of Today*, p. 213).

Clergy Say Tradition Not Bible Ordinance Declared Sunday Holy. A spokesman for St. Augustine's Roman Catholic seminary for the diocese of Toronto said, "Sunday is kept by Christians, not because there is any Scriptural injunction but because there are religious traditions associated with that day

among Christians, Protestant and Catholic... Because the resurrection occurred on Sunday, and because of the general acceptance today of Sunday as a day of rest, it's fitting that now Sunday should be observed instead of Saturday, as under the old rule. The church has a specific commandment stating that Sunday should be observed. Protestants observed Sunday because for many centuries they had been a part of the Roman Catholic Church, and had observed the church commandment (Toronto Daily Star, p. 3, October 26, 1949, p. 3).

Origins of Sunday Religion

As a “holy” day of rest and cessation from labor and amusements Sunday was unknown to Jesus... Outside the Church its observance was legalized for the Roman Empire through a series of decrees starting with the famous one of Constantine in 321, an edict due to his political and social policies rather than, as Eusebius thought, to religious ones. For he took the day not because of the Christian custom of meeting then to commemorate the Resurrection but from “the venerable day of the Sun” ... So much confusion in identifying Sunday and the Sabbath has been inherited by Britain and America through Puritan influence that it seems well to recapitulate the well-known facts... As the Jewish element in the Church waned the Christians came to feel the need of a fixed day for meetings to replace the Sabbath. Then Sunday, like other pagan festivals such as Christmas, came gradually into being, first as a fit day of worship and later one for rest (*Paganism to Christianity in the Roman Empire*, pp. 257-258, Walter Woodburn Hyde).

The Sun was a foremost god with heathen-dom... The sun has worshippers at this hour in Persia and other lands... There is, in truth, something royal, kingly about the sun, making it a fit emblem of Jesus, the Sun of Justice. Hence the church in these countries would seem to have said, to “Keep that old pagan name [Sunday]. It shall remain consecrated, sanctified.” And thus the pagan Sunday, dedicated to Balder, became the Christian Sunday, sacred to Jesus (*Doctor of Divinity, The Catholic World*, p. 809, William Gildea, Mar. 1894).

“Sabbath” is derived from both “rest” and “seven.” With the Egyptians it was the reverse... for them on the contrary, the sun-god was the beginning and origin of all things. The day of the sun, Sunday, became necessarily for them the feast day... The holiday was transferred from the last to the first day of the week. The seven planetary names of the days were at the close of the second century A.D. prevailing everywhere in the Roman Empire... This astrology originated in Egypt, where Alexandria now so loudly proclaimed it to all... “The day of the sun” was the Lord’s day, the chiefest and first of the week. The evil and fatal Saturn’s day was the last of the week on which none could celebrate a feast (*Daglige Liv i Norden*, Vol. XIII, pp. 54-55, 91-92).

This Sunday law constituted no real favoritism to Christianity... It is evident from all his statutory provisions that the Emperor during the time 313-323 with full consciousness has sought the realization of his religious aim: the amalgamation of heathenism and Christianity (*Kirken og Romerstaten [The Church and the Roman State]* p. 256).

The retention of the old pagan name of Dies Solis, for Sunday is, in a great measure, owing to the union of pagan and Christian sentiment with which the first day of the week was recommended by Constantine to his subjects - pagan and Christian alike - as the “venerable’ day of the sun” (*History of the Eastern Church*, Arthur P. Stanley, p. 184).

Pastoral intuition suggested to the Church the Christianization of the notion of Sunday as “the day of the sun,” which was the Roman name for the day and which is retained in some modern languages. This was in order to draw the faithful away from the seduction of cults which worshipped the sun, and to direct the celebration of the day to Christ, humanity’s true “sun” (*Dies Domini*, John Paul II, p. 27, *The day of Christ-Light*, 1998).

Constantine’s decree of 321 when the observance of the “day of the Sun” was imposed on the Empire, a decree marking an epoch in the history of Sunday as the beginning of both civil and later of ecclesiastical legislation. Now dies Solis, sacred in various

solar cults and notably in Mithraism, was to play a role as the Christian Sunday as Christmas did a little later... This is the “parent” Sunday law making it a day of rest and release from labor. For from this day to the present there have been decrees about the observance of Sunday which have profoundly influenced European and American society. When the Church became a part of State under the Christian emperors Sunday observance was enforced by civil statutes and later, when the Empire was past, the Church in the hands of the papacy enforced it by ecclesiastical, and also influenced it by civil enactments. The emperors after Constantine made Sunday observance more stringent but in no case was their legislation based on the Old Testament. For Augustine said: “the Sabbath signifies rest, Sunday the Resurrection.” ... (Charlemagne) In 813 as emperor he decreed that “all servile labor must be abstained from.” From his time onward, then, the idea of substituting Sunday for the Sabbath began, for all his decrees were based on the Old Testament command to keep the Sabbath day holy, and throughout the succeeding Middle Ages the Old Testament became the basis for Sunday observance (*Paganism to Christianity in the Roman Empire*, pp. 260-261, Walter Woodburn Hyde, 1946).

The Sabbath Through Centuries

The 1st Century

And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath... And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God (Acts 13:42-44).

Then the spiritual seed of Abraham fled to Pella, on the other side of Jordan, where they found a safe place of refuge, and could serve their Master and keep His Sabbath (*Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History*, book 3, ch. 5).

The primitive Christians had a great veneration for the Sabbath, and spent the day in devotion and sermons. And it is not to be doubted but they derived this practice from the Apostles

themselves, as appears by several scriptures to that purpose (*Dialogues on the Lord's Day*, p. 189, Dr. T.H. Morer, 1701).

For some time, groups of Christian believers continued to meet in the synagogues on the Sabbath day with the Jews. This fact indicates that the apostolic church, in its primitive organization did not cast away everything connected with the synagogue (*Truth Triumphant – The Church in the Wilderness*, B.G. Wilkinson, p. 43).

Note: There are several spurious works attributed to Peter, Paul, Barnabas, and other early Christian leaders. It is also asserted by many reputable scholars, that there were additions made to the epistles of Polycarp, Ignatius, and others making it seem as though these early Christian leaders were in favor of the first day of the week (Sunday) being of equal value to the Sabbath. None of those writings giving credibility to Sunday have been verified as genuine.

The 2nd Century

The primitive Christians did keep the Sabbath of the Jews... therefore the Christians, for a long time together, did keep their conventions upon the Sabbath, in which some portions of the law were read: and this continued till the time of the Laodicean council (*The Whole Works of Jeremy Taylor*, Vol. IX, p. 416).

Victor I, bishop of Rome, entered into a compact with Clement, about 190, to carry on research around the Mediterranean basin to secure support to help make Sunday the prominent day of worship in the church. Sunday was already a day exalted among the heathen, being a day on which they worshiped the sun; yet Rome and Alexandria well knew that most of the church throughout the world sanctified Saturday as the Sabbath of the fourth commandment... In his early youth, Lucian was called to resist the rise and spread of two perverted types of Christianity: Manichaeism and Gnosticism. Manichaeism dethroned the first chapter of Genesis by rejecting creation and a miracle-working God, by demanding celibacy of its leaders, and by worshiping the sun as the supreme dwelling place of Deity. Imbued with the

ancient Persian hatred of the Old Testament, it ridiculed the Sabbath of the fourth commandment and exalted Sunday. This fanatical darkness, with its own fabricated scriptures, came down upon Syria like a fog. Lucian weakened its attacks by his irresistible defense of the Scriptures and their teachings (*Truth Triumphant – The Church in the Wilderness*, B.G. Wilkinson, p. 47-49).

While the Jewish Christians of Palestine retained the entire mosaic law, and consequently the Jewish festivals, the Gentile Christians observed also the Sabbath and the Passover, with reference to the last scenes of Jesus' life, but without Jewish superstition (*A Text-Book of Church History*, Geiseler, p. 93).

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 (*First Apology of Justin Martyr*, Ch. LXVII).

The 3rd Century

The majority of the churches of Syria and of the East continued to observe Saturday, the Sabbath of the fourth commandment from the days of the apostles and throughout the centuries. Hence the attempt to stigmatize them as Judaizers (*Truth Triumphant – The Church in the Wilderness*, B.G. Wilkinson, p. 61).

The 4th Century

The Saturday continued hitherto a day of special meeting for the congregation in all the churches of the east... The Alexandrians only of all the people of Egypt observed it not; being therein conformed to the Church of Rome (*History of the Sabbath*, p. 126, P. Heylin, 1636).

When it is a matter of inquiry as to what was the attitude of Christians in Spain on Sabbath observance, the evidence is clear. Canon 26 of the Council of Elvira reveals that the Church of Spain at that time kept Saturday, the seventh day. "As to fasting every Sabbath: Resolved, that the error be corrected of fasting every Sabbath." This resolution of the council is in direct opposition to the policy the church at Rome had inaugurated, that

of commanding Sabbath as a fast day in order to humiliate it and make it repugnant to the people.

What connection is there between these facts and the early Waldenses? It is this: that while for centuries Christianity in Spain was one, yet when the encroachments by Rome on these primitive Christians in Spain began, the people of the Pyrenees separated themselves from the errors that crept in upon them. Robert Robinson writes that the people living in the valleys in different countries became known as the “valley dwellers,” or Vallenses. In fact, this author states his belief that the inhabitants of the Pyrenees were the true original Waldenses... Resolution 26 of the Council of Elvira having revealed that the early church of Spain kept the Sabbath, and history having proved that the Waldenses of north Spain existed at that time, these connections prove the keeping of the seventh-day Sabbath by the early Waldenses in Spain. It is a point of further interest to note that in northeastern Spain near the city of Barcelona is a city called Sabadell, in a district originally inhabited, in all probability, by a people called both “Valdenses” and “Sabbatati.” Could not this name, Sabadell, have originated from the expression, “dell of the Sabbathkeepers”? It is also shown that the name Sabbatati comes from the fact of their keeping the Sabbath. There are still in the vicinity of Sabadell archaeological remains of these ancient peoples (*Truth Triumphant – The Church in the Wilderness*, B.G. Wilkinson, p. 257-258).

From the Apostles’ time until the council of Laodicea, which was about the year 364, the holy observation of the Jews’ Sabbath continued, as may be proved out of many authors: yea, notwithstanding the decree of the council against it (*Sunday a Sabbath*, John Ley, p. 163).

The 5th Century

It is a fact that it was formerly the custom in the East to keep the Sabbath in the same manner as the Lord’s day and to hold sacred assemblies: while on the other hand, the people of the West, contending for the Lord’s day have neglected the celebration of the Sabbath (*Apollinaris Sidonii Epistolae*, Sidonius, lib. 1, 2; Migne, 57).

In S. Hieromes days, and in the very place where he was residing, the devoutest Christians did ordinarily work upon the Lord's-day (Sunday) when the service of the Church was ended (*Treatise of the Sabbath Day*, Dr. Fr. White, p. 219, 1635).

The 6th Century

Having continued his labours in Scotland thirty-four years, he clearly and openly foretold his death, and on Saturday, the ninth of June, said to his disciple Diermit: This day is called the Sabbath, that is, the rest day, and such will it truly be to me; for it will put an end to my labours (*Butler's Lives of the Saints*, Vol. 1, p. 762).

It seems to have been customary in the Celtic churches of early times, in Ireland as well as Scotland, to keep Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath, as a day of rest from labor, and Sunday, commemorative of the Lord's resurrection, as one of rejoicing, with exercises of public worship. In that case they obeyed the fourth commandment literally upon the seventh day of the week—the day on which the Lord lay in the grave—and did not understand the precept about resting from labor to apply to the day of rejoicing over his resurrection. On the latter, people did not feel under obligation to refrain from any of their ordinary occupations consistent with their attending upon public worship. The queen insisted upon the single and strict observance of the Lord's Day. People and clergy alike submitted, but without entirely giving up their reverence for Saturday, which subsequently sank into a half-holy day preparatory for Sunday (*The Church in Scotland*, James Moffat, p. 140).

The 7th Century

The papacy has always endeavored to substitute the observance of Sunday for the sanctification of Saturday, the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. Pope Gregory 1, in 603, declared that when Antichrist should come, he would keep Saturday as the Sabbath (*Truth Triumphant – The Church in the Wilderness*, B.G. Wilkinson, p. 61).

The 8th Century

In 1625, some Chinese workmen, engaged in digging a foundation for a house, outside the walls of the city of Si-gnan-Fou, the capital of the province of Chen-Si, found, buried in the earth, a large monumental stone, resembling those which the Chinese are in the habit of raising to preserve to posterity the remembrance of remarkable events and illustrious men. It was a dark-coloured marble tablet, ten feet high and five broad... On examining the stone, and endeavoring to interpret the inscription, it was, with surprise, discovered that the Christian religion had had numerous apostles in China, at the beginning of the seventh century, and that it had for a long time flourished there... (among other things, the stone was interpreted to say) “The baptism by water and by the Spirit, is a law that purifies the soul... Our ministers allow their beards to grow, to show that they are devoted to their neighbours... We do not accumulate riches, and we share with the poor that which we possess. Fasting strengthens the intellectual powers, abstinence and moderation preserve health... On the seventh day we offer sacrifice, after having purified our hearts, and received absolution for our sins. This religion, so perfect and so excellent, is difficult to name, but it enlightens darkness by its brilliant precepts. It is called the Luminous Religion” (*Christianity in China, Tartary and Thibet*, Vol. 1, pp. 44-49, 1867).

The 9th Century

Again the Sabbath question became prominent. The churches of the East from earliest days had sanctified Saturday as the Sabbath, and wherever Sunday had crept in, religious services were observed on both days. Bulgaria in the early season of its evangelization had been taught that no work should be performed on the Sabbath. Long before this time, migrations from the Paulician church had reached Bulgaria. These Paulicians observed the seventh-day Sabbath of the fourth commandment... Pop Nicholas I, in the ninth century, sent the ruling prince of Bulgaria a long document elucidating political, territorial, and ecclesiastical questions, and saying in it that one is to cease from work on Sunday, but not on the Sabbath (*Truth Triumphant – The Church in the Wilderness*, B.G. Wilkinson, pp. 231-232).

The 10th Century

They worked on Sunday, but kept Saturday in a Sabbatical manner (*A History of Scotland from the Roman Occupation*, Vol. I, p. 96, Andrew Lang).

The 11th Century

The queen further protested against the prevailing abuse of Sunday desecration. "Let us," she said, "venerate the Lord's day, inasmuch as upon it our Savior rose from the dead: let us do not servile work on that day, whereon we were redeemed from the slavery of the devil."...The Scots in this matter had no doubt kept up the traditional practice of the ancient monastic Church of Ireland, which observed Saturday rather than Sunday as a day of rest (*History of the Catholic Church in Scotland*, Bellesheim, Vol. 1 pp. 249-250).

Her next point was that they did not duly reverence the Lord's day, but in this latter instance they seemed to have followed a custom of which we find traces in the early Church of Ireland, by which they held Saturday to be the Sabbath on which they rested from all their labours... They held that Saturday was properly the Sabbath on which they abstained from work (*Celtic Scotland*, Vol. 2, p. 349-350).

The 12th Century

Robinson gives an account of some of the Waldenses of the Alps, who were called Sabbati, Sabbatati, Insabbatati, but more frequently Inzabbatati. One says they were so named from the Hebrew word Sabbath, because they kept the Saturday for the Lord's day (*General History of the Baptist Denomination*, Vol. 2, p. 413).

As to the persecutions suffered by the Waldenses for Sabbathkeeping, the following is found in the decree of Alphonso, published about A.D. 1194: "Alphonse, king of Aragon etc., to all archbishops, bishops, and to all others... We command you in imitation of our ancestors and in obedience to the ordinances of the church, that heretics, to wit, Waldenses, Insabbathi and those who call themselves the poor of Lyons and

all other heretics should be expelled away from the face of God and from all Catholics and ordered to depart from our kingdom.” The use of the term “Insabbathi” in the previous quotation, designating those who should be expelled from Spain, leads to a consideration of Spanish Sabbathkeepers in medieval times (*Truth Triumphant – The Church in the Wilderness*, B.G. Wilkinson, p. 260).

In Lombardy, which was the principal residence of the Italian heretics, there sprang up a singular sect, known (for what reason I cannot tell) by the denomination of *Pasaginians*, and also by that of the *circumcised*. Like the other sects already mentioned, they had the utmost aversion to the dominion and discipline of the church of Rome; but they were, at the same time, distinguished by two religious tenets, which were peculiar to themselves. The first was a notion, that the observance of the law of Moses, in everything except the offering of sacrifices, was obligatory upon Christians; in consequence of which they circumcised their followers, abstained from those meats, the use of which was prohibited under the Mosaic economy, and celebrated the Jewish Sabbath. The second tenet that distinguished this sect was advanced in opposition to the doctrine of three persons in the divine nature; for the Pasaginians maintained that Christ was no more than the first, and purest creature of God (*Ecclesiastical History, ancient and modern, birth of Christ to the beginning of the eighteenth century*, John Laurence Mosheim, 1858, p. 292)

The 13th Century

He lays it down also as one of their opinions, “That the Law of Moses is to be kept according to the letter, and that the keeping of the Sabbath, Circumcision, and other legal observances, ought to take place. They hold also, that Christ the Son of God is not equal with the Father, and that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, these three Persons, are not one God and one substance; and, as a surplus to these their errors, they judge and condemn all the doctors of the Church, and universally the whole Roman Church (*Some Remarks Upon The Ecclesiastical History of the Ancient Churches of Piedmont*, p. 169, Peter Allix).

The sect of the Passagii represents in most obvious tangible form the Judaizing aspects of heterodox movements in Christendom during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries... The insistence by the Passagii upon the literal observance of the Sabbath commandment reflects the strong Sabbatarian influence in the Christian Church from its earliest beginnings to present day... The length to which the Passagii carried their acceptance of the Jewish law may be perceived in their attachment to Mosaic dietary regulations... Like the ancient sects of the Christian communion, among them the Nazareans, Ebionites, Elkesaites, Sampseans and others, the Passagii sought to harmonize the Old and New dispensations. The Catholic Church had pretended to follow a similar policy, but in the process had negated and virtually obliterated, by its “spiritual” exegesis, the author of the Old Testament (*Jewish Influence on Christian Reform Movements*, 255-266, Newman).

If anyone should do a properly Jewish action, such as observing the Sabbath, and other Jewish rites, from thence is inferred the intention and will of Judaizing. If the Intention doth not appear, in a doubtful Case, 'tis presumed that this was done with the intention Judaizing, when the Act or Commission is certain, either from the person's confession, or by witnesses, and especially if the person be suspected. He therefore who confesses an heretical action, and denies the intention, which is the quality affecting such an action to make it punishable or not, may possibly be condemned as a negative heretic; and at least may be tortured to discover his intention (*The History of the Inquisition*, vol. II, p. 31, Philip Limborch).

The 14th Century

We wrote of the Sabbatarians in Bohemia, Transylvania, England, and Holland between 1250 and 1600, as authenticated by Cox, Jones, Allix, and William of Neuburg. We have mentioned the innumerable Sabbath-keeping churches among the Greeks, Abyssinians, Armenians, Maronites, Jacobites, Scythians, and the great Church of the East (also from A.D. 1250 to 1600) with supporting evidence from competent authorities. The doctrines of all these Sabbathkeeping bodies throughout the

centuries were comparatively pure, and the lives of their members were simple and holy. They were free from the unscriptural ceremonies which arose from the following of tradition. They received the Old Testament, and the whole Bible was their authority (*Truth Triumphant – The Church in the Wilderness*, p. 456, Wilkinson).

The 15th Century

The first matter concerned a keeping holy of Saturday. It had come to the ear of the archbishop that people in different places of the kingdom had ventured the keeping holy of Saturday. It is strictly forbidden it is stated in the Church-Law, for anyone to keep or to adopt holy days, outside of those which the pope, archbishop, or bishops appoint (*The History of the Norwegian Church Under Catholicism*, R. Keyser, Vol. II, p. 488).

Louis XII, King of France (1498-1515), being informed by the enemies of the Waldenses, inhabiting a part of the province of Provence, that several heinous crimes were laid to their account, sent the Master of Requests, and a certain doctor of the Sorbonne, to make inquiry into this matter. On their return they reported that they had visited all the parishes, but could not discover any traces of those crimes with which they were charged. On the contrary, they kept the Sabbath day, observed the ordinance of baptism, according to the primitive church, instructed their children in the articles of the Christian faith, and the commandments of God. The King having heard the report of his commissioners, said with an oath that they were better men than himself or his people (*History of the Christian Church*, Vol. II, pp. 71-72, 3rd edition).

The 16th Century

Thus the opening of the year A. D. 500 discloses communities of Assyrian Christians throughout India. Faithful in their evangelical missionary life, they assembled for worship on the Sabbath day. 27 When priests from Rome entered India a thousand years later, papal hatred stigmatized the persecuted church as Judaizers (*Truth Triumphant – The Church in the Wilderness*, B.G. Wilkinson, p. 308).

In the reign of Elizabeth, it occurred to many conscientious and independent thinkers (as it previously had done to some Protestants in Bohemia) that the fourth commandment required of them the observance, not of the first, but of the specified “seventh” day of the week (*Chambers’ Cyclopaedia*, Vol. 8, p. 416, 1887).

That Sabbatarians again appeared in England by the time of the Reformation, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth (a.d. 1533-1603), Dr. Chambers testifies in his *Cyclopedia*. (*History of the Sabbath and First Day of the Week*, p. 650, Andrews and Conradi, 1912).

The Sabbatarians teach that the outward Sabbath, i.e., Saturday, still must be observed. They say that Sunday is the Pope’s invention (*Refutation of Sabbath*, Wolfgang Capito, 1599).

For many years, God in his providence made Moravia (where there were Christian Sabbath-keepers) the place of refuge for many thousands of honest believers, assembled there from various parts of Europe, and he brought all these in touch with his truth. Even most prominent men, as the princes of Lichtenstein, held to the observance of the true Sabbath. When persecution finally scattered them, the seeds of truth must have been sown by them in the different portions of the Continent which they visited. That there were also Sabbath-keepers in other countries of Europe, although they were few in number and somewhat secluded because of the severe persecutions against them, proofs are not lacking. We have found them in Bohemia. They were also known in Silesia and Poland. 22 Likewise they were in Holland and in northern Germany. Dr. Cornelius states of east Friesland, that when the Baptists were numerous, “Sunday and holidays were not observed...” (*History of the Sabbath and First Day of the Week*, p. 649, Andrews and Conradi, 1912).

The 17th Century

We can trace these opinions over almost the whole extent of Sweden of that day from Finland and northern Sweden. In the district of Upsala the farmers kept Saturday in place of Sunday.

About the year 1625 this religious tendency became so pronounced in these countries that not only large numbers of the common people began to keep Saturday as the rest day, but even many priests did the same (*History of the Swedish Church*, vol. I, p. 56).

And whereas it is objected that our Lord has fulfilled the Law; and that indeed one jot or tittle may not pass till He had fulfilled it, but that we need not now fulfil it: Let such know, that it is no more lawful now than before to be unclean, lie, steal, or covet; it is as unlawful now as ever to blaspheme, make, or worship images, and it will one day be found as sinful now as ever it was, to slight God's sanctified Seventh-day Sabbath which Christ fulfilled; He fulfilled Baptism, and so must we; He observed His Supper, and so must we; He sanctified the Seventh-day Sabbath (and established it forever) and therefore so must we (*The Seventh-Day Sabbath Sought out and celebrated*, 1657, Thomas Tillman, p. 30)

Five centuries later, during heated debates on the Sabbath, a learned bishop of the Church of England referred to the Sabbathkeeping of the Petrobrusians. For centuries evangelical bodies, especially the Waldenses, were called Insabbati or Ensavates, that is, Insabbatati, because of Sabbathkeeping. "Many took this position," says Ussher. The learned Jesuit, Jacob Gretzer, about 1600, recognized that the Waldenses, the Albigenses, and the Insabbatati were different names for the same people (*Truth Triumphant – The Church in the Wilderness*, B.G. Wilkinson, p. 237).

The Lord's day (is) not enjoined in the place thereof, either by Christ, or his Apostles; but instituted by the authority of the (Catholic) Church. Our Saviors resurrection upon the first day of the week, and apparition on the same, make it not a Sabbath (*History of the Sabbath*, Heylin, p. a4, 1636).

The 18th Century

With respect to the Jacobites, there is the statement of that well known and learned Samuel Purchas, who, having visited them in

the beginning of the seventeenth century, writes: “They keep Saturday holy, nor esteem Saturday Fast lawful but on Easter Even. They have solemn Service on Saturdays.” Another authority, Josephus Abudacnus, writing in the eighteenth century in his history of the Jacobites, stated that they assembled every Sabbath in their temples, to which statement the later editor, J. Nicholai, adds the following footnote:

Our author states that the Jacobites assembled on the Sabbath day, before the Dommical day, in the temple, and kept that day, as do also the Abyssinians as we have seen from the confession of their faith by the Ethiopia king Claudius... From this it appears that the Jacobites have kept the Sabbath as well as the Dommical day, and still continue to keep it.

Alexander Ross writes that the Maronites likewise observed the Sabbath as well as Sunday. 41 Thus, we see how these four Eastern communions, three of which never walked with the papacy, continued to honor the Sabbath (*Truth Triumphant – The Church in the Wilderness*, B.G. Wilkinson, pp. 290-291).

And though the Council of Laodicea permits Christians to assemble on the Jewish Sabbath to hear the word of God, they must do it as Christians, otherwise they are liable to excommunication (*A Discourse in Six Dialogues on the Name, Notion, and Observation of the Lord’s Day*, Thomas Morer, 1701, p. 198).

The Celebration of this Feast (Easter) was Instituted by the same authority which changed the Jewish Sabbath into the Lord’s-day, or Sunday. For it will not be found in Scripture where Saturday is discharged to be kept, or turned into Sunday wherefore it must be the Churches Authority that Changed the one, and instituted the other. Therefore my opinion is, that those who will not keep this Feast may as well return to the observation of the Saturday and refute the weekly Sunday (*A Discourse in Six Dialogues on the Name, Notion, and Observation of the Lord’s Day*, Thomas Morer, 1701, p. 58).

As it is of the Law of Nature, that in general a proportion of Time by God's appointment be set apart for the Worship of God; for by his Word in a positive, moral, and perpetual Commandment, binding all Men in all Ages, he hath particularly appointed one Day in seven for a Sabbath to be kept holy unto him, which from the beginning of the World to the Resurrection of Christ, was the last Day of the Week (*A Confession of Faith*, 1750, p. 38).

The 19th Century

The Armenians in Hindostan are our own subjects. They have preserved the Bible in its purity; and their doctrines are, as far as the author knows, the doctrines of the Bible. Besides, they maintain the solemn observance of Christian worship throughout our Empire, on the seventh day; and they have as many spires pointing to heaven among the Hindoos, as we ourselves. Are such a people then entitled to no acknowledgment on our part, as fellow-Christians? Are they forever to be ranked by us with Jews, Maliomedans, and Hindoos (*Christian Researches in Asia*, p. 259, Claudius Buchanan).

In the 1830s, some New Englanders called the first day of the week "Sunday," as was the custom in England and most other parts of the United States. But many rural people continued the regional tradition of "the Sabbath," "Sabbathday," or in its most rustic form, "Sabbahday." In the 17th and 18th centuries, the Sabbath had been regarded as a day out of ordinary time. The Puritans had come to insist on strict and unvarying observance of the Sabbath, at the same time that they had eliminated all saints' days and holidays, including Christmas, from the calendar ("Remembering the Sabbath": Worship in New England Meetinghouses, <https://www.teachushistory.org/second-great-awakening-age-reform/articles/remembering-sabbath-worship-new-england-meetinghouses>, retr. 1/1/25).

But the majority moved to the Crimea and the Caucasus, where they remain true to their doctrine in spite of persecution until this present time. The people call them Subotniki, or Sabbatarians (*Geschichte der Juden in Polen*, p. 124).

A spectacular resurgence of seventh day Sabbath keeping erupted in 19th century America... Seventh day Baptists currently number around 5000, but have many more members worldwide... In 1844 Seventh-day Adventists arose and had spread to nearly all parts of the world by the close of the 19th century. Their name is derived from their teaching of the seventh-day Sabbath... Previously known as “Church of God, Adventist” or “Church of God Seventh Day” or simply COG7, this group of churches also spawned from the Adventist movement... (*Sabbath Diagnosis*, p. 431-433, Hullquist).

The 20th Century

Founded in the 1930s by COG7 ministers, Herbert W. Armstrong, a one-time SDA, the Worldwide Church of God developed primarily through radio and television ministries. By the early 1950s, the Radio Church of God, as it was then known, developed a strong central hierarchical government. Membership grew to over 100,00 at its peak (*Sabbath Diagnosis*, p. 433, Hullquist).

The evaluation of Sunday, the traditionally accepted day of the resurrection of Christ, has varied greatly throughout the centuries of the Christian Era. From time to time it has been confused with the seventh day of the week, the Sabbath. English speaking peoples have been the most consistent in perpetuating the erroneous assumption that the obligation of the fourth commandment has passed over to Sunday. In popular speech, Sunday is frequently, but erroneously, spoken of as the Sabbath (F. M. SETZLER, Head Curator, Department of Anthropology, Smithsonian Institute, from a letter dated Sept. 1, 1949).

The 21st Century

New Testament writings do not explain how the practice (Sunday worship) began. Jewish Christians probably kept the sabbath at the synagogue... (Encyclopedia Britannica, History of the Church Year, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/church-year/History-of-the-church-year>, retr. 7/25/2011).

Observation of the Sabbath is one of the key variations between Christianity and Judaism, even though each of these two religious systems of man claim adherence to the same Book (or at least portions thereof), which clearly delineates everything about the Sabbath. While the Sabbath is acknowledged by both, the actual day observed by these two religious systems differs (*The Biblical Sabbath*, <https://www.thebiblicaltruths.com/post/the-biblical-sabbath>, retr. 12/21/2022).

Sabbath Questions

Did the Creator rest on, bless and hallow the Sabbath? Yes (Gen. 2:3; Exo. 20:11). Did He rest, bless or at any time hallow the first day of the week? No!

Does God command the keeping of Sabbath? Yes (Exo. 20:8-11). Does He command the keeping of the first day of the week? No!

Did God call the Sabbath His Holy Day and offer great reward to those who keep holy the Sabbath? Yes (Isa. 58:13-14). Did He call the first day of the week His Holy Day and offer reward to those who keep holy Sunday? No!

Will the Sabbath be kept in the New Earth? Yes (Isa. 66:23). Will the first day of the week be kept in the New Earth? No!

Is keeping the Sabbath holy a sign that we worship the one and only living God? Yes (Eze. 20:20). Is keeping the first day of the week holy a sign that we worship the true God? No!

Should the saints pray about the Sabbath? Yes (Mat. 24:20). Should the saints pray about the first day of the week? No!

Did holy women keep the Sabbath according to the commandments? Yes (Luke 23:56). Did holy women keep Sunday according to any commandment? No!

Was it Christ's custom to keep the Sabbath? Yes (Luke 4:16). Was it the Savior's custom to keep the first day of the week? No!

Was it Paul's custom to worship on Sabbath? Yes (Acts 17:2). Was it Paul's custom to worship on Sunday? No!

Were people punished by God for Sabbath breaking? Yes (Jer. 17:27; Neh. 13:17-18). Were people punished by God for the first day of the week breaking? No!

Are those who keep the commandments of the Almighty blessed? Yes (Rev. 22:14). Are those who keep the traditions of men blessed? No (Mat. 15:3).

Do scriptures say that the Law would NOT be abolished by the Messiah? Yes (Mat. 5:17). Will God ever change His way? No (Mal. 3:6).

Are there six working days? Yes (Eze. 46:1). Did Paul make tents on the six working days? Yes (Acts 18:3). Is the Sabbath one of these working days? No (Exo. 20:8-11). Did Paul make tents on the Sabbath? No (Acts 18:4).

Is the Sabbath a sign of obedience to God? Yes (Eze. 20:12). Is Sunday a sign of obedience to God? No! (Exo. 31:13).

Does Scripture say that the Savior is the Master of the Sabbath? Yes (Mark 2:28). Do they say that the Savior is the Master of the first day of the week? No!

Is teaching for doctrines the commandments of men vain worship? Yes (Mat. 15:9). Is teaching for doctrines the commandments of the Almighty vain worship? No (Mat. 19:17).

No Christian of the New Testament, either before or after the resurrection, ever did ordinary work upon the seventh day. Why should modern Christians do differently from Bible Christians?

Does faith establish the Law? Yes (Rom. 3:31). Does Faith annul the Law? No! Faith is not merely belief—the faith of the saints is faithfulness. It is having the faith OF Christ, not faith IN Christ.

Are we under grace? Yes (Rom. 6:14). Does grace allow us to transgress the Law? No (Rom. 6:15; 3:20). In fact, grace rightly defined means “of manner or act... especially the divine influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life” (*Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, G5463).

Saturday still called Sabbath (Sabato) in the Greek language as well as in Spanish, Portuguese, Italian and others.

Paul, the apostle to the gentiles, called it the “Sabbath day” about A.D. 45 (Acts 13:27). Did Paul not know? Or shall we believe modern teachers who affirm that it ceased to be the Sabbath at the resurrection of Christ?

Did Christ say that we should not only observe, but teach others to observe the Law? Yes (Mat. 5:19). Did He say that we should teach others to break the Law? No!

In all their accusations against Paul, they never charged him with disregarding the Sabbath day. Why did they not, if he did not keep it? Paul himself expressly declared that he had kept the law. “Neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor yet against Caesar, have I offended anything at all” (Acts 25:8). How could this be true if he had not kept the Sabbath?

When the Son of God came, He kept the seventh day all His life on earth (Luke 4:16; John 15:10). Thus He followed His Father’s example from creation. Shall we not be safe in following the example of both the Father and the Son?

The evidence is insurmountable, so what are you personally going to do about it?

Sabbath Facts

After working the first six days of the week in re-creating this earth, the great God rested on the seventh day (Gen. 2:1-3). This stamped that day as God’s rest day. Therefore, the seventh day must always be God’s Sabbath day. Can you change your

birthday from the day on which you were born to one on which you were not born? No. Neither can you change God's rest day to a day on which He did not rest. Hence the seventh day continues to be God's Sabbath day.

God sanctified the seventh day (Exo. 20:11) from the beginning of man, (Gen. 2:1-3) before man had sinned. Thus, it was never a type or symbol introduced after the fact.

The Sabbath is also a memorial of creation (Exo. 20:11, 31:17). Every time we rest upon the seventh day, as God did at creation, we commemorate that grand event.

The Sabbath is not Jewish because it was made 2,300 years before there was ever a Jew.

The Bible never calls it the Jewish Sabbath, but always "the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." Men should be cautious how they stigmatize God's holy rest day.

Evident reference is made to all Sabbaths and the seven-day week throughout the patriarchal age (Gen. 26:5). It was kept by all the men and women of God down through the ages. All those things are examples for us (1Cor. 10:11).

It was a part of God's law before delivering the Ten Commandments at Sinai (Exo. 16:4, 27-29).

Christ said that the Sabbath was made for man (Mark 2:27) that is, for mankind, hence for the Gentile as well as the Jew.

The Sabbath was placed within God's Ten Commandments (Exo. 20:1-17). Why did He put it there if it was not like the other nine precepts, which all agree to be immutable?

The seventh-day Sabbath was commanded by the voice of the living God (Deu. 4:12, 13), and then He wrote the commandment with His own finger (Exo. 31:18).

The Sabbath was engraved in stone (Deu. 5:22), which was sacredly preserved in the Ark of the Covenant, within the holy of holies (Deu. 10:1-5). Thus, signifying its imperishable nature.

God forbade work upon the Sabbath even in the busiest of times (Exo. 34:21).

God destroyed the Israelites in the wilderness because they walked not in His Statutes, despised His judgments and greatly polluted His Sabbaths (Eze. 20:12, 13).

The Sabbath is the sign of the true God, by which we are to know him from false gods (Exo. 31:13-17, Eze. 20:20).

God promised that Jerusalem should stand forever if they would keep the Sabbath, but alas they did not so He destroyed Jerusalem for its violation (Jer. 17:24-27).

The Sabbath is part of the prophetic mystery of God's plan for humanity, and God has promised to bless all who keep it (Isa. 56:6-7; Heb. 4:1-13).

The Lord instructs us to take delight in the Sabbath and to call it honorable (Isa. 58:13). Beware ye who take delight in calling it a yoke of bondage and the like.

All of the great men and women of faith, the holy prophets, the apostles, Christ, and the New Testament Church kept the seventh day of each week holy.

The seventh day is the Lord's day (Rev. 1:10; Isa. 58:13; Exo. 20:10). Christ is Lord of the Sabbath (Mark 2:28) that is, to love and protect it, as the husband is the lord of the wife, to love and cherish her (1Pet. 3:6).

The Sabbath is a merciful institution designed for man's good (Mark 2:23-28).

Instead of abolishing the Sabbath, Christ carefully taught how it should be observed (Mat. 12:1-13).

Christ taught His disciples that they should do nothing upon the Sabbath day but what was “lawful” (Mat. 12:12) and that they it should be prayerfully regarded (Mat. 24:20).

The pious women who had been with Christ carefully kept the seventh day Sabbath when He was in the grave (Luke 23:56).

Thirty years after Christ’s resurrection, the apostles continued to observe and call it “the Sabbath day” (Acts 13:14).

Luke, the inspired Christian historian, writing as late as A.D. 62 calls it the Sabbath day. In addition, the Gentile converts kept the Sabbath (Acts 13:42-44).

In the great Christian council, A.D. 49, in the presence of the apostles and thousands of disciples, James explained that Gentiles were expected to keep the Sabbath day (Acts 15:21).

It was customary to go to synagogue and hold prayer meetings on the Sabbath day (Acts 16:13).

Paul read the Scriptures in public meetings as was his custom to preach on the Sabbath day (Acts 17:2-3; 13:14, 44).

The Sabbath is mentioned in the New Testament nearly sixty times, and always with respect, bearing the same title it has in the Old Testament. Not a word is said anywhere about the Sabbath being abolished, done away, or changed.

The seventh day Sabbath was an important part of the law of God, as it came from His own mouth, and was written by His own finger upon stone at Sinai, Exodus 20. When Christ began His work, He expressly declared that He had not come to destroy any part of the law (Mat. 5:17).

There was never any dispute between the Christians of the Bible and the Jews about the Sabbath day. This is proof that Christians still observed the same day that the Jews did.

Christ reprimanded the Pharisees and called them hypocrites for claiming to revere God while keeping a tradition that violated the fifth commandment (Mat. 15:3-6). Those who keep the first day of the week do something similar by choosing to observe a tradition of men that transgresses the fourth commandment.

First Day Facts

The very first thing recorded in the Bible is work done on the first day of the week, the first day of the week (Gen. 1:1-5). This was done by the Creator Himself. If God worked on Sunday, can it be wrong for us to work on the first day of the week?

God tells us to work on the first day of the week (Exo. 20:8-11). God Himself calls it a “working” day (Eze. 46:1). Is it wrong to obey God?

God did not rest upon the first day of the week. He never blessed it. Christ did not rest upon it and never blessed it. The apostles never rested on it. It has never been sanctified nor blessed by any divine authority.

No law was ever given to enforce the keeping of Sunday. Hence, it is no transgression to work upon it (Rom. 4:15, 1John 3:4).

No regulation is given as to how the first day of the week ought to be observed. Would this be so if God wished us to keep it?

The first day of the week is mentioned only eight times in all the New Testament (Mat. 28:1; Mark 16:2, 9; Luke 24:1; John 20:1, 19; Acts 20:7; 1Cor. 16:2). None of these utterances refer to it as a holy day.

Paul directed the saints to take care of financial business on the first day of the week (1Cor. 16:2).

It is never called, or even insinuated that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, a rest day, or the Sabbath day at all in the Scriptures. No sacred title whatever is applied to it. Neither God, nor inspired men ever said one word in favor of Sunday as a holy day. It is simply called "first day of the week."

The Bible nowhere says that the first day of the week commemorates the resurrection of Christ. This is a tradition of men, which contradicts the law of God (Mat. 15:1-9). It is baptism that commemorates the burial and resurrection of Christ (Rom. 6:3-5).

The entire Bible is silent with regard to any change of the Sabbath day or any sacredness for the first day of the week.

Can You Find a Scripture?

- Telling mankind to keep every first day of the week holy or to worship or rest on each first day of the week?
- That shows any of the apostles keeping the first day of the week as the Sabbath?
- Declaring that the seventh day is no longer the Eternal's Sabbath day?
- That calls the seventh day the Jewish Sabbath or one calling the first day the Christian Sabbath?
- Calling the first day of each week a holy day?
- That says the Sabbath was changed from the seventh day to the first day of the week?
- That says the Sabbath has been done away?
- That tells us to keep the first day in honor of the resurrection of the Savior?
- Where an apostle taught the keeping of the first day of the week as the Sabbath?
- Where the first day of the week is kept as the New Testament Sabbath?

The Eternal Church of God offers a variety of books, booklets, articles, audio, and video to help people better understand the Bible. Some of the printed material available includes:

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