Church and State – Part 18 Is Saturday or Sunday the day of rest?







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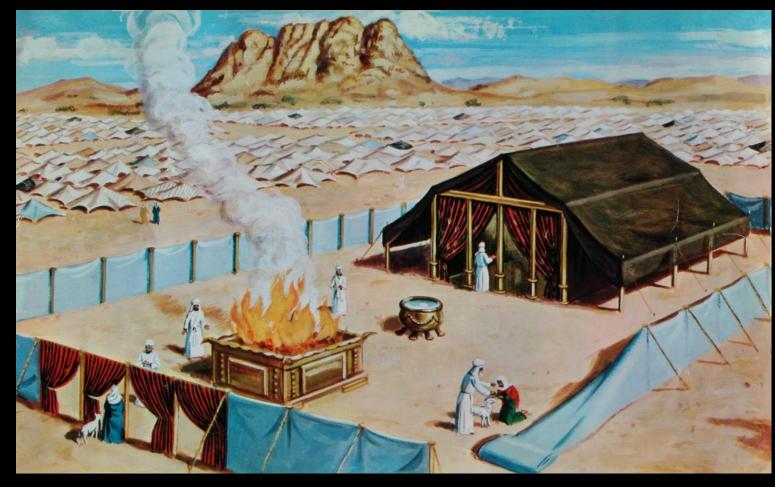
Enter The Ark of Hope

The Great Controversy between God and Satan is primarily over "WORSHIP" Who will you Choose?









And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. – Exodus 25:8

Psalms 77:13



Health Snippet – Aonori (seaweed)

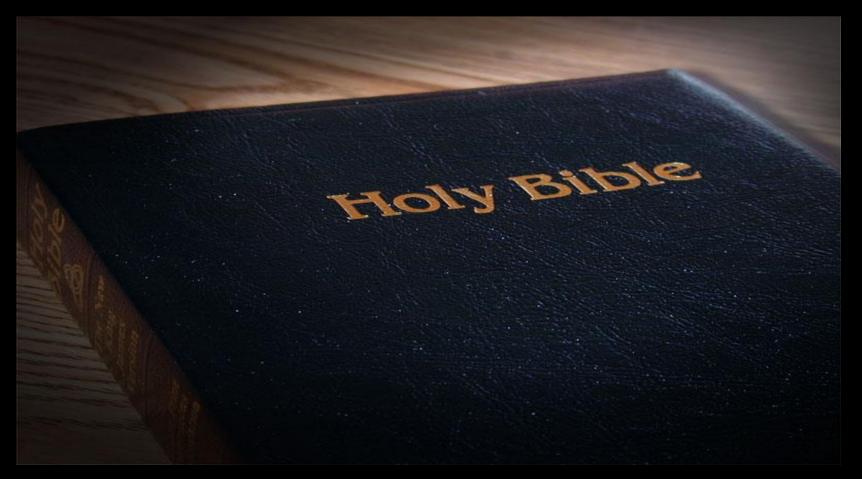
Health Benefits of Aonori (Seek Medical Advise) Aonori is unique seaweed belonging to the genre Monostroma and Enteromorpha. These seaweeds are exclusively found in southern areas of Japan. Treating skin conditions : Aonori is rich in minerals and vitamins, which can help to soothe irritated skin. Improving the immune system: Aonori contains compounds such as polyphenols, which can help boost the immune system and fight off invading bacteria and viruses. Lowering cholesterol levels: Aonori is a good source of dietary fibre, which can help to reduce cholesterol levels. **Reducing inflammation**: Aonori has anti-inflammatory compounds that can help reduce joint pain and swelling. **Preventing anaemia:** Aonori is a good source of iron, which is essential for preventing anaemia. **Improving digestion**: Aonori is a great source of dietary fibre, which can help to improve digestion and reduce constipation.

Best way to eat it: As a dry seasoning or extra flavour to soups, salads, topping for rice, toasts and French fries.

• It's high in sodium, too much can raise blood pressure.



Can We Trust Bible Prophecy?



Yes we can

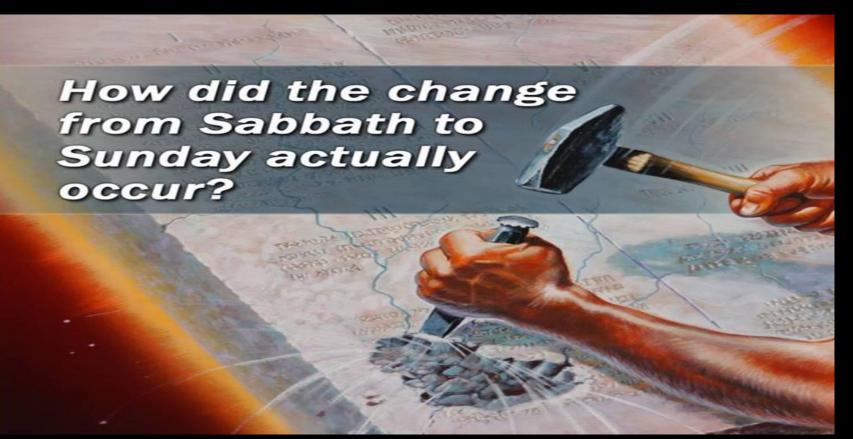


Genesis 2:3 KJV And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

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Church and State – Part 18 Is Saturday or Sunday the day of rest

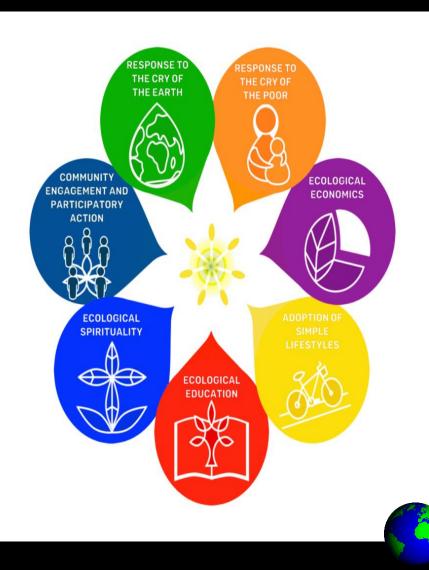


Past > Present > Future



Introduction

For years, the Vatican has promoted the pope's Laudato Si' message. This plan, "designed to encourage strategic actors to commit to achieving total sustainability with Pope Francis's environmental advocacy as a guide," kicked into gear on May 25, 2021. "Pope Francis said humanity has a duty to future generations to overcome selfishness, indifference, and 'irresponsible' habits, asking faithful to respect creation and 'inaugurate a lifestyle and a society that is finally eco-sustainable." According to a Vatican official, the plan is designed to be seven years long because of the biblical significance of the number seven. Year one is a planning year, followed by five years of environmental action. The final, seventh year "will be a 'sabbatical' year dedicated to 'praise and thanking God." The idea is to begin with Catholic churches and organizations and then bring in other churches and organizations, ultimately involving the whole world. Integral to the plan is a mandatory weekly day of rest. "The Pope's encyclical calls for Sunday to be implemented as a weekly day of rest to save the environment".



Introduction (cont'd)

Bible prophecy foretells the rise of an endtime "beast power (Papal Rome)" in central Europe. This "beast" will be a powerful political/military/economic leader who will work in concert with a powerful 2nd beast power (USA) (see Revelation 13). Ultimately, the 2nd beast power will cause "all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name" (vv. 16–17). Could mandatory Sunday worship be part of this mysterious "mark" of the beast, and could Pope Francis' Laudato Si' help bring this about?

Let us examine God's word the Bible to see what is the truth about the day of rest or the Sabbath!



Let examine the Truth about God's Truth!

Have you ever considered answering these questions in your mind:

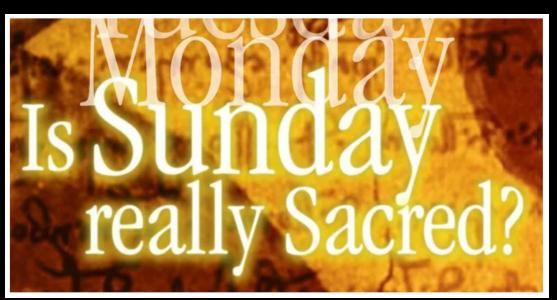
WHY do some Christians meet for worship on Saturday, while others do so on Sunday?

OR WHY did Sunday become a legal day of rest? OR

WHY do we even need a "Sabbath day" at all?

Genesis 2:2 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.

3 And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.
 Please also see the 4th Commandment in Exodus 20:8-11.



IS THE SABBATH Saturday or Sunday?

TRU

A Wrong Turn

One of David's most beautiful prayers is recorded in Psalm 43:3. "O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles."

This same earnest petition to understand God's Word should be in the heart of every sincere seeker for truth. A willingness to learn and to obey must characterize all of those who expect to be enlightened by the Holy Spirit. To such, the beautiful promise of the beatitude will be fulfilled. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6).

But it does no good to pray for the truth if we have no intention to obey it when God answers our prayer. One of the greatest favours God can bestow upon us is to give knowledge of His Word. And the most presumptuous thing anybody can do is to pray for an understanding of God's will and then refuse to obey, for any reason whatsoever, when the answer comes.

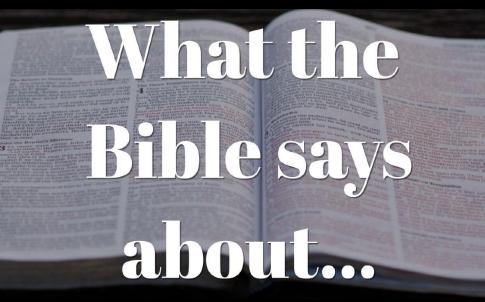


1st Sunday 2nd Monday 3rd Tuesday 4th Wednesday 5th Thursday 6th Friday 7th Saturday

Sun. Mon. Tues. Wed. Thurs. Fri. Sat.

A Wrong Turn (cont'd)

Many people are guilty of pulling the Bible down to match their poor, weak experience, instead of bringing their experience up to meet the requirements of the Word. There is only one great decisive test of truth, and that is the Bible. Every religious thought, every book we read, and every sermon we hear should be measured by the infallible rule of the inspired Scriptures. It does not matter what we were taught as children, or what the majority is following, or what our emotions lead us to think or believe. Those factors are invalid as a test of absolute truth. The ultimate question must be answered: What does the Word of God say on the subject?





A Wrong Turn (cont'd)

Some people think that if they are sincere in what they believe, God will accept them and save them. However, sincerity alone is not enough. One can be sincere, and be sincerely wrong. Lets look at a 1st hand narative... I remember driving to West Palm Beach, Florida, several years ago. At least I thought I was going there. It was night, and I had not seen any road signs for quite awhile. Suddenly my car lights picked up a sign that read, "Belle Glade 14 miles." Heartsick, I realized that I was traveling in the opposite direction from West Palm Beach. I was on the wrong road. No one could have been more sincere than I was that night, but I was sincerely wrong. Now, I could have continued down the road saying that somehow, somewhere up ahead I might find West Palm Beach. Instead, I turned the car around and went back to the place where I took the wrong turn and got on the right road leading to West Palm Beach. That was the only right thing to do.



Closed Minds and Majority Rule

God's Word has a lot to say to those who are willing to be corrected. The people to be the most pitied are those who have closed minds. They will resist any information that varies from their personal views. Their minds are made up, and they don't want to be bothered by the facts. This is especially true concerning the subject of the Sabbath.

Multitudes have inherited opinions about the day to be observed weekly, and they find it very difficult to look objectively at any other viewpoint. Many of them know that one of the Ten Commandments requires the keeping of the seventh day of the week. They also know that the seventh day is Saturday. Yet they tenaciously follow the tradition of observing a different day from the one God commanded. They worship on Sunday, the first day of the week, for which there is no biblical command.

"Bear in mind this sacred principle, that though the will of the majority is in all cases to prevail, that will, to be rightful, must be reasonable; that the minority possess their equal rights, which equal laws must protect, and to violate would be oppression."

Thomas Jefferson - 1st Inaugural (1801)

Closed Minds and Majority Rule (cont'd)

Why do they do it? Most Sunday keepers have simply accepted the practice of the religious majority in the community where they were raised; assuming that it has to be right because so many are doing it. Is this a safe assumption? Has the majority usually been right in religious matters?

The Bible clearly answers these questions in the negative. Every available source of information reveals that in religious matters, at least, the majority has always been wrong. Jesus Himself said, "And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man" (Luke 17:26). Only eight people went into the ark to be saved from the flood. Christ taught that only a comparable few would be saved at the end of the world. Said He, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matthew 7:13, 14).



PReconceived notions are the locks on the door to wisdom - Merry Browne

Closed Minds and Majority Rule (cont'd)

It is very true that the great majority of Christians today, including many famous evangelists and theologians, are keeping Sunday instead of the seventh-day Sabbath. That fact alone should not over impress anyone. Taken by itself, in the light of Christ's words, it should raise a flag of warning. Truth has never been popular with the masses. And those in the majority today, as in all past ages, are not really looking for truth as much as they are looking for a smooth, easy, comfortable religion that will allow them to live as they want to live.

What, then, should be the test of the Sabbath truth? Just one thing, and one thing only—the Word of God. Unfortunately, millions have never studied the Bible for themselves on this subject. I propose that we test the Sunday-keeping practice of this majority group and find out if it is correct. If it is biblical, then all of us should accept it and faithfully keep every Sunday. If the Scriptures do not support it, then we should diligently search the Word until we find the day that our Lord has endorsed for us to keep.



Closed Minds and Majority Rule (cont'd)

The most honest way I know to approach this subject is to take a look at absolutely everything that the Bible says about the first day of the week. There are only eight texts in the New Testament that refer to Sunday, and by carefully studying these verses we can be certain that all the evidence for consideration is before us. If there is any biblical authority for keeping the first day of the week, it will have to be found in one of these verses.

Here is where our prejudice will be tested! Can we open our minds completely to whatever this objective search reveals? These are not trick questions. Personally, I do not care which day is found to be the Sabbath. If the Bible teaches it, I will gladly keep Monday, Thursday, Friday, or Sunday. Long ago, I decided to follow the Word of God wherever it would lead, regardless of my feelings. It makes no difference to me which day I keep holy, as long as it is the one commanded in the Bible! I hope you feel the same way as we begin our examination of every reference in the New Testament that mentions the first day of the week.





Resurrection on Sunday

Let's begin with the first Gospel. Matthew writes, "In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre" (Matthew 28:1). Here we have some very interesting proof that the Sabbath could not possibly be the first day of the week. According to this record the Sabbath was ending when the first day was beginning. They are two successive days. Based on Scripture no one could truthfully call Sunday the Sabbath. It would be both confusing and unbiblical.

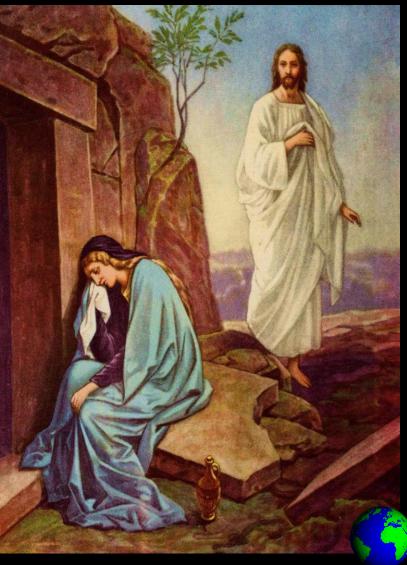
The substance of Matthew's testimony is simply that the women came at dawn on the day following the Sabbath and found that Jesus was already risen. This harmonizes perfectly with the next Gospel, which adds a few more details. Notice that Mark equates the dawn with "the rising of the sun." He wrote, "And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun. And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?" (Mark 16:1–3).



Resurrection on Sunday (cont'd)

These parallel Gospel accounts clear up a common misconception that has arisen over the meaning of Matthew's words "as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week." Some have interpreted this to be just before sundown on Saturday evening. Since the Hebrew reckoning would establish the end of the Sabbath at sunset, they assume that the women came just before the first day was ushered in at sundown.

Here we see the value of comparing text with text. Mark's words make it impossible to hold the view that the women came Saturday night and found the tomb empty. He lists the very same women as coming at sunrise Sunday morning, but they were asking the question, "Who shall roll us away the stone?" Obviously, if they had been there the night before and discovered an empty tomb, they would have known that the stone was already removed from the door. Thus, we can understand clearly that Matthew's "dawn" is referring to the early morning visit at sunrise on Sunday morning.



Resurrection on Sunday (cont'd)

The third New Testament reference to the first day is a simple narrative statement in Mark 16:9, "Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils." Little comment is needed here, because the verse is only repeating the same story of the resurrection early on Sunday morning. The important thing to note is that nothing is said in any of these texts about the first day of the week being holy. There is no intimation of anyone observing the day in honour of the resurrection.



Locating the True Sabbath

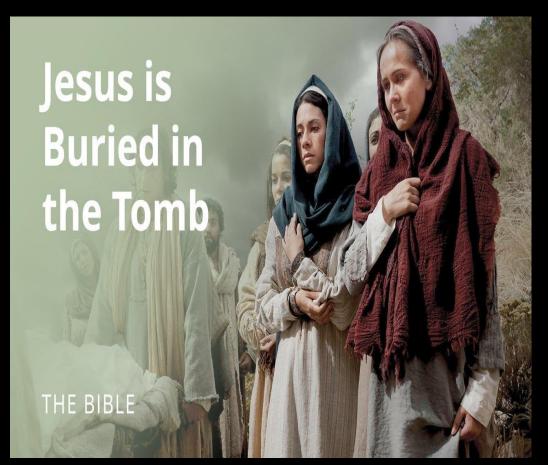
One of the most complete word pictures of resurrection events is found in the Gospel of Luke, and here we read the fourth reference to the first day of the week. "This man (Joseph of Arimathaea) went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on" (Luke 23:52–54).

Before reading further, let us carefully examine the inspired description of this crucifixion day. The vast Christian majority agrees that these events transpired on the day we now call Good Friday. Here it is called the "preparation" day, because it was a time for making special arrangements for the approaching Sabbath. In fact, the text states very simply "the Sabbath drew on." This means that it was coming up next.



What else happened on that day Jesus died? "And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment" (Luke 23: 55, 56).

During the rest of that fateful Friday, the devoted women bought the anointing materials and made further preparation for their Sunday morning visit to the tomb. Then, as the Sabbath was ushered in at sunset, they "rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment." This identifies that holy day as the specific weekly Sabbath of the Ten Commandments and not the Passover or some other feast-sabbath that could have fallen on any day of the week.



The next verse tells what the women did on the day following the Sabbath. "Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them. And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre" (Luke 24:1, 2).

First, we notice that the women came to do their regular labour on the day of the resurrection. Modern churches refer to that particular first day of the week as Easter Sunday. There can be no doubt that Jesus was raised sometime during the dark hours of that early morning. In none of the Gospel recitals do we have any evidence that the women, or anyone else, attached any sacredness to the day on which the resurrection took place.



Luke's account of that eventful weekend proves beyond any question that the true seventh-day Sabbath can still be precisely located. He describes the sequence of events over three successive days—Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Jesus died on the preparation day, and the Sabbath was approaching. Christians now refer to it as Good Friday. The next day was the Sabbath "according to the commandment." Since the commandment plainly designates that "the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord," that Sabbath had to be Saturday. It is very interesting to note that Jesus rested in the tomb on the Sabbath from His work of redemption, just as He had rested from His work of creation on the Sabbath.

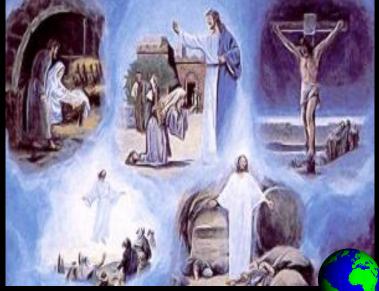
"Now Jesus rested from the work of redemption. A restored creation, a redeemed race, that having conquered sin could never fall, this, the result to flow from Christ's completed work, God and angels saw." DA.769.002



On the day following the Sabbath, Jesus rose. Today it is referred to as Easter Sunday, but the Bible designates it "the first day of the week." In the light of these indisputable, historical facts to which all Christianity subscribes, no one can plead ignorance of the true Sabbath. It is the day between Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Luke's record is such a perfect chronological account of those three days that even the most simple and uneducated can locate the biblical seventh day on our modern calendar.

Now we are prepared to examine the fifth New Testament statement concerning Sunday. "The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre" (John 20:1). There is very little new information in John's description of the resurrection. Like all the other writers he gives no indication whatsoever that the first day of the week was ever counted holy or kept holy by anyone. So far, the significant common thread in all the Gospel stories has been a total absence of such evidence.





For Fear of the Jews

John mentions the "first day" again in the same chapter, and this has often been misinterpreted as a reference to Sunday worship. "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you" (John 20:19). Even though this gathering behind locked doors took place on the same day as the resurrection, was it a special commemoration of that event? The circumstances make it impossible for such to be the case. The text plainly states that they were gathered there "for fear of the Jews." The frightened disciples had already learned that the tomb was empty, and they expected shortly to be charged with stealing away the body of Jesus. They huddled together in the locked room for protection and reassurance.



For Fear of the Jews (cont'd)

The fact is that they did not believe Christ had been resurrected from the dead. Mark's account reveals that they totally rejected the testimony of Mary and the other disciples who brought word of actually seeing the resurrected Lord. "And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not. After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country. And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them. Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen" Mark 16:10–14).

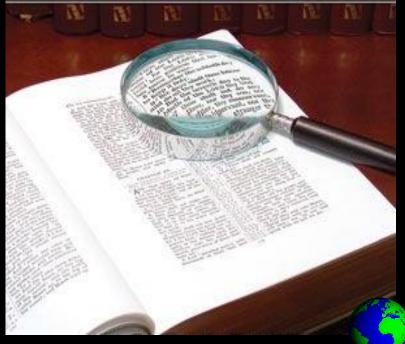


For Fear of the Jews (cont'd)

Thus far, we have carefully studied six of the eight New Testament references without finding a single instance of Sunday observance. In fact, every one of them reveals a consistent, total ignorance of any recognition of the first day of the week for worship, prayer, rest, or honouring the resurrection. The Gospels were written several years after the events transpired, giving many opportunities to the Holy Spirit to inspire the authors with the full facts. Jesus told His disciples that the work of that Spirit was to "guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). If first-day observance had been any part of truth, then the Holy Spirit would have been divinely obligated to reveal it to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. So said our Lord.

Now we turn to the two remaining references. If we find no evidence in these texts, we will have to abandon the search, for there is nowhere else to look. Paul and Luke are the final witnesses who mention the first day of the week, and both of them have been grossly misrepresented in what they said.

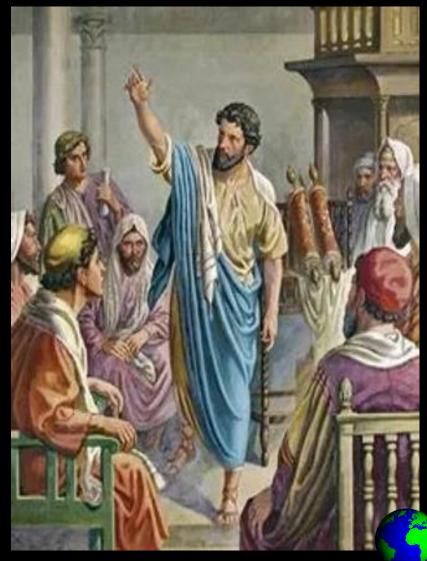




No Sunday-keeping in Corinth

In 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2, Paul wrote: "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come ... whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem."

Please carefully notice what the apostle said, and what he did not say. Many have assumed that a religious meeting was held and a collection plate passed. This is not the case. Paul was writing special appeals to the churches in Asia Minor, because many of the Christians in Jerusalem were suffering greatly for lack of food and daily necessities. Paul asked the church at Corinth to gather food, clothing, etc., and store it up at home until he could send men to transport it to Jerusalem. The expression "lay by him in store" in the original Greek gives the clear connotation of putting aside at home. Even Sunday advocates agree to this.



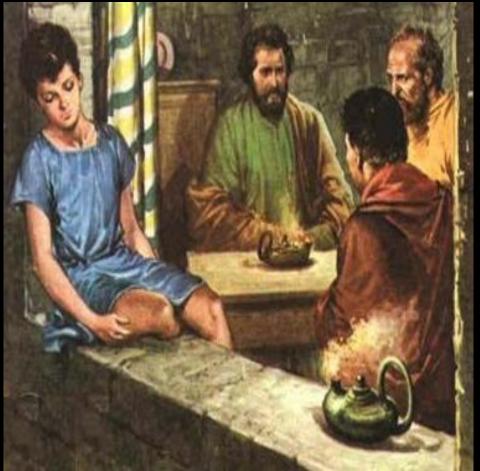
Paul's Longest Sermon

This brings us to the final reference that could provide any support for Sunday sacredness. In Luke's history of the early church, he describes the dramatic farewell meeting, which Paul had with the believers in Troas. Those who grasp for any tiny excuse to justify their disobedience of God's commandments have grievously distorted this account in the book of Acts. Because it is the only record in the New Testament of a religious meeting being held on the first day of the week, we should examine it with special care and interest.





The full context reveals that it was a night meeting. "And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days. In addition, upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight. And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together. And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: ... and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead. And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him. When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed. And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted. And we went before to ship, and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, minding himself to go afoot" (Acts 20:6–13).



There are some very unusual things about this allnight meeting in Troas. <u>First</u>, it had to be a solemn, poignant occasion for the speaker and congregation, as well. In verse 25 Paul declared, "And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more."

It is obvious that this farewell meeting was held on the dark part of the first day of the week. There were lights in the room, and Paul preached until midnight. It is important to understand the Jewish way of reckoning time. Days were not counted according to the pagan Roman method, from midnight to midnight. In the Bible, the day begins at evening. Genesis describes all the days of creation week in the same way—"The evening and the morning were the first day ... the evening and the morning were the second day," etc. In other words, the evening always comes first in the day.

The evening and the morning were the first day

Genesis 1:5

This explains why the Sabbath is described in these words, "It shall be unto you a Sabbath of rest, ... from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your Sabbath" (Leviticus 23:32). But when does the evening begin according to the Bible? "And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils" (Mark 1:32). Since the Pharisees taught that it was wrong to heal on the Sabbath, the people waited until the Sabbath was over before bringing their sick to Jesus. Therefore, they brought them "at even, when the sun did set." Moses wrote, "Thou shalt sacrifice the Passover at even, at the going down of the sun" (Deuteronomy 16:6).

In Nehemiah, we are given another description of the beginning of Sabbath. "And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the Sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the Sabbath" (Nehemiah 13:19). This definitely places the first moments of the Sabbath at sunset, when it is beginning to be dark.



5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

8b And the evening and the morning were the second day.

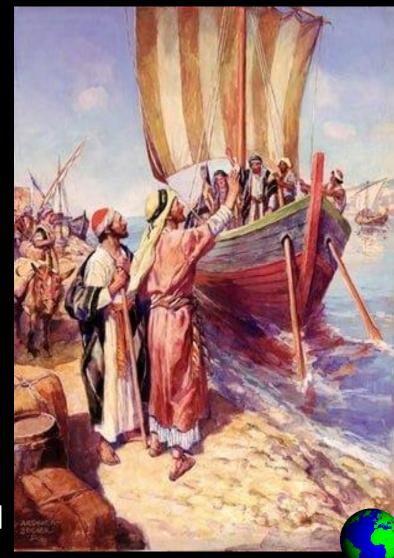
verse

- 13 And the evening and the morning were the third day.
- 19 And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.
- 23 And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

31b And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

Now we are ready to apply this sound Bible principle to the first-day meeting of Paul in Troas. The night setting would require that it be held on Saturday night. The Sabbath ended at sundown, and the first day of the week began. Paul, who had stayed a full seven days so that he could be with the people over the Sabbath, decided not to leave with the ship on Saturday night. Instead, he fellowshipped all night long with the believers and then walked twenty miles across the peninsula on Sunday morning to join the boat at Assos.

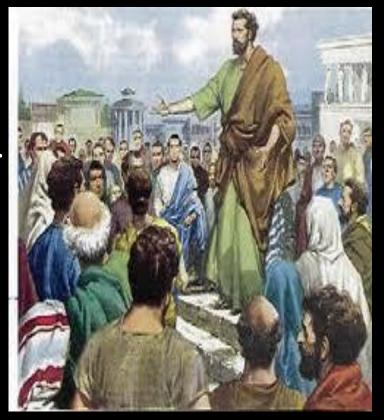
Incidentally, Paul's missionary companions, including Luke, who chronicled the highlights of the carefully scheduled voyage, manned this boat. It is very significant that they would not go out to sea until the Sabbath was over on Saturday night. Toiling at the oars and sails would have been no more proper for a holy day than Paul's twenty-mile walk across the isthmus on Sunday morning. Neither Paul nor his fellow travellers would have indulged in those secular activities on God's holy Sabbath.



The Day They Kept

The book of Acts establishes a consistent pattern of seventhday Sabbath keeping. On one occasion, Paul was petitioned by the Gentiles to hold an exclusive service for them on the Sabbath. "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).

There are some very interesting points in these dynamic verses that validate the Sabbath practices of Paul and his fellow Christians. After preaching in the synagogue, where the Gentiles were not permitted to enter, Paul was besieged by the Gentiles with an appeal to preach to them "the next Sabbath." Many have charged that Paul only preached in the synagogues on the Sabbath because he had a ready-made crowd of Jews to work on. This is a false claim. In this instance, Paul made an appointment to minister to the Gentiles on the following Sabbath, and according to verse 43, many of those who heard him that day were "proselytes" to the faith. This means they were converts to Christianity, and Paul and Barnabas "persuaded them to continue in the grace of God."

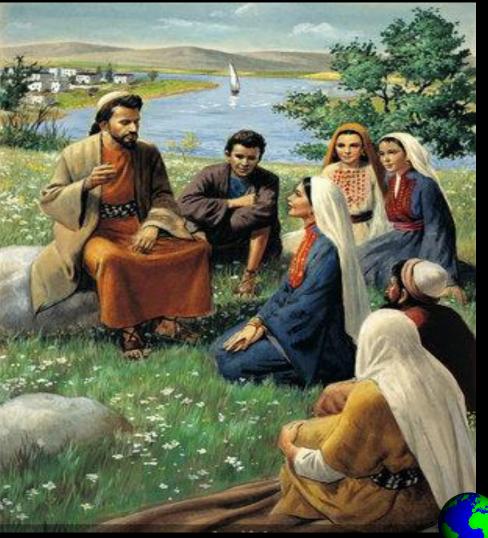


The Day They Kept (cont'd)

How interesting it is that their Sabbath worship is spoken of in the context of continuing in God's grace! Modern critics of the Sabbath try to label Sabbath keepers as legalists who are aliens to the grace of the gospel. Not so the writers of the Bible, who constantly associate obedience with true salvation by faith.

In Acts 16:13 we have positive proof that Paul kept the Sabbath even when there was no synagogue and no Jews. He was ministering in Greece, where there were only a few scattered Jews and no synagogue at all. What did he do on the Sabbath? "And on the Sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spoke unto the women which resorted thither."

Even with no church to attend, the apostle sought out a spot where religious worship was carried on—a place of prayer by the river—and preached to those who went there. Surely, no one can fail to discern Paul's deep commitment to the Sabbath as we follow him in this unusual outdoor mission.

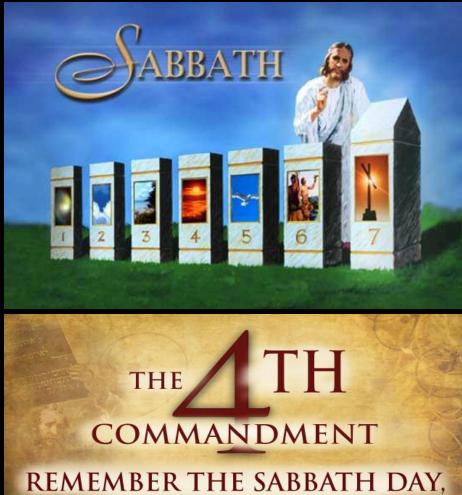


The Day They Kept (cont'd)

Again, we read about Paul's customary practice in these words, "And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures" (Acts 17:2). "And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks" (Acts 18:4).

Finally, we cite the great apostle's personal testimony that he never kept one Sunday holy in his whole life. Just before his death, Paul made this emphatic statement to the Jewish leaders, "Men and brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans" (Acts 28:17).

Think for a moment! If Paul had ever deliberately broken the Sabbath, or kept another day than the seventh, he could not have declared truthfully that he had done nothing against Jewish custom. On the strength of this unqualified declaration by a man of unimpeachable integrity, we close the search for Sunday keeping authority in the Bible. It just is not there.



TO KEEP IT HOLY.

The Change Of The Sabbath Has No Biblical Authority

If the Seventh - day is the true Sabbath of the Lord, why do the majority worship on the first day today?

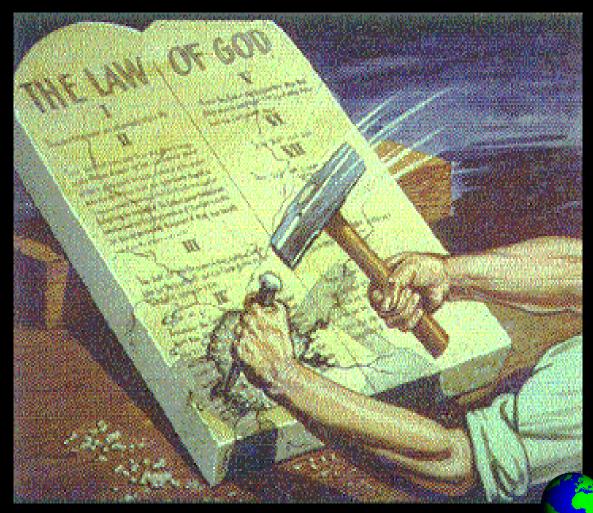
One will go through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation and will not find a place where the Lord gave a new commandment that changed the Sabbath time from the Seventh day to another day. The gospels make it clear that Christ knew that His disciples would be keeping the Seventh-day Sabbath even after His ascension. From Matthew 24:20, we read the following prophetic words from our Lord in relation to Jerusalem's destruction: "But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day".

Beloved, it is clear from the gospels that Christ did not give any contrary commandment in relation to the Sabbath time. Rather, He knew that long after His ascension, His disciples would be keeping the Seventh-day Sabbath. The New Testament also makes it clear that the Disciples of Christ, including even Paul, did not present any contrary teaching in relation to the Seventh-day Sabbath.



The Change Of The Sabbath Has No Biblical Authority (cont'd)

Beloved, it is sad to learn that many who have asked why their church worship on Sunday instead of on the Bible Sabbath have been told by their ministers that their church worship on Sunday in honour of the resurrection of Christ. However, you will search the entire New Testament and will not come across any place where Christ asked His disciples to replace Sunday with the Sabbath in honour of His resurrection. In fact, there are 8 texts in the New Testament that mention the first day of the week (see Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:2; Mark 16:9; Luke 24:1; John 20:1; John 20:19, Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2). And as we note in these passages, none of these texts carry a command to keep holy the first day instead of the Seventh day.



The Change Of The Sabbath Has No Biblical Authority (cont'd)

Today at this point in time of earth's history, the million dollar question that now begs for an answer is this: If there is no evidence from Scripture that the Sabbath time has been changed, then why do the majority in **Christendom today keep Sunday instead of Saturday?** Friends, the answer to this question is not so straightforward. The reason is that Sunday worship crept into the church in a gradual manner after the death of the apostles (see Acts 20:29). In the subsequent sections, we are going to consider the various events that made Sunday worship to become popular as we see in Christendom today.

20. Why is breaking God's commandments, or law, so serious?

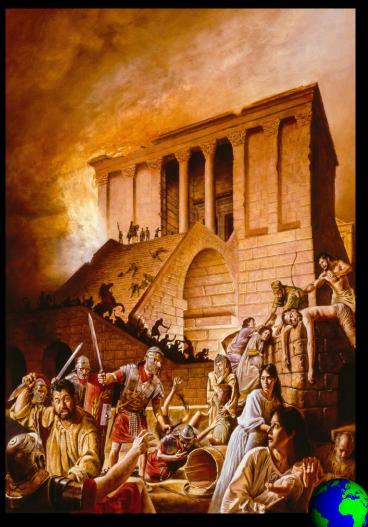
1 John 3:4 (1792)

How The Change Of The Sabbath Actually Came About

History records clearly how the change of the Sabbath time from Saturday to Sunday actually took place. Here is the progression of events that led to the distinct change we see today: A) ANTI - SEMITISM IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE

After the death of Christ, the Christian church continued to keep the Seventh-day Sabbath for several years (see Chapter 11 of the book "The Change of the Sabbath" by George L. Butler and Chapters 18 and 19 of the book "History of the Sabbath" by John Nevins Andrews). Wherever the gospel was preached, Christian converts kept holy the Seventh-day Sabbath. However, within the course of time, the Jews rebelled against the Roman Empire. Rome suppressed the Jewish rebellion by destroying Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

With the continual suppression of the Jews by Rome, it became increasingly uncomfortable for some Christians to keep the Seventh-day Sabbath which was viewed by Rome as a visible sign of Judaism. With time, many in the Christian church began to distance themselves from the Jews by adopting Sunday (the pagan's rest day) as their day of worship.



B) CONSTANTINE AND THE FIRST SUNDAY LAW

In AD 320, Constantine the Great, the Emperor of Rome, announced that He was now a Christian. Soon after becoming a Christian, he declared himself the Bishop of the Christian church. The pages of secular history reveal that Constantine's conversion to Christianity was basically for political reasons and not because he had a true change of heart to follow Christ. Constantine wanted to find a way to unite his empire, and he thought that he could achieve this objective if he could find a way to unite the pagans and Christians in his empire. The pagans already worshipped on Sunday and the Christians were now shifting from keeping Saturday to Sunday. Constantine's clever question was this: why don't I unite the empire around Sunday worship?



How The Change Of The Sabbath Actually **Came About (cont'd)** Thus, in March 7, A.D. 321, Constantine

made the first Sunday law. This law read:

"On the venerable day of the sun let the magistrate and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed" Codex Justinianus 3.12.3, trans. Philip Schaff, History of the Christian Church, 5th ed. (New York, 1902), 3:380, note 1).

It is important to note that this Sunday law did not mention the Seventh-day Sabbath. Moreover, the law forbade works only within the cities. As we proceed, it is important to remember that Constantine's Sunday law was only a strategy to bridge his empire together.

Constantine made the 1st Sunday Law

A.D. 321 – First Sunday Law

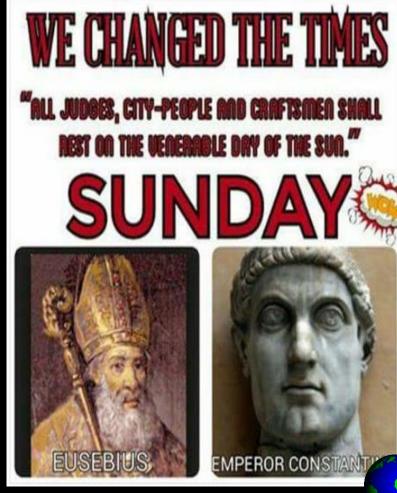
- On the Venerable Day of the Sun ["venerabili die Solis"--the sacred day of the Sun] let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed.
- The First Sunday Law of Constantine 1, in "Codex Justinianus," lib. 3, tit. 12, 3; trans. in Phillip Schaff "History of the Christian Church," Vol. 3, p. 380.



C) CATHOLICISM AND SUNDAY LAWS

After the first Sunday law by Constantine in A.D. 321, other Sunday laws soon followed from the Church of Rome. In A.D. 325, Pope Sylvester officially named Sunday "the Lord's Day," and in A.D. 338, Eusebius, the court bishop of Constantine, wrote: "All things whatsoever that it was the duty to do on the Sabbath (the seventh day of the week) we (Constantine, Eusebius, and other bishops) have transferred to the Lord's Day (which they claim to be the first day of the week) as more appropriately belonging to it."

Friends, one of the most significant Sunday laws came from the Council of Laodicea in A.D. 364. This Papal council decreed the following: "Christians shall not Judaize and be idle on Saturday but shall work on that day; but the Lord's day they shall especially honour, and, as being Christians, shall, if possible, do no work on that day. If, however, they are found Judaizing, they shall be shut out from Christ" (Strand,op. cit., citing Charles J. Hefele, A History of the Councils of the Church, 2 [Edinburgh, 1876] 316).



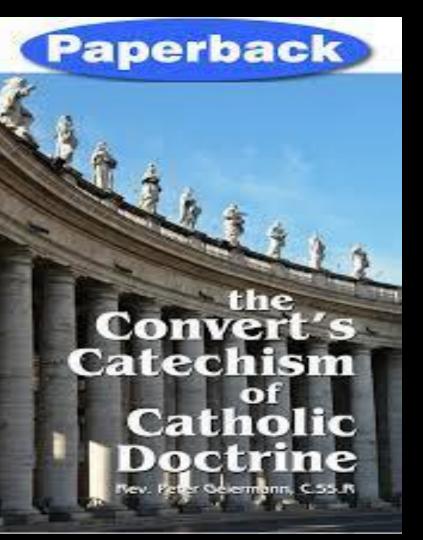
Beloved, it is important to note that this significant Sunday law by the Roman Catholic Church was not only a Sunday rest law but also an anti - Sabbath law. Offenders of this law were to be shut out from Christ. This Sunday law now created a problem for Christians who believed that the Seventh - day Sabbath was Saturday and not Sunday. History is filled with the story of how the Roman Catholic Church has persecuted several of God's children who decided to honour the Bible Sabbath instead of Sunday (see "The Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe" by W. E. H. Leckey Vol. II p. 32 and "The Approaching End of the Age" by H. Grattan Guiness, p. 212).

The decree from the Council of Laodicea is not the only clear statement by the Papacy in relation to the change of the Sabbath. There are several clear admissions by the Catholic Church as to the fact that they had changed the Sabbath time from Saturday to Sunday. Let's consider a few of these bold claims:





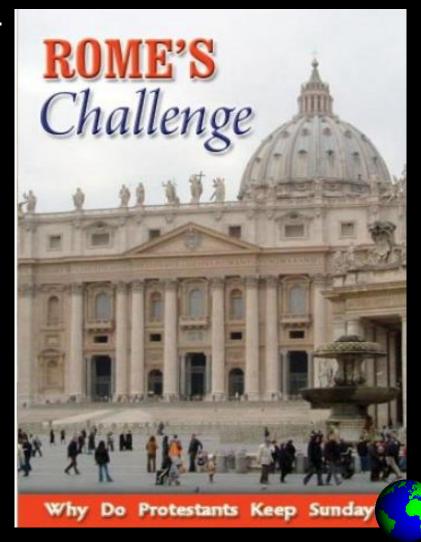
- i) <u>From the "Convert's Catechism of Catholic</u> <u>Doctrine" 2nd Edition 1910, p. 50 we read the</u> <u>following</u>: "
- **QUESTION**: Which is the Sabbath day?"
- **ANSWER**: Saturday is the Sabbath day."
- **QUESTION:** Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?"
- ANSWER: We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church, in the council of Laodicea transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday."
- ii) From the Catholic Record, London, Ontario
 September 1, 1923 we read the following:
 "Sunday is our mark of authority, the church is above the Bible and this transference of Sabbath observance is proof of the fact and any protestant who keeps Sunday acknowledges this."



How The Change Of The Sabbath Actually Came About (cont'd) iii) From the book Rome's Challenge, page 34,

iii) From the book Rome's Challenge, page 34 we read the following:

"Most Christians assume that Sunday is the biblically approved day of worship. The Roman Catholic Church protests that it transferred Christian worship from the biblical Sabbath (Saturday) to Sunday, and that to try to argue that the change was made in the Bible is both dishonest and a denial of Catholic authority. If Protestantism wants to base its teachings only on the Bible, it should worship on Saturday."



iv) From the words of Dr. Edward T. Hiscox D. D., author of the Baptist manual, we read the following:

"There was and is a commandment to keep holy the Sabbath day, but that Sabbath 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 a record of such a 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. Of course, I quite well know that Sunday did come into use in early 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 sanctified by the papal apostasy, and bequeathed as a sacred legacy to Protestantism." Stated November 13, 1893, at a New York Minister's Conference discussing the heated debate over whether the Chicago's World Fair should remain open on Sunday.

Standard Manual For Baptist Churches Edward T. Hiscox, DD.

1890 Edition

v) <u>From the Saint Catherine Catholic Church Sentinel</u> May 21, 1995, we read the following:

"Perhaps the boldest thing, the most revolutionary change the church ever did happened in the first century. The Holy day, the Sabbath was changed from Saturday to Sunday... not from any directions noted in the Scriptures, but from the churches sense of its own power. People who think that the Scriptures should be the sole authority, should logically become Seventh-day Adventists, and keep Saturday holy."

vi) <u>The famous Cardinal Gibbons summarizes this</u> <u>Sabbath - Sunday controversy with these strong words</u>:

"Reason and sense demand the acceptance of one or the other of these alternatives: either Protestantism and the keeping holy of Saturday, or Catholicity and the keeping holy of Sunday. Compromise is impossible." -Catholic Mirror, Cardinal Gibbons Dec. 32, 1893.



A glimpse of the Campus, Our Lady of The Elms College. O'Leary Hall Appears in the Distance

Our Lady of The Elms, A College

O N January 19, the Joint Committee on Education of the Massichusetts Legislature manimously endorsed the petition of the Sixters of St. Joseph that the Academy of Our Lady of the Elms, at Chicopee, he elevated to the rank of a college, with the right to grant all degrees usually granted by colleges in this state, except degrees in haw and medicine. Previous to this, Commissioner of Education, Dr. Payson Smith, had made a personal visit to the campus at Chicopee, and approved the buildings and equipment as satisfactory for the opening of a college. He appeared in person before the Legislative Committee and stated what he had already declared in his written recommendation—that he found facelity, buildings. and equipment suitable for the opening of a college fully up to the high standard demanded by the Massachuvetts educational tradition

The action of the Committee on Education and the subasuent adoption of its recommendation by both branches of the egislature completes the educational system of our dioces by triving us a college which can grant to our girls all the determinant Holy Cross grants to our boys. It will give this raduating class at "The Elms" the privilege of continitudies at Chicopee, for the college will precise its lass in September of this year, and add a class each to a first graduation. four years hence.

Catholicism's Admission: A Fulfilment Of Bible Prophecy

<u>Friends</u>, these bold admissions by the Roman Catholic Church in relation to the change of the Sabbath time from Saturday to Sunday is actually a fulfilment of Bible prophecy. From the apocalyptic book of Daniel, we learn the following about the antichrist power of Bible prophecy: "And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, AND THINK TO CHANGE TIMES AND LAWS: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time" (Daniel 7:25).

Beloved, the Roman Catholic Church actually fulfilled this portion of Bible prophecy (i.e. "and think to change times and laws") when they changed the Sabbath time from Saturday to Sunday. It is important to note that the change of the Sabbath commandment is just one of the numerous characteristic marks in the Bible that show that the Papacy is the true antichrist power of Bible prophecy. SUN-day

"The Mark of the Papacy's Authority"

Sunday is our MARK of <u>authority</u>.... The (Roman) church is above the Bible, and this transference of Sabbath observance is proof of that fact.

- Catholic Record, September 1, 1923 (Ontari

Catholicism's Push For Sunday Worship Across The World

Besides the Catholic Church changing the Sabbath time from Saturday to Sunday, she has also worked hard through the ages to ensure that the majority in Christendom follow Sunday (which they esteem as the MARK of their church's authority) instead of Saturday, which is the memorial of the Creator **God.** Today, through the huge impact of the Catholic directed ecumenical movement, the majority in our world follow Sunday instead of the Bible Sabbath. Beloved, this is the reason why even though the Scripture endorses the observance of Saturday (the seventh day of the week), yet we find many observing Sunday (the first day of the week) today.

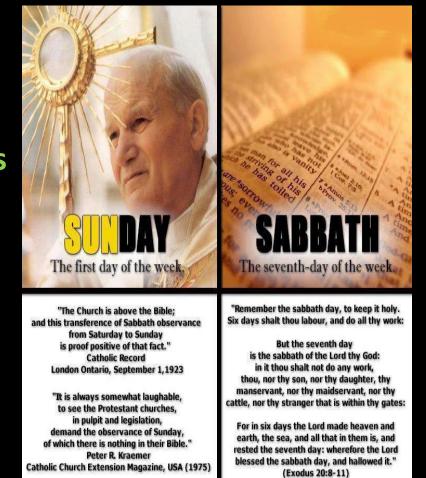
THE SABBATH IS THE SIGN OF GOD'S AUTHORITY. SUNDAY IS THE SIGN OF THE AUTHORITY OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

We ought to obey God rather than men. Acts 5:29

What does it mean to us today?

Some argue that God exempts us from the fourth commandment because it is impossible to keep the seventh day in the competitive, industrialized society in which we have to earn a living. It is undoubtedly true that Satan has manipulated the economic world to the distinct disadvantage of the Sabbath keeper, but God has never required the impossible. It is never necessary to break one of God's commandments for any reason.

You may say, "But my employer requires that I work on Saturday, and I can't let my family starve." The answer to that dilemma was given by our Lord long ago in the Sermon on the Mount. He said "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). The preceding verse defines "these things" as food, clothes, and job. Jesus is simply telling us that if there is ever a conflict between obeying Him and obeying our employer, we should put Him first. Material considerations should never be made more important than doing God's will.



"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the out or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other." (Matthew 6:24)

Conclusion & Exhortation:

In this study, the Lord has opened our eyes to know the reason why the majority of Christians today worship on the first day instead of the Bible Sabbath. <u>But friends</u>, in as much as the majority worship on Sunday, the Scripture still commands God's people to keep holy the Seventh day of the week (see Exodus 20:8-11; Revelation 14:12).

From Acts 17:30, we are plainly admonished that "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent".

Beloved, knowing what you know today, will you follow the Bible or still continue in the traditions of men? If it is your desire to follow the example of Jesus in keeping the Bible Sabbath, why don't you bow in prayer now, and ask God for the strength to enable you to make this important decision.



God has given all:

The Power of Choice

Revelation 12:12

"..... for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."

Enter The Ark of Hope

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

– John 10:16

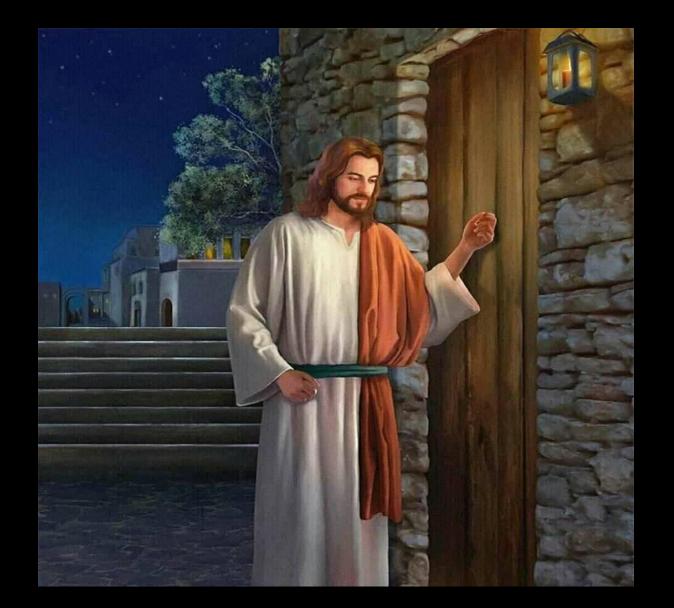
The Ark of the Covenant







Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. – Revelation 3:20





ARE YOU READY TO MEET JESUS?