

THE TRUE SABBATH - Saturday or Sunday? PART - I

“When God organized the worlds that exist in the universe, He established laws to govern them. When He framed this tiny world, and placed a race of man here for a good and wise purpose, He gave them laws to govern them, both in their duty to their Creator and their fellowmen. One of the laws was that the seventh day according to our manner of reckoning time, should be kept for the Sabbath.” (The Sabbath and the Restitution, Edward T. Couch.)

The purpose of this research article is to examine the facts and determine which day of the week is the true Sabbath day. But before commencing upon this subject, it is important to understand the universal law that God does not change.

In Malachi 3:6, we are told: “For I am the Lord, I change not.” In James 1:17 it states: “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” It is also explained to us in 1st Corinthians 14:33: “For God is not the author of confusion.” [Note: King James Version used]

From these references, we can clearly see that God does not change, that He does not vary from what He has said. God would not tell a people at one time of the world to keep an explicit commandment, and then later tell another group of people to do something different – this would make God the author of confusion. But we are told this is not so – that He has no variableness neither shadow of turning. Therefore I ask, how could we trust and have faith in a God that keeps changing the rules?

It is also true that Christ does not change. “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever.” (Heb. 13:8) Further proof of this can be found in Matthew 5:17-18:

“Think not that I am come to destroy the Law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfil.

“For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”

There are those who believe that we have nothing to do with the Old testament, and some people believe that things changed with Christ, and others believe things changed after his resurrection. But what has the Savior himself told us? That not one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till the heaven and earth shall pass away. I ask - has heaven and earth passed away?

For those who believe we have nothing to do with the Old testament, or that some things were changed we can clearly see what Jesus taught. It might be well to remember that Jesus and his Apostles preached out of the Old testament. This was because there was no other scripture written at that time.

Now to answer the question of paramount importance - what day of the week did God declare to be His Sabbath? What is the LAW? Let us search the scriptures for the truth. In

Genesis and Exodus we are told:

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

“And God blessed and sanctified it: Because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.” (Gen. 2:2-3)

“But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates.” (Ex. 20:10)

“Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, Holy to the Lord. . . .” (Ex. 31:15)

“**REMEMBER** the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

“Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:

“But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work.

“For in six days the Lord made Heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.” (Ex. 20:8-11) [Note: all emphasis in all quotes belong to the author]

From this we can see how the law on the Sabbath originated, and it was a Holy day consecrated by God himself. God further clarifies how long the seventh day Sabbath was to be kept. Please note:

“Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for **it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations:** that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.

“Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a **PERPETUAL COVENANT**. [perpetual–dictionary states: continuing forever; everlasting, *permanent*.]

“It is a **sign** between me and the children of Israel **FOREVER: FOR IN SIX DAYS THE** Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.” (Ex. 31:13,16-17)

I believe sufficient proof has been given that the LAW states that the seventh day is the Sabbath day. It is one of the Ten Commandments—it is not a suggestion. At this point, some might choose to argue that the Gentiles are not Jews and are therefore not bound by Hebrew customs on the Sabbath. I would like to prove that it is by baptism that a person becomes the adopted “seed of Abraham”. Through this adoption, we can therefore class ourselves as Israelites and are thereby bound by the same laws, and can expect the same blessings as the literal seed of Abraham. Please note:

“Know ye therefore that they which are of the faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

“And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through the faith,

preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

”So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

“There is neither Jew nor Greek [Gentile], there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male or female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

“And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”
(Gal. 3:8-9,27-29)

Now I ask—what day did Jesus and his Apostles recognize as the Sabbath, and did they change it? Let us again search the scriptures –

“And he [Jesus] 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 for to read.” (Luke 4:16)

“And when the Sabbath day was come, he began to preach in the synagogue. . . .” (Mark 6:2)

“And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached unto them the next Sabbath.” (Acts 13:42)

“And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded Jews and the Greeks.”
(Acts 18:4, also see Acts 13:14, and Acts 15:21)

From these scriptures, we can clearly see that Jesus and the Apostles preached in the synagogues on the Sabbath. Jesus, being a Jew, would have gone to the synagogue on the seventh day of the week as prescribed in the Law.

How do we know that Saturday is the seventh day of the week? One way is the simple fact that the Jews continue to celebrate that day even to this point in time. It is also a fact that even though the calendar has gone through changes, the seventh day (Saturday) has remained the same. Ask anyone what day is the first day of the week and they will say Sunday. The dictionary states: “The seventh day of the week the Jewish Sabbath.” Jesus, as a Jew, would have kept the Saturday Sabbath as the Jewish “custom” was and is today. It is a fact that there is absolutely no place in the New Testament where Christ or his apostles decreed a change in the Sabbath day. If they would have, that would have been breaking one of the Ten Commandments. In fact, it is quite to the contrary. The Apostle John wrote an epistle about 90 A.D. in which he states:

“Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, But an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.” (1st John 2:7)

“Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son and in the Father.” (1st John 2:24)

From what beginning—when? John explains:

“For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning that we should love one

another.

“Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother and wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous.” (1st John 3:11-12)

“He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning.” (1st John 3:8)

By John referring to Cain, it is evident that he was referring to the time of Adam—and then he tops it off by referring to the Devil who sinneth from the beginning, leaving no doubt that it was from the beginning of the existence of man. Therefore, it is evident that the commandments John was teaching were from the same commandments that men had from the time of Adam.

John mentions numerous times throughout his epistles that he delivered **no new** commandment to the people. Believing what John is telling us, we can see that he would then have been keeping the Saturday Sabbath in 90 A.D.

Part II

This section will be devoted to answering the question of when, how, and by whom the Sunday Sabbath originated.

Most people today are well aware that the early Christians were severely persecuted by the worldly force that was in power at the time of Christ and his Apostles—namely, the Pagan Roman Empire. The herald of Jesus Christ, John the Baptist, was beheaded. Then Jesus was crucified, and then one by one the Apostles were martyred, except for John the revelator who was exiled to the Isle of Patmos. The persecution of the saints was violent. Paul testified that: “They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.” (Heb. 11:37-38) We are all aware of the early Christians who were thrown into the Roman arena to be torn apart by lions. Jesus foretells what would be the fate of the Apostolic church: “And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.” (Matt. 11:12)

Latter Day Saints realize the full import of the words Jesus spoke. It can be proved that the church Christ founded apostatized shortly after the death of the apostles. (Other articles are available on the subject upon request.) In fact, Paul tells the saints not to be troubled or shaken in mind, to “Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day [Christ’s second coming] shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.” (2nd Thess. 2:2-3)

At this point, it is important to prove that the church at the time of the apostles were having problems from within, as well as severe persecutions from without. Paul writes to the Galatians: “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel. Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.” (Gal. 1:6-7) John wrote to the churches in the second and third

chapters of Revelations. He stated that Laodicea was lukewarm; Sardis had but a few who had not defiled their garments; Thyatira suffered evil in her presence; Pergamos approved of false doctrine; and Ephesus had departed from her first love. John instructed Ephesus to repent, and do the first works. In other words, John rebuked those churches for not holding fast to what was taught to them by Christ and the Apostles, and tells them to repent and return to those teachings.

Now I ask—what happened to the church of Christ? Did she repent and remain pure, or did she change? The following quotes show what the Apostles’ foretold would happen:

Paul warned: “Take heed therefore unto yourselves . . . For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, **not sparing the flock**. Also of **your own selves** shall **MEN** arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. (Acts 20:28-30)

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears;

“And they shall turn their eyes from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.” (2nd Tim. 4:3-4)

Isaiah also foretold: “The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, broken the everlasting covenant.” (Is. 24:5)

Did God decree a change in the day to be celebrated as the Sabbath—or did MEN change the laws and ordinances of God? How can we prove such? How can we know what is truth? Suppose you had a fifty dollar bill, and you didn’t know if it was counterfeit or genuine currency, what would you do? Any wise person would compare it to a genuine fifty dollar bill. In like manner, any point of doctrine being examined can be compared to the words of Christ, his Apostles and the Prophets to make sure it is identical. In fact, extreme caution should be exerted on our part in embracing a religious institution for our own without knowing for a certainty that its dogmas conform to Christ’s doctrines. For Jesus said there is but: “One Lord, one faith, and one baptism” (Eph. 4:5) In other words, there is only one authorized church.

Now let us delve into the annals of history and find out when, how, and by whom the true Saturday Sabbath was changed to Sunday.

Collier’s Encyclopedia states:

“Sabbath, Biblically the seventh day of the week, a day of rest and of joy consecrated to the Lord. Originally the Sabbath was thought of as extending from sunset Friday to sunset of Saturday, but in common usage among Christians it *later* came to refer to Sunday . . . A gradually developed tradition of abstaining from servile work on the Lord’s day was **FORMULATED** in positive legislation, both **ecclesiastical** and **civil** in the FOURTH century. From the eighth century onward the obligation was more precisely defined.”

“Forbidden Sunday and Feast-Day Occupations”, Vincent J. Kelly, p. 203:

“The keeping of the Sunday rest arose from the custom of the people and the constitution

of the Church. . .

“Tertullian was probably the first to refer to a cessation of worldly affairs on the Sunday; the Council of Laodicea issued the first conciliar legislation for that day; Constantine I issued the first civil legislation; . . .”

Encyclopedia Britannica, “Sunday”, p. 448:

“The earliest recognition of the observance of Sunday as a legal duty is a constitution of Constantine in 321 A.D., enacting that all courts of justice, inhabitants of towns, and workshops were to be at rest on Sunday. (Venerabili die solis) – or the venerable day of the sun, with an exception in favor of those engaged in agricultural labor.”

The Early Church, Cullmann, p. 31-32:

“All his life [Constantine’s], however, he promoted the worship of the sun. . . It was certainly Constantine’s intention to combine the worship of the sun with the worship of Christ; . . . giving the Christian Sunday a legal status, was intended by him at the same time to bring the pagan sun worship in a Christian form into Christianity.”

New Catholic Encyclopedia, “Constantine I, The Great”, p. 227:

“He [Constantine] made Sunday a civil holiday and freed Christian soldiers for religious services. While he retained the office of pontifex maximus and continued the Sol Invictus and lux perpetua legends on his coinage and monuments . . . Besides, the Sol Invictus (venerable sun) had been adopted by the Christians in the Christian sense, as demonstrated in the Christ as Apollo-Helios in a mausoleum beneath St. Peter’s in the Vatican.”

Constantine and the Christian Empire, Richard A. Todd, p. 130-131:

“Constantine retained the pagan high priest’s title of Pontifex Maximus; for a decade his coins continue to feature some of the pagan gods, notably his own favourite deity, the Unconquered Sun; and delayed Christian baptism until the end of his life. . . Retaining the pagan symbols was a necessary COMPROMISE with his pagan subjects, still very much in the majority.

“It is important to understand Constantine’s previous religion, the worship of the Unconquered Sun. . . Constantine continued to identify the sun with the Christian God in some way – a belief made easier by the tendency of Christian writers and artists to use sun imagery in portraying Christ. For them, Christ is the source of light and salvation, and a mosaic from a third-century tomb found under St. Peter’s, Rome, even shows him as the sun god, in his chariot. When in 321 Constantine made the first day of the week a holiday, he called it ‘venerable day of the Sun’ (Sunday) . . .

“The Christian church took over many pagan ideas and images.”

The Roman Emperor Constantine truly did unite his empire by changing pagan symbols, observances, and deities into Christian counterparts. As quoted above, Apollo became Christ,

and the venerable day of the Sun became the new Christian “Lord’s Day”–Sunday. Constantine not only incorporated pagan beliefs into this new “Christianity” in order to make the conversion easier for the pagans, he also literally bought them:

Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Gibbon, Volume One, p. 655:

“The salvation of the common people was purchased at an easy rate. . . a white garment, with twenty pieces of gold, had been promised by the emperor to every convert.”

Therefore, Constantine united pagans and Christians into one universal religion, and Christianity became the religion of state. It was nearly three hundred years after Christ’s death that a Roman Emperor forced all his subjects to obey a Sunday day of rest. The faithful followers of Christ now found themselves no longer thrown to the lions, but forced to adopt rites and ceremonies foreign to the primitive church. They now had to honor the pagan day of the sun. Satan could not destroy the church by outward persecution, so now he chose to infiltrate and destroy the church from within by polluting the pure and simple teachings of Christ. Constantine coerced his subjects to unite themselves with the now universal, or Catholic church. The Protestants split off from, and were excommunicated by the Catholic church during the Reformation of the 16th century. This has resulted in over a thousand different churches which exist today with each teaching something a little different from the other. What CONFUSION!

The most important thing to remember during this course of study is God’s laws. God made mankind, man did not make God. God expects us to obey His laws:

“What thing soever I command you, observe to do it, *thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.*” (Deut. 12:32)

At this point it is imperative to note that the Catholic church claims that she does not change; and that she is identical with the primitive church. She states that if she is not identical, then she is not the church of Christ. Please note what the Catholic church states:

Faith of our Fathers, Cardinal Gibbons, 83, imprimatur: [Note: an “imprimatur” means that it has the official sanction of the Catholic church to be printed]:

“She is the one institution that **never changes.**”

Catholic Facts, Bishop Noll, 27, imprimatur:

“ . . . if it be not IDENTICAL in **belief**, in **government**, etc., with the primitive church, then it is **NOT** the church of Christ.”

“History proves conclusively that the same doctrines were taught in the church from the beginning.” (Bishop Noll, 209)

With these statements in mind, I will proceed to show how this very Catholic church that claims she does not change, did in fact change doctrines. Let’s examine ecclesiastical history and

find the truth. I would find it very interesting to know where Bishop Noll received his knowledge from, because facts are history. Let's proceed to examine the facts as recorded by declarations of the Catholic church.

Catholic Encyclopedia, XII, circa 1963, imprimatur:

“One is forced to admit the gradual corruption of Christianity began very early.”

History of the Church of God, 383, imprimatur:

“The idolatrous and barbarous populations of the middle ages could not have been converted by mere preaching.”

“To convert and civilize her new subjects she descended to their level and employed means in keeping with their notions and customs.” (p. 407, imprimatur)

Catholic Encyclopedia, VI, circa 1963, imprimatur:

“Substitution of false documents and tampering with genuine ones was quite a trade in the Middle Ages.”

How Bishop Noll could make the statement that the same doctrines were taught from the beginning, in light of these statements and the fact the Catholic church hierarchy is cognizant of its own past, is beyond my understanding. They admit they availed themselves of pagan customs foreign to the primitive church, descended to their level (the pagans), and readily admit forging and tampering with original manuscripts. It is no wonder they are forced to admit that corruption began very early. Remember that Protestantism was not born until centuries after the formation of the Catholic church. However, Protestants did retain most of the mother Churches' doctrines.

Consequently, I must take the Catholic church at their own words when they state that if the church changes any doctrines then it can not be the church of Christ. They have condemned themselves! The same Cardinal Gibbons as quoted above, stated that the church is the one institution that never changes, but is cited in the following quotes to frankly and thoroughly contradict himself. Let us continue with further admissions of the change the Catholic church made when she changed God's Holy Sabbath day to Sunday. Please note:

Catholic Mirror, Cardinal Gibbons, Sept. 28, 1893, imprimatur:

“But you may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelations, 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, Cardinal Gibbons, 1917 ed., p. 72-73, J. Cardinal Gibbons' Autograph Letters, imprimatur:

“1. Is Saturday the 7th day according to the Bible and the commandments?

“I answer Yes.

“2. Is Sunday the first day of the week and did the church change the 7th day – Saturday – for Sunday, the 1st day?

“I answer Yes.

“3. Did Christ change the day?

“I answer NO! Faithfully yours.”

Oh common sense – where hast thou fled? !!! Surely a man guided by the Spirit of God would not make such gross contradictions. For further proof that the Catholic church made it a law to keep the Sunday Sabbath, notice that at the Council of Laodicea in the fourth century, she enacted Canon 29 as recorded from –

A History of the Councils of the Church, Charles Joseph Hefele, Vol. 2, 1896, English Ed., p. 316:

“Christians shall not Judaize and be idle on Saturday (sabbato, the Sabbath), 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 (anathema) from Christ.”

In Canon and Tradition, (Dr. J.H. Hotzman, p. 263), it can be found concerning another Catholic council:

“Finally, at the last session opening of the eighteenth of January, 1562, in the Council of Trent, their last scruple was set aside. The Archbishop of Beggio made a speech in which he openly declared that tradition stood above Scripture. The authority of the Church would therefore not be bound to the authority of the Scriptures, because the Church had changed Sabbath to Sunday, not by command of Christ, but by its own authority.”

In further study, it can even be found that the New Catholic Encyclopedia admits that Jesus did not change the Sabbath day.

“In principle Jesus had no quarrel with the Sabbath obligation itself or even with the Pharisees’ interpretation of it, which for the most part was not unduly severe. . . Nothing in the comportment of Jesus gave the slightest hint that he would have considered it preferable to transfer the Sabbath observance to any other day.” (Vol. 12, p. 783)

I will end this section by quoting a few Catholic periodicals concerning the change of the Sabbath day:

The American Catholic Quarterly Review, Jan. 1883, p. 152, imprimatur:

“The state, in passing laws for the due sanctification of Sunday, is unwittingly acknowledging the authority of the Catholic church, and carrying out more or less faithfully its prescriptions.

“The Sunday, as a day of the obligatory public worship. . . is purely a creation of the

Catholic church.”

“If Protestants would follow the Bible, they should worship God on the Sabbath day. In keeping Sunday, they are following a law of the Catholic Church.” (Albert Smith, Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, replying for the Cardinal in a letter Feb. 10, 1920)

Catholic Press, Sydney, Australia, Aug. 25, 1900, imprimatur:

“Sunday is a Catholic institution, and it’s claims to observance 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.”

History of the Church, Father Enright, C.S.S.R., of the Redemptoral College, Kansas City, Mo., p. 802:

“The Bible says, ‘Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.’ The Catholic church says, No! By my divine power I abolish the Sabbath day, and command you to keep the first day of the week. And lo, the entire civilized world bows down in reverent obedience to the Holy Catholic Church.”

Part III

This section will continue with further testimony from other writers, and other church clergymen concerning the change of the Sabbath day. This section will also investigate if it makes any difference what day is kept.

It may be interesting to note that even the writers for the Encyclopedia Britannica noticed how important that this Commandment is:

“In the prophetic writings the people are continuously admonished to keep the Sabbath holy. Few commandments received the same emphasis.” (Vol. 19, p. 788, 1965)

Now let us examine what a few other writers have to say about Sunday:

History of the Christian Church, N. Summerbell, 1873, p. 415:

“They [the Roman Catholic church] reversed the Fourth Commandment by doing away with the Sabbath of God’s word, and instituting Sunday as a holiday.”

The History of the Christian Church, Augustus Neander, p. 186:

“Opposition to Judaism introduced the particular festival of Sunday very early, indeed, into the place of the Sabbath. . . 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.”

Finding Christ's Church, John A. O'Brien, Ave Marie Press, 1950:

“This is a matter upon which our Protestant neighbors have for many years laid great emphasis; yet nowhere in the Bible is Sunday designated as the Lord's day; the day mentioned is the Sabbath, the last day of the week. The early church [Catholic], conscious of her authority to teach in the name of Christ, deliberately changed the day to Sunday. . .”

Buck's Theological Dictionary:

“Throughout Christendom, with some slight exceptions, the first day and not the seventh, is kept as a Sabbath. For this they have no warrant in scriptures, and pretend to none.”

Rebuilding a Lost Faith, John L. Stoddard, p. 80:

“Protestants often deride the authority of Church tradition, and claim to be directed by the Bible only; yet they, too, have been guided by customs of the ancient church [Catholic], which find no warrant in the Bible, but rest on Church tradition only! . . . The Bible, which Protestants claim to obey exclusively, give no authorization for the substitution of the first day of the week for the seventh. On what authority, therefore, have they done so? Plainly on the authority of that very Catholic Church which they abandoned, and whose traditions they condemn.”

Now, what do various other church clergymen have to say concerning the Sabbath?

Church of England: “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.” Mr. Morer, clergymen.

Methodist: “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 the authority for changing from the seventh day to the first.” Ten Rules for Living, Clovis G. Chappell, p. 6

Baptist: There was and is a commandment to keep holy the Sabbath day, but that Sabbath day was not Sunday. It will, however, be readily said, 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, paper read Aug. 20, 1893, at a Baptist minister's meeting at Saratoga, New York.

Alexander Campbell, the founder of The Disciples of Christ, states:

“But, say some, it was changed from the seventh to the first day. Where? When? And by whom? No one can tell. No; it never was changed, nor could it be, unless creation was to be gone through again: . . . 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, Feb. 2, 1824, Vol. 1, no. 7

By using the King James Version of the Bible, ecclesiastical histories, and the testimonies of notable men and various church clergymen, we have proved that the Sabbath day was not changed by God. And as Alexander Campbell has so wonderfully stated: “It couldn’t be unless creation was to be gone through again”, and God rest and sanctify a different day.

At this point, I know some people will choose to say – What difference does it make as long as we keep - a - day. So, I therefore ask: Does it really make a difference? Let’s turn to the scriptures and find out what God has told us.

“REMEMBER, the Sabbath day, to keep IT holy.” Ex. 20:8

“What thing soever I command you, OBSERVE TO DO IT, thou **shalt not ADD thereto, nor DIMINISH from it.**” Deut. 12:32

“He that saith he abideth in him [Christ] ought himself also so to walk” 1st John 2:6

“. . . leaving us an example, that ye should follow his step.” 1st Peter 2:21

“And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.” 1st John 2:3

“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.” 1st John 5:3

“Thus saith the Lord, learn not the way of the heathen. For the customs of the people are vain.” Jeremiah 10:2-3

“Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, his judgements, and his statutes. . .” Deut. 8:11

“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

“It there come any unto you, and bring not THIS doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed.” 2nd John 9-10

“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.” Gal. 1:8

“Then Peter and the other Apostles answered and said, we ought to obey God rather than man.” Acts 5:29

“And he [Christ] said unto them, the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath:

“Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.” Mark 2:27-28

Remember – Jesus being a Jew kept the Sabbath on the seventh day of the week– Saturday. If we are to follow Jesus’ perfect example, then we too will keep Saturday as the Sabbath day.

Keeping the Sabbath is a COMMANDMENT of God. He has told us which day to keep and that we should have a holy convocation on that day (Lev. 23:3). From the Biblical quotes used, there can be no doubt that it does matter what day we keep as the Sabbath - IT MATTERS TO GOD.

“He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” (1st John 2:4) Jesus told us – “in vain do they worship me teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” (Matt 15:9) The idea of a Sunday Sabbath is a commandment of men – which is part of another doctrine, which is really no doctrine at all since Christ didn’t decree it. In 2nd John 9-10 it states “Whosoever transgresseth, and abides not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed.” Yet at the council of Laodicea (364 A.D.) the leaders of the Catholic church forbade the observance of the Saturday seventh day Sabbath of the Lord, and declared any one keeping that day to be anathema and cast them out of their church. BUT I ASK, BY WHOSE AUTHORITY DID THEY DO IT? Surely not by our beloved Saviors’ authority, for they admit he didn’t change it.

Therefore, like the counterfeit fifty dollar bill with its subtle differences from the genuine currency, the church following the death of the Apostles did change many pure and simple teachings of Christ, and adopted dogmas foreign to the primitive church, which in turn nullified its authenticity and made it of no value or worth.

At some point in time in the future, the world will discover that for nearly two thousand years what they have been taught, and what they have unquestioningly and faithfully believed is in error. Note what Jeremiah states:

“O Lord, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, surely our fathers have INHERITED LIES, VANITY, and thing’s where-in there is no profit.” (Jer. 16:19)

Part IV

This third section will answer the question: What day is the Lord’s Day?

The Catholic church claims that the Lord’s Day is Sunday in commemoration of Christ’s resurrection. But yet they admit that from the scriptures it is impossible to determine that Sunday is the Lord’s Day. Please note:

New Catholic Encyclopedia, “Lord’s Day”, p. 990:

“The only explicit mention of the Lord’s Day in the NT occurs in Rev. 1:10, ‘I was in the spirit on the Lord’s day.’ From this single reference alone, it would be impossible to conclude that the early Christians celebrated the first day of the week, Sunday, as their special day of

devotion and rest.”

So, I ask again – is Sunday the Lord’s Day? Did Christ rise from the dead on Sunday? Let us turn to the scriptures and follow the admonition of the Apostle Paul, “Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.” (1st Thess. 5:21)

To prove which day Christ was resurrected, we have to come to a firm knowledge that he gave the people a sign, and only one sign of his Messiahship. Either he fulfilled that sign, or he was a charlatan and the greatest imposter to ever live in the history of the world. What was the sign? Jesus, himself, answers that question:

“But he answered and said, an evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall be no sign given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. For as Jonas was THREE days and THREE nights in the whales belly; so shall the Son of man be THREE days and THREE nights in the heart of the earth.” (Matt. 12:39-40)

“Jesus answered and said unto them destroy this temple, and in THREE days I will raise it up.

“But he spoke of the temple of his body.” (John 2:19,21)

“. . .thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day.” (Luke 24:46)

Jesus was very specific concerning the one sign he would give. He stated his body would be in the tomb three days and three nights. But some people might choose to argue that Jesus didn’t literally mean a full day and night. Jesus clarifies this from his own mouth:

“Jesus answered, are there not twelve hours in a day? If a man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.

“But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.” (John 11:9-10)

Hence, we can plainly see that Christ refers to a day time period of twelve hours and a night time period of twelve hours. The fact of the matter is, there simply isn’t three days and three nights between Good Friday and Sunday morning!!! Good Friday to Sunday morning accounts for one day and two nights – exactly half the time required. Let us consider that if Jesus were crucified on Friday, three days and three nights would have put the resurrection late Monday afternoon, but according to the scriptures he was risen long before then.

Let us turn to the New Testament and see if we can figure out this seeming contradiction. Let us examine the following references in Mark:

“And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

“And when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day BEFORE the Sabbath.

“Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of

God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.

“And Pilate marveled if he were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead.

“And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.

“And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulcher which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulcher.

“And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses beheld where he was laid.” (Mark 15:37, 42-47)

“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.” (Mark 16:1)

“And he [Joseph of Arimathaea] took it down [Christ’s body], and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulcher that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.

“And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on.

“And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulcher, and how his body was laid.

“And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment.” (Luke 23:53-56)

Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulcher, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.” (Luke 24:1)

“When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

“The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for **that Sabbath day was a high day**), besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

“Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.

“But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs:

“But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

“For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of his shall not be broken.

“And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

“And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.

“Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulcher, wherein was never man yet laid.

“There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews preparation day; for the sepulcher was nigh at hand.” (John 19:30-34, 36-38, 41-42)

“The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulcher, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulcher.” (John 20:1)

Before continuing, it is of utmost importance to fully realize that according to the Jewish reckoning of a day, a day consisted of a time period from sunset to sunset. From the previous quotes, we can learn the following:

1. That Christ was crucified before a “high” day or High Sabbath. (This will be discussed a little later.)
2. Shortly before sunset, on the preparation day before the High Sabbath, Christ died.
3. That Mary Magdalene and other women watched where Jesus’ body was laid to rest. According to Jewish law, the body had to be put in the tomb before the start (or before sunset) of the “high” Sabbath – that is why the Jews asked Pilate to break the legs of those crucified so they would die before sunset. However, they found that Christ was already dead!
4. The next day after the preparation day was the “High Sabbath”, a holy day, so no work would have been done among the Jews on that “high” day. So the women would not have prepared spices to anoint Christ’s body on that day.
5. The day after the “high” Sabbath (actually Friday), the women prepared the spices, then rested on the weekly seventh day Sabbath. They went to the tomb following the weekly seventh day Sabbath – sometime after sunset Saturday.
6. When Mary Magdalene came to the sepulcher “when it was yet dark” she found that Christ had already risen. Please note the account in Luke:

“Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulcher, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.

“And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulcher.

“And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

“And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments:

“And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?

“He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,

“Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.” (Luke 24:1-7)

It is an interesting fact to note, that in the original Greek phrase “early on the first day of the week” referred to the early part of the day – the evening before – for remember a day began at sunset. When the women came to the tomb early Sunday (sometime after sunset Saturday when it was dark) they found the tomb empty.

Now let us consider – if he was resurrected Saturday afternoon before sunset, backing up three days and three nights would put his death on the cross on Wednesday afternoon before sunset. Could this be the case? Let’s examine facts. The Apostle John gives us the key to understanding what happened during that fateful week. John clarifies: “The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath

day, (for THAT Sabbath day was an HIGH DAY.)” The Jewish usage of the term “High” Day means an annual Sabbath day – of which there are seven annual Sabbaths or “High” Days during the Jewish Calendar year which don’t necessarily occur on Saturday. By John using the term “High Day”, he enlightens us to the fact that there were two sabbaths during that week. First, the annual High Sabbath, and second the weekly seventh day Sabbath on Saturday. We can narrow down which holiday exactly, for Jesus himself tells us which Jewish celebration was occurring at the time of his death, please note:

“. . .with desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.” Luke 22:15

“Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.” Luke 22:7

“You know that after two days is the Passover, and the Son of man will be delivered up to be crucified.” Matt. 26:2

Just exactly what was the Passover, and how was it celebrated? It is important to understand this, to know the sequence of events at Christ’s death. From the booklet, God’s Festivals and Holy Days, we find the explanation using scriptural references:

“The Israelites were to sacrifice the Passover lamb at the going down of the sun – in the evening before dark – on the 14th of Abib [Nisan], just before the beginning of the 15th.

“They shed the blood of the lamb, picturing Christ’s sacrifice to come. They ate the flesh that night. At midnight the death angel came, but passed over every house where the blood had been sprinkled. Notice Exodus 12:12: ‘For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn. . .’

“Now notice the section composed of verses 12:41: ‘On the very same day – it came to pass that all the armies of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt. This is the night of the Lord, a solemn observance.’ Which is the night to be observed? The night they came out of Egypt. They went out of Egypt the late night of the 15th of Abib [Nisan]. And that night, the 15th, is to be observed.

“Now turn to Numbers 28:16-17: ‘On the fourteenth day of the first month is the Passover of the Lord. And on the fifteenth day of this month is the feast; unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days.’

“Leviticus 23:5-6 says the same things. Notice the Passover is the 14th. And notice, too, the Feast mentioned here is not the 14th (though the passover is elsewhere called a feast); the Feast day is the 15th. The seven-day period begins the 15th. The 15th is the first of the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.”

The 14th of Nisan was the preparation day for the feast on the 15th of Nisan. The Jews sacrificed their lambs near sunset. It is an interesting fact that Christ also died near sunset and is called the “lamb of God”. In fact, he is described as “our passover”: “For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.” (I Cor. 5:7) Christ died on the Passover preparation day, Nisan 14, by Jewish reckoning of time. The 15th of Nisan was that “High” Sabbath, which was the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Can we know what day the passover was on in the year of his crucifixion? But of course! – by using the Jewish Solar Lunar Calendar, which was had from the time of Moses. It can be proven without doubt, that the Passover in the year of the crucifixion

was on Wednesday, April 25th, A.D. 31.

Thus we can clearly see that he was crucified on Wednesday afternoon, and as Christ himself stated concerning the sign of Jonas, he was “three days and three nights in the heart of the earth”, and was resurrected late Saturday afternoon. He did fulfill the sign that he prophesied of – proving that he was the promised Messiah and Savior of the world, Therefore, it is a fact that all those professing Christians who worship a Messiah resurrected on a Easter Sunday morning have been misled.

Almighty God and Jesus created the earth and everything on it. The seventh day Sabbath, Saturday, commemorates the creation, and God’s day of rest. It is a sign of the covenant between God and His people. Jesus stated: “Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.” Jesus was resurrected late Saturday afternoon before sunset. I ask again – what day is really the Lord’s Day? Of a truth – **SATURDAY IS THE LORD’S DAY.**

To the reader who is questioning and searching for the truth – you ask– How can I know what is falsehood and what is truth? The answer lies in the fact that all prophets of God teach alike, so then they must all conform to the teachings of Christ. Therefore, all authorized ministers must teach the same IDENTICAL doctrines as Christ taught or they teach a counterfeit doctrine, and they themselves are as equally counterfeit. Christ stated to: “Search ye the scriptures. . .” Isaiah declared: “To the Law and to the testimony: and if they speak not according to the word, it is because there is no light [or truth] in them.” (Is. 8:20) The Apostle Paul admonishes to: “Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.” (1st Thess. 5:21)

Till next time - Let Truth Prevail.
Timothy R. Hansen, Priest

TESTIMONY

Be it known unto all nations, kindred, tongues and people, to whom this Book of the Law of the Lord shall come, that James J. Strang has the plates of the ancient Book of the Law of the Lord given to Moses, from which he translated this law, and has shown them to us. We examined them with our eyes, and handled them with our hands. The engravings are beautiful antique workmanship, bearing a striking resemblance to the ancient oriental languages; and those from which the laws in this book were translated are eighteen in number, about seven inches and three-eighths wide, by nine inches long, occasionally embellished with beautiful pictures.

And we testify unto you all that the everlasting kingdom of God is established, in which this law shall be kept, till it brings in rest and everlasting righteousness to all the faithful.

Samuel Graham
Samuel P. Bacon
Warren Post
Phineas Wright
Albert N. Hosmer
Ebenezer Page
Jehiel Savage

Note: The Book of the Law is one of the missing books of the Bible. It is mentioned in Deut. 30:10, 31:26; Joshua 1:8, 8:31, 23:6, 24:6; II Kings 14:6, 22:8; IIChron. 17:9; Nehemiah 8:1,8; Gal.3:10.

Galations 3:10 – “Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” Remembering the Sabbath day to keep it holy is one of the Ten Commandments contained in the Book of the Law of the Lord.

Book of the Law

III.

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work; thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy woman servant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates: for in six ages the Lord thy God made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh age: wherefore the Lord thy God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it: thou shalt keep it holy unto him, that thou forget not the Law, nor be found keeping the company of the vile, nor be despised by the righteous.

[The following footnotes were written by the Prophet James J. Strang, and appear in the Book of the Law under the Third Commandment.]

1. The day of rest originated in the rest of God, when he ceased the work of creation, at the making of man, to have dominion over the earth.
2. It was had in remembrance as an institution of God, before promulgated by his voice in Sinai; (Gen. II, 2,3. Ex. xvi, 23;) and there is no ground for believing that the sanctifying of the Sabbath, was not a law among the Patriarchs and the Antediluvian, because it is not mentioned in the scriptures; for from the time of Moses until that of Solomon, when it was unquestionable in force, it is nowhere mentioned.
3. Throughout Christendom, with some slight exceptions, the first day, and not the seventh, is kept as a Sabbath. For this they have no warrant in the scriptures, and pretend to none. (Buck's Th. Dic. "Sabbath".) The reason given for the change, is, that Christ raised from the dead the first day, and the attempt is to justify it by tradition, and the practice of the Church [Catholic].
4. But, evidently, the Church have no power to change or abrogate a commandment of God, who required us to keep the seventh day, not any other day in the seven.
5. The early Christians did undoubtedly frequently meet on the first day for religious worship, precisely as the Saints do nowadays, in exclusively Christian communities; not because they regarded it as the Sabbath of God, but because on that day, being the regular day of heathen festivals, men would come together to hear them.
6. Keeping the first day as a Sabbath, instead of the seventh, is one of the innovations forced upon Christianity by the Emperor Constantine, to make the change of national religion less difficult.
7. The very language of this Commandment, seems to presage the propensity of man to change the Sabbath; remember the Sabbath day; and God, foreseeing what wicked men would do, has placed on his chosen a special injunction that they keep that day in all their generations for a perpetual covenant; (Ex. xxxi, 13-17;) and awful penalties are denounced against those who abolish it.
8. The Sabbath is appointed for men in every station in life. The crime of exacting labour of children and servants on the Sabbath day, is a great offence unto God. But it is the Sabbath of the beast as well as of men, and to work beasts for our pleasure or profit, is an offence unto God.