

“Open Bible Study”

Jerry States (Pastor of Seminole Seventh Day Adventist Church) will be presenting the viewpoint: **“Worship to God is required on the Seventh-Day Sabbath.”**

George Battey (preacher of the Church of Christ) will be presenting the alternate viewpoint: **“Worship to God is required on the first day of each week.”**

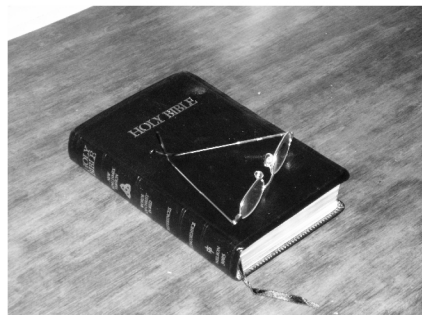
Come listen to this important topic discussed openly for all to hear.

- **A friendly discussion.**
- **An “open Bible study” with questions taken from the audience.**
- **No collections taken up. (Leave your money at home.)**

Church of Christ

Saturday, June 12
6:00 p.m.

Good Hope Rd. & Hwy 99
Seminole, OK



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THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK

Important questions about the “first day of the week”:

- *What day did Jesus resurrect?*
- *What other important events occurred on this day?*
- *How many appearances did Jesus make on this day?*
- *Were disciples commanded to assemble on the first day of every week?*
- *What is the only thing the disciples were commanded to eat when assembled?*
- *Was the Lord’s supper ever called “breaking bread” in the scriptures?*
- *In Acts 20:7, did the disciples gather together on their own authority or was a higher authority requiring this?*
- *What bearing does Paul’s “hurrying” play in interpreting Acts 20:7?*
- *If time and frequency for the communion were unimportant, what would not be mentioned?*
- *How can we know for sure that the “Lord’s day” (Rev 1:10) is the first day of the week?*

These and other questions are explored in this booklet.



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THE 1ST DAY OF THE WEEK

The proposition under consideration in this booklet is as follows: *The "first day of the week" of Acts 20:7 is the day upon which Christians must assemble for worship.*

DEFINITION OF TERMS

"The first day of the week" – the day commonly called Sunday. This is not a defense of the name "*Sunday*" or any idea that gave origin to that name.

All the days of the week have names by which they are commonly known: *Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday*. None of these names are in the Bible.

Christians are under no more obligation to defend the name "*Sunday*" than others are to defend the name "*Saturday*."

"of Acts 20:7" – that is, this passage of scripture forms a binding pattern that must be followed by God's people today. The assembling that occurred in this passage was not incidental or insignificant. It did not involve private or individual affairs.

"is the day upon which Christians must assemble for worship" – that is, a certain worship has been ordained for that day. Christians are not required to prove:

- The first day of the week is a Sabbath or a "*Christian Sabbath*." The first day of the week was never called by God as "*the Sabbath*."
- Nor that the first day of the week was "*sanctified*" or "*blessed*."
- Nor that the first day of the week is a "holy day" (holiday) which requires commerce and labor to cease.

The proposition merely states Christians must assemble for worship sometime on the first day of the week. This is what will be shown from the scriptures.

Colossians 2:14-16

14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

15 Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

16 So **let no one judge you** in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or **Sabbaths**,

In the NT there are:

- No holy places (Jn 4:21)
- No holy things – as in tabernacle worship (Heb 9:1-4)
- No holy days (holidays) (Col 2:16)

Instead, God is calling for holy people:

1 Peter 2:9

9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, **a holy nation, His own special people**, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

"Christians" – that is, disciples of Christ as found in Acts 11:26, *"The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."* Since only disciples were considered Christians, we must inquire what constitutes a "disciple." Jesus said:

Matthew 28:19-20

19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

20 "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

Disciples, who were called Christians, were baptized believers who were instructed to obey all that Jesus commanded.

One of the commandments Jesus gave thru His apostles involved a day for worship. This study is about the command to assemble on the first day of the week. If Jesus had commanded worship on the Sabbath day, that passage could be read and the study would be over. Likewise, if it can be shown that God gave a command to assemble on the first day of the week for worship, that should be sufficient to end the study.

SUMMARY: This proposition is affirming God requires Christians to worship Him on the first day of the week. He has specified a worship service for that day and expects His people to honor Him in meeting His requirements.

Now, consider the evidence offered in defense of this proposition.

IMPORTANT EVENTS

There are some events which occurred on the first day of the week which make this an important day for Christians. These events do not of themselves make worship on the first day mandatory, but they serve as a background for the institution of such worship.

1) **Jesus resurrected on the first day of the week.**

Mark 16:9

9 Now when **He rose early on the first day of the week**, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons.

Matthew 28:1-6

1 Now after the Sabbath, **as the first day of the week began to dawn**, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.

2 And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and **rolled back the stone** from the door, and sat on it.

3 His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow.

4 And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men.

5 But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified.

6 "**He is not here**; for **He is risen**, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

Luke 24

1 Now **on the first day of the week**, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared.

2 But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb.

3 Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

6 "He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you

when He was still in Galilee,

7 "saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and **the third day rise again.**'"

13 Now behold, two of them were traveling **that same day** to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem.

21 "But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, **today is the third day** since these things happened.

22 "Yes, and certain women of our company, who **arrived at the tomb early**, astonished us.

23 "When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive.

29 But they constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us, for **it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.**" And He went in to stay with them.

33 So **they rose up that very hour** and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together,

46 Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to **rise from the dead the third day**,

No greater event ever occurred in history and it occurred on the first day of the week.

2) Salvation for man was completed on the first day of the week.

1 Peter 1:3

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

Since the resurrection occurred on the first day of the week, man's salvation was completed on that day.

3) **Jesus was acknowledged as the only begotten Son of God on the first day of the week.**

Psalms 2:7

7 "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, **Today I have begotten You.**

This passage was quoted by the apostle Paul and applied to the resurrection of Christ:

Acts 13:33

33 "God has fulfilled this for us their children, **in that He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm:** 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.'

Later Paul would write to the Romans:

Romans 1:4

4 and **declared to be the Son of God** with power according to the Spirit of holiness, **by the resurrection from the dead.**

All this happened on the first day of the week.

4) **A number of other events occurred on the first day of the week according to Acts 2.**

The Day of Pentecost (Acts 2) always fell on the first day of the week (Lev 23:11, 15). Therefore, since the following items occurred on Pentecost, they occurred on the first day of the week:

- **Acts 2:1-17** – the Lord **poured out the Holy Spirit** on His apostles in fulfillment of prophecy (Joel 2:28-29).
- **Acts 2:17, 47** – the Lord **established His church** on the first day of the week in fulfillment of the prophecy (Isa 2:2-3).
- **Acts 2:29-36** – Jesus was **crowned as King of kings** and began to reign in the kingdom of God in fulfillment of prophecy (Zech 6:13).
- **Acts 2:17, 47** – the **new law of Christ** (NT) came into force on this day and went forth from Jerusalem in fulfillment of Isa 2:3.

All of these events show the significance of the first day of the week.

FIRST DAY BECOMES PROMINENT

After the Lord's resurrection, the first day of the week became increasingly prominent. This is seen by all the times Jesus appeared to His disciples on this day.

- 1) **He appeared first to Mary Magdalene on the first day of the week:**

Mark 16:9

9 Now when He rose early **on the first day of the week**, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons.

- 2) **The first time the risen Savior was worshipped was on the first day of the week:**

Matthew 28:9

9 And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, "Rejoice!" So they came and held Him by the feet and **worshipped Him**.

Here is worship on the first day of the week with God's approval.

- 3) **Jesus appeared to two other disciples on their way to Emmaus on the first day of the week** (Lk 24:13-15).
- 4) **When these disciples returned to Jerusalem to tell the others, Jesus appeared to the entire group** (Lk 24:33-36).
- 5) **A week later the disciples were assembled on the first day of the week and Jesus appeared to them** (Jn 20:19, 26).

Here are disciples assembling on the first day of the week with God's approval.

Verse 26 says, "**After eight days.**" Yet this mean, "**On the eighth day.**" To illustrate this way of counting days, compare the following passages:

<p><u>Mark 8:31</u> 31 And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.</p>	<p><u>Matthew 16:21</u> 21 From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.</p>
<p><u>1 Kings 12:5</u> 5 So [Rehoboam] said to them, "Depart for three days, then come back to me." And the people departed.</p>	<p><u>1 Kings 12:12</u> 12 So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, <u>as the king had directed</u>, saying, "Come back to me the third day."</p>
<p><u>2 Chronicles 10:5</u> 5 So [Rehoboam] said to them, "Come back to me after three days." And the people departed.</p>	<p><u>2 Chronicles 10:12</u> 12 So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king had directed, saying, "Come back to me the third day."</p>
<p><u>Esther 4:16</u> 16 "Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. ...</p>	<p><u>Esther 5:1</u> 1 Now it happened on the third day that Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace, across from the king's house, while the king sat on his royal throne in the royal house, facing the entrance of the house.</p>

"After three days" is the Bible way of saying "on the third day." Likewise, "after eight days" is the Bible way of saying "on the eighth day."

Hence, Jesus met with His disciples on the first day of the week (Jn 20:19) and He met with them on the eighth day (Jn 20:26) – meaning He met with them again on the first day of the week.

The first day of the week was becoming increasingly important after the resurrection.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Now consider the Lord's supper. There are a number of things to notice about the communion:

1) **Jesus commanded His disciples to eat the Lord's supper together.**

Matthew 26:26-27

26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."
27 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you."

This is a command by Jesus for His people to eat the Lord's supper together. The Lord's supper cannot be eaten at home alone. People cannot have "individual communion." The Lord's supper must be eaten in an assembly with all the members participating. We will learn shortly when this assembly was to be conducted.

2) **Jesus commanded His people to assemble.**

Hebrews 10:25

25 not forsaking **the assembling of ourselves together**, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

This is a command.

"the assembling" (τὴν ἐπισυναγωγὴν) – a singular participle with the definite article – referring to one specific and particular assembly.

God's people have liberty to assemble any time they wish and as often as they wish (Acts 2:46; 1 Cor 14:26).

However, there is one time when Christians do not have a choice. There is one assembly which God ordained and to miss that assembly is a violation of the command in Heb 10:25.

We do not know from this passage on which day this particular assembly was suppose to occur. We must learn this from other passages, but some day is required and there must be an assembling together of God's people.

3) Jesus commanded His people to assemble every first day of the week.

Jesus never commanded any Christian to keep the Sabbath, but He did command an assembly on the first day of the week.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2

1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given **orders** to the churches of Galatia, so you **must do** also:

2 On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.

The NASV is most accurate here:

NASV

On the first day of **every week** ...

Notice that "*orders*" were given to the churches. This is a command. "*On the first day of every week*" the church was to have a collection.

We know the collection was taken up in an assembly of the church and not at home for at least two reasons:

- This is an "order" to the church – not just to individual Christians.
- Paul wanted the money "collected" so that when he arrived, there would not have to be any "gatherings" or "collections."

If people were storing this money up in their own private homes, Why specify the first day of the week as the day to set the money aside? Why wouldn't any other day work just as well? Furthermore, If disciples were storing the money up in their own private homes, there would have been a need to gather up the money after Paul arrived in town – the very thing he was wanting to avoid.

1 Cor 16:1-2 necessarily implies an assembly of the church every week – on the first day of the week.

These instructions were meant for more than just Corinth:

1 Corinthians 1:1-2

1 Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,

2 **To the church of God which is at Corinth**, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, **with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord**, both theirs and ours:

1 Corinthians 4:17

17 For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, **as I teach everywhere in every church.**

These instructions were written by Paul when he was living at Ephesus (compare 1 Cor 16:5 with Acts 19:21-22). In other words, Paul gave this command before the assembly of Acts 20:7 occurred.

Review:

- The disciples were commanded to eat the Lord's supper.
- They were also commanded to assemble together.
- They were commanded to assemble together on the first day of every week.

Q: Is there any connection between eating the Lord's supper and assembling together?

That brings us to the next point:

4) The disciples ate the Lord's supper when they were assembled.

1 Corinthians 11:33-34

33 Therefore, my brethren, **when you come together to eat**, wait for one another.

34 But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest **you come together** for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come.

The context of this passage is the Lord's supper. They were required to eat the Lord's supper in their assembly (v33), but they were forbidden to eat a common meal in this assembly (v34).

5) The express purpose of their assembly was to eat the Lord's supper.

What this means is that Christians did not just assemble and then later decide to eat the Lord's supper since they were together – as if it were an afterthought. Instead, the very purpose of their assembly was to eat the communion:

1 Corinthians 11:33

33 Therefore, my brethren, **when you come together to eat**, wait for one another.

Q: What did they come together for?

A: To eat.

Q: What were they eating?

A: The Lord's supper (1 Cor 11:26)

6) **The Lord's supper is the only thing God commanded Christians to eat in an assembly.**

To put it another way: God never commanded Christians to assemble to eat anything else except the Lord's supper. To disprove this, all one has to do is read one passage where God ever commanded Christians to eat anything else in an assembly. However, there is no such passage.

7) **Eating the Lord's supper in an assembly was called, "breaking bread."**

1 Corinthians 10:16-17

16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The **bread which we break**, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

17 For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread.

It is true that "*breaking bread*" can mean a common meal, but it is also true that it can refer to the communion.

Acts 2:42

42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the **breaking of bread**, and in prayers.

Here "*breaking bread*" refers to the communion because it is listed in the middle of other spiritual activities – doctrine, fellowship, prayers. These are religious and spiritual duties.

Notice there is no mention of the "cup." This demonstrates conclusively that the expression "breaking bread," without mention of the cup, can indeed refer to the Lord's supper.

SUMMARY & APPLICATION

Review what has been proven:

- 1) Jesus commanded His disciples to eat the Lord's supper together.
- 2) Jesus commanded His people to assemble.
- 3) Jesus commanded His people to assemble on the first day of every week.
- 4) The disciples ate the Lord's supper while they were assembled.
- 5) The express purpose of their assembly was to eat the Lord's supper.
- 6) The Lord's supper is the only thing God commanded Christians to eat in their assembly.
- 7) Eating the Lord's supper in the assembly was called, "breaking bread."

Q: Do the scriptures show where disciples ever came together for the express purpose of eating and was the eating called "breaking bread"?

If we can find this, we will know they ate the Lord's supper.

Acts 20:7

7 Now **on the first day of the week**, when **the disciples came together to break bread**, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.

Q: What did these disciples do?

A: *They assembled.* The Lord commanded an assembly (Heb 10:25).

Q: What was the purpose of their assembly?

A: *To "break bread."* This was the express purpose of their assembling.

In other words, they did not assemble to hear Paul preach. They did not assemble to visit with Paul. It is true they did hear Paul preach and they did visit with Paul, but that was not the purpose of their assembly. They assembled for the express purpose of "breaking bread" – a Bible term for communion.

Q: When was all this done?

A: *On the "first day of the week."*

Q: Did God approve of this assembly on the first day of the week?

A: Yes. We know this for at least two good reasons:

- The Lord's apostle gave his approval by being present at the assembly. He would not have participated in something wrong (Acts 20:7).
- The Lord worked a miracle thru Paul during this assembly – indicating divine approval (Acts 20:9-12).

"on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread" – the words "came together" (συνηγμένων) is the passive voice in Greek (see Analytical Greek NT).

The passive voice indicates an action performed upon the disciples. They were *gathered by an authority other than themselves*. That is, they were gathered together by divine command and the purpose for the gathering was to eat.

If Acts 20:7 is *not* the communion, then here is what we have:

- A command to have an assembly for the express purpose of eating the Lord's supper (1 Cor 11:33-34)
- But no example of the church ever doing this!

NO MENTION OF SABBATH

The common response of Sabbath-keepers is to say that the "breaking of bread" in Acts 20:7 was only a common meal with no religious significance. But we have seen this was not a common meal.

- Yes, "breaking bread" can refer to a common meal.
- But it can also refer to the Lord's supper (Acts 2:42; 1 Cor 10:16-17).

The only way to know for sure which one is under consideration is the context and the context of Acts 20:7 points to the Lord's supper – beyond all doubt.

NOTE: No mention is made of assembling with disciples on the Sabbath day. Why not? If Christians kept the Sabbath and if Christians had a worship assembly on the Sabbath, why is no mention made of that?

It seems strange that Luke would completely ignore a worship service on the Sabbath day, and then emphasize that on the first day of the week the disciples gathered to eat a common meal – if that is what really happened. Would this be reasonable?

If this passage had said: *"On the seventh day of the week the disciples came together to break bread,"* Sabbath-keepers would certainly seize upon that as proof that Christians met on the Sabbath to have communion. They would certainly use it as proof of their position. But since scripture says, "first day of the week," Sabbath-keepers have to argue (against all reason) that it was just a common meal with no religious significance whatsoever.

PAUL WAS HURRYING

Acts 20:16

16 For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for **he was hurrying** to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the Day of Pentecost.

Here is a man who is in a hurry. He would not stay anywhere very long unless it was necessary. He was in such a hurry, he would not even go to Ephesus:

Acts 20:17

17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church.

Here is a man in such a hurry that he would not take the time to travel over to Ephesus for a few miles to see his very dear friends. But, if you will remember, when Paul had arrived in Troas (v6), he and his companions waited seven days!

Q: If the meal of v7 is a common meal, why wait seven days to have it? Why not meet earlier so Paul could go on – since he was in a hurry?

He was in such a hurry that after being up all night, he left on foot to begin his journey – rather than resting and waiting another day (vv11-14).

All of this seems extremely odd if the meal of v7 were merely a common meal.

ACTS 20:7

("STAYING SEVEN DAYS")

Look closer at this passage. It was the custom of Paul and his companions to spend a week at places as they traveled along.

Acts 21:3-4

3 When we had sighted Cyprus, we passed it on the left, sailed to Syria, and landed at Tyre; for there the ship was to unload her cargo.

4 And finding disciples, **we stayed there seven days.** ...

Exactly why they stayed for seven days is not stated. All we know for sure is:

- The ship unloaded its cargo.
- Paul & company took the opportunity to find some disciples, and
- Having found them they stayed seven days.

If we had no other scriptures, we could at least say they took advantage of opportunities to spend time with disciples as they traveled and, most likely, worshipped with them. But we have other similar events revealed:

Acts 28:13-14

13 From there we circled round and reached Rhegium. And after one day the south wind blew; and the next day we came to Puteoli,
14 where we found brethren, and were invited to stay with them **seven days.** And so we went toward Rome.

This occurred while Paul was going to Rome as a prisoner. Why specify that they stayed "seven days"? Why not stay 5 days, or 6 days, or 8 days? Most likely because seven days would bring them to their regular worship and they wished Paul to be with them at that time.

Acts 20:6-7

6 But we sailed away from Philippi after the Days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days joined them at Troas, where **we stayed seven days.**

7 Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.

Here is the same wording again – "*we stayed seven days.*" However, in this passage there is additional information as to *why* they were staying seven days – because they

were waiting to assemble with the brethren for worship.

When Sabbath-keepers are in the affirmative, they read passages about Paul preaching in Jewish synagogues on the Sabbath day. They argue that Paul preaching on the Sabbath proves Paul kept the Sabbath!

Q: Here is Paul preaching on the first day of the week. Does this prove Paul "*kept the first day of the week*"?

In fact, these men were in Troas for seven days and there is no mention of any Sabbath meeting.

Q: If the brethren in Troas had met together on the Sabbath day for anything, do you think Luke would have mentioned it?

Why would Luke completely skip over any mention of a Sabbath day (if it were a sacred day observed by Christians) and then make specific mention of the "first day of the week" and a worship assembly?

NOTE: If Acts 20:7 is not a worship service, then we have Paul and his companions staying in a place with other disciples and no worship service ever occurred.

Would an apostle of Jesus Christ:

- Come to a town where there was a congregation of Christians
- Stay there seven full days, and
- Never worship a single time.

Yet, this is what Sabbath-keepers would have you to believe about Acts 20.

WEEKLY COMMUNION

(TIME & FREQUENCY)

We have learned that Christians were to assemble to eat the communion. Notice this passage:

1 Corinthians 11:26

26 For **as often as** you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

"as often as" (ὡσάκις) – this refers to a time element. It carries with it the idea of "frequently." This word is found seven times in the NT. Every time it means "often" or "frequently":

2 Corinthians 11:26-27

26 in journeys **often**, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

27 in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness **often**, in hunger and thirst, in fastings **often**, in cold and nakedness;

Philippians 3:18

18 For many walk, of whom I have told you **often**, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:

Christians are to eat the Lord's supper "*often*" or "*frequently*." But how frequently?

1) **If it did not matter to God, no time element would be mentioned.**

In this case, time and frequency would not matter and Christians could have communion whenever they felt like and as frequently or infrequently as they chose.

2) **If God wanted communion to be a yearly event, a certain day of a certain month would have been specified.**

For example, God wanted the Passover to be a yearly feast. He specifically said it was to be observed on the fourteenth day of the first month (Lev 23:5). This means every year, once a year. It mattered to God *when* and *how often* Passover was observed.

3) **If God wanted communion to be a monthly event, a certain day of the month would be specified – but no certain month would be specified.**

For example, Num 28:14 and Num 29:6 speak of the offerings which are to be offered on the "*new moon*" day of the month. This means every month, once a month. It mattered to God *when* and *how often* the "new moon" events were observed.

4) **If God wanted communion to be a weekly event, a certain day of the week would be specified.**

For example, Lev 23:3 speaks of the Sabbath day. It was to be on the seventh day of the week. This meant every week, once a week. It mattered to God *when* and *how*

often the Sabbath was observed.

Q: What do we find in the scriptures about the time and frequency of communion?

Acts 20:7

7 Now **on the first day of the week**, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.

If time and frequency had not mattered, God would not have recorded this. The scriptures teach weekly communion – this is what the Holy Spirit revealed as God's divine will for His people.

Consider the following questions:

- Does your church partake of the Lord's supper?
- When and how frequently?
- Upon what scripture does your church base its practice?

Communion in the scriptures is something that occurred frequently:

Acts 2:42

42 And they **continued** steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Since these early disciples "continued" in several things, those things occurred frequently.

- If the disciples had *prayed* one time and prayed no more until next year, the scripture would not say they "continued" in prayers.
- If they had *fellowship* one time and never saw each other till next year, it could not be said they "continued" in fellowship.
- If they had *communion* one time and would not have communion again till next year it could not be said they "continued" in breaking of bread.

Hence, communion was something that occurred frequently. This agrees perfectly with weekly communion. It agrees perfectly with Acts 20:7.

THE COLLECTION

We have mentioned the collection already, but let us return and pick up some things we missed:

1 Corinthians 16:1-2

1 Now concerning the **collection for the saints**, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also:

2 **On the first day of the week** let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.

- This money collected was for the poor saints in Judea.
- This collection was a command of God.

These are instructions regarding a *religious matter*. Not only is this a religious service, but it is a religious service that is to take place on a particular day. (Giving money to the Lord's service on any day would be a religious service, but when that service is commanded for a particular day, it becomes all the more significant.)

- Giving into the collection was a religious service, and
- The first day of the week was the day for that service.

Q: If this were a duty to perform at home, why specify the first day of the week? What makes the first day any more special for a "*home duty*" than any other day?

But if the church assembled for worship on the first day, it becomes understandable why the day was mentioned. (If the Sabbath had been the day the church gathered for worship, that would have been the logical time to specify having a collection.)

The Greek says, "Every first day of the week" (κατὰ μίαν σαββάτου ἕκαστος).

Q: Why specify the first day of every week unless that day was a day of worship and assembly?

If 1 Cor 16:1-2 had said, "*Upon the Sabbath, let everyone of you lay by in store,*" Sabbath-keepers would certainly be quoting that to prove the need to keep the Sabbath.

Some religious duties were never limited to the first day of the week:

- Preaching was never limited to the first day.
- Praying ...
- Singing ...
- Charitable deeds, etc.

But collecting money for the saints and communion were restricted to the first day of the week. Why?

- Because the first day of the week was the time when disciples (with God's approval) met together for worship.
- Because the first day of the week was the day the Lord resurrected.

THE "LORD'S DAY"

Finally, consider the expression, "*The Lord's day*."

Revelation 1:10

10 I was in the Spirit on **the Lord's Day**, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet,

What day is "*the Lord's day*"?

"Lord" (κυριακός) – a unique word that is found only two times in the NT (1 Cor 11:20 and Rev 1:10).

1 Corinthians 11:20

20 Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat **the Lord's Supper**.

The OT Passover was called, " <i>the Lord's Passover</i> " (Ex 12:11).	But " <i>the Lord's supper</i> " (1 Cor 11:20) has no reference to the OT Passover.
The Sabbath day was called the " <i>Sabbath of the Lord</i> " (Ex 20:10)	But " <i>the Lord's day</i> " (Rev 1:10) has no reference to the OT Sabbath.

Here is a question to ponder: Would it be proper to eat the "Lord's supper" on the "Lord's day"? Does your church do this? If not, why not? Does your church eat the "Lord's supper" less frequently than each "Lord's day"? If so, why?

"Lord's" (κυριακός) is a word that is uniquely linked to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is referring to a day uniquely linked to Him.

Psalms 118:22-24

22 The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone.

23 This was the Lord's doing; It is marvelous in our eyes.

24 This is **the day the LORD has made**; We will rejoice and be glad in it.

This is the most quoted passage of the OT. It is quoted five times in the NT (Mt 21:42; Mk 12:10; Lk 20:17; Acts 4:11; 1 Pet 2:7).

- "the stone" = Jesus
- "the builders" = the Jewish leaders
- "rejected" = the crucifixion
- "has become the chief cornerstone" = the resurrection (Acts 4:10-11)
- "This is the day the Lord has made" = the same day the "rejected stone" became the "chief cornerstone" (the first day of the week)
- "We will rejoice and be glad in it" = the disciples would worship and rejoice on this day

Q: When was the "stone" exalted to become the "chief cornerstone"?

Acts 4:10-11

10 "let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, **whom God raised from the dead**, by Him this man stands here before you whole.

11 **"This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.'**

Acts 2:30-31

30 "Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would **raise up the Christ to sit on his throne**,

31 "he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning **the resurrection of the**

Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.

Q: What day was the Lord raised? What day did God's people rejoice and become glad?

Matthew 28:1-8

- 1 Now **after the Sabbath**, as **the first day of the week began to dawn**, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.
- 2 And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it.
- 3 His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow.
- 4 And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men.
- 5 But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified.
- 6 "He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.
- 7 "And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you."
- 8 So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and **great joy**, and ran to bring His disciples word.

John 20:19-20

- 19 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, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you."
- 20 When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then **the disciples were glad** when they saw the Lord.

Luke 24:41

- 41 But while they still did not believe **for joy**, and marveled, He said to them, "Have you any food here?"

How can we reach any other conclusion: The Lord's day is the first day of the week.

Psalms 118:24

- 24 This is the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it.

On this day the disciples:

- Broke the bread in a weekly assembly.
- Took up a collection.

COMMON OBJECTIONS **CONSIDERED**

- 1) **No passage says the first day of the week is "holy," "blessed," or "sanctified." Therefore, it is not necessary to worship on that day.**

First, Passover was never specifically called "holy," "blessed," or "sanctified," and yet the people were still required to worship God on this day every year (Ex 12:16).

Second, when God tells His people to assemble on a certain day, what are they suppose to do? Are they suppose to assemble like He said? Or shall they argue, "God, You never said this was a 'holy' day and so we're not going to assemble like You commanded."

In Lev 8:3 God commanded that all the congregation "gather together" to anoint Aaron and his sons as priests.

Q: Were the people required to do this even though God did not "bless" this day or "sanctify" it or "hallow" it? Did they still have to do this ... just because God said so?

Third, the proposition under discussion does not say anything about proving the first day of the week is "holy," or "blessed," or "sanctified." The proposition under consideration simply reads: "*The "first day of the week" of Acts 20:7 is the day upon which Christians must assemble for worship.*"

All this proposition requires is to demonstrate that on the first day of the week Christians must assemble for worship.

- 2) **Dan 7:25 – Does this prophecy refer to the Pope or to Constantine changing the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday?**

First, the scriptures clearly teach that the Sabbath was "taken away" (2 Cor 3:16) and "nailed to the cross" (Col 2:14-16). It was not "changed" by anyone. The "Lord's day" is an entirely different day.

Second, the apostles of Christ authorized meeting together on the first day of every week (1 Cor 16:1-2; Acts 20:7; Heb 10:25). This was before any Catholic Church or Pope or Constantine.

Third, Jesus is the One who authorized the "change" in the law that abolished the Sabbath and required worship on the first day of the week:

Hebrews 7:12

12 For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a **change of the law**.

Fourth, just because the Catholic Church makes a claim of "changing" the Sabbath from the seventh day to the first day of the week does not make it so. The Catholic Church makes many claims which Sabbath-keepers do not accept as true, yet they believe the claim about "changing the Sabbath." For example, the Catholic Church claims:

- They are the only true church.
- Catholic Church goes back to the apostles.
- Everyone outside Catholic Church is a heretic.
- Peter was the first Pope.
- The Pope is Peter's successor.
- Pope holds the keys to heaven.
- Pope is the vicar of Christ on earth.
- Christians should pray thru Mary.
- Mary was a perpetual virgin.
- Mary conceived immaculately.
- Priests have power to absolve sin.
- Infants should be sprinkled.
- They changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday.

Here are 13 things claimed by the Catholic Church. Sabbath-keepers believe the Catholic Church is lying about every one of these claims except the last one.

Q: If a witness lied 12 times, why would anyone believe what he said about anything else?

Fifth, consider the text:

Daniel 7:25

25 He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall **intend to change times and law**. Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time.

Here are some assumptions made by Sabbath-keepers about this passage:

- **It is assumed the Lord Himself would never give a new law which differed from the ten commandment law** (yet Jeremiah 31:31 said He would).
- **It is assumed the "times" (plural) under consideration in Dan 7:25 is the weekly day (singular) of worship.** (Remember, Sabbath-keepers make the argument regarding Col 2:14-16 that the word "Sabbath" is plural it cannot refer to the weekly Sabbath. Now they assume the plural word "times" means the weekly Sabbath)

In other words:

- "Times" (plural) supposedly cannot refer to annual feast days.
 - Supposedly it must refer only to the weekly sabbath.
- **It is assumed the change under consideration is moving the day of worship to another day of the week.** It cannot mean substituting, deleting, or adding.

In other words:

- It cannot mean the "little horn" will substitute other events for the regular events of the day.
 - It cannot mean the "little horn" will delete the sacredness of the day altogether.
 - It cannot mean the "little horn" will add sacred days to the calendar.
 - It can only mean he will move the sacredness of one day of the week to another day of the week.
- **It is assumed the word "intends" means the "little horn" actually accomplishes this feat.** (There is a big difference between "intending" to do something and actually accomplishing it.)
 - **It is assumed the "little horn" was Constantine** – the 46th emperor of Rome even though the "little horn" was suppose to come after the 10th king (7:24).
 - **It is assumed this "little horn" was Constantine** – even though the "little horn" was suppose to defeat three kings (7:24), yet Constantine fought only two kings: Maxentius (312 AD) to gain control of Western Empire and Licinius (324 AD) to gain control of Eastern Empire.

Just because a day which use to be considered sacred, is no longer considered sacred does not mean:

- Christian are following after a "beast."
- Or the one who changed the day is the beast.

EXAMPLE:

- The 10th day of the 7th month use to be the Day of Atonement (Lev 23:27).
- That has been changed (Heb 7:12).
- The change was by the method of deletion – not moving.
- Now the 10th day of the 7th month is only an ordinary day of the year.
- This was done by God, not a "beast."

To prove anything, it must be first shown:

- That the Sabbath day was intended to be for all nations (cf. Dt 5:1-3).
- It was not a special sign just between God & Israel (cf. Ex 31:13).
- It was to last for all time (2 Cor 3:3-14).

3) Lk 4:16 – Jesus kept the Sabbath. Aren't we suppose to imitate Him?

Jesus kept more than the Sabbath. He kept all of the Law of Moses – including circumcision (Lk 2:21), animal sacrifice (Lk 2:22-23), leprosy laws (Lk 5:14), and the Passover (Mt 26:18). The reason He kept all these laws is because He lived while the Law of Moses was in force:

Galatians 4:4

4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born **under the law**,

Hebrews 9:15-17

15 And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

16 For **where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.**

17 For **a testament is in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives.**

Matthew 17

3 And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.

4 Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

5 While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. **Hear Him!**"

9 Now as they came down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, "**Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead.**"

Men would be told to listen to Jesus rather than Moses and the prophets, but when? After the "Son of Man is risen from the dead."

Deuteronomy 18:18-19

18 'I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.

19 'And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him.

Matthew 28:18-20

18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

20 "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

"teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you" – where did Jesus or the apostles command anyone to keep the Sabbath after the resurrection – for this was the time men should begin to "*hear Him*"?

4) Acts 2:46 – The "cup" is not mentioned and therefore this refers to a common meal – not communion.

"Breaking bread" in v46 refers to a common meal. The context is about what people were doing privately in their houses.

1 Corinthians 11

22 What! **Do you not have houses to eat and drink in?** Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not

praise you.

34 But **if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home**, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come.

Compare the above verses with the following:

Acts 2:46

46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread **from house to house, they ate their food** with gladness and simplicity of heart,

This passage is obviously speaking of things done privately in their homes. So "breaking bread" in this verse does not refer to the communion. However, v42 does speak of the communion:

Acts 2:42

42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

The "breaking bread" of this verse is in the middle of spiritual duties – doctrine, fellowship, prayers. The context demonstrates that the "breaking of bread" in this verse is a spiritual meal – the communion.

5) **Rom 6:3-4 – Wasn't baptism given to remember the resurrection of Christ – not the first day of the week?**

First, Rom 6:3-4 does not teach baptism was given to remember the resurrection of Christ. Baptism was given by God as the occasion when a sinner has his sins washed away by the blood of Christ (Acts 22:16; 2:38).

Second, Only a part of baptism resembles the resurrection of Christ. Actually, Rom 6:3-4 teaches that baptism resembles (a) the death, (b) the burial, and (c) the resurrection of Christ – all three, not just the resurrection.

Third, Rom 6:3-4 does not remove the fact that disciples gathered every week (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 16:1-2) to worship on the first day of the week. In other words, Rom 6:3-4 does not remove the fact that the resurrection day was chosen by God for NT worship. "*This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it*" (Ps. 118:24) refers to the day of the resurrection (Ps. 118:22-23; Acts 4:10-11).

Fourth, If this present argument means anything, it means: Christians do not have to worship on the first day of every week like the apostles commanded (1 Cor 16:1-2; Heb 10:25) because part of the act of baptism reminds us of the resurrection of Christ." Is this a reasonable conclusion?

6) 1 Cor 16:1-2 – Christians fulfill this duty by putting aside money at home ("lay by him"). This does not teach a church assembly on the first day of the week.

This passage is instructing the church how to have a treasury. Notice the following points:

OT had a treasury:

Joshua 6:19

19 "But all the silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron, are consecrated to the LORD; they shall come into **the treasury** of the LORD."

Luke 21:1-4

1 And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into **the treasury**,

2 and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites.

3 So He said, "Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all;

4 "for all these out of their abundance have put in **offerings for God**, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had."

Jesus had a treasury:

John 12:6

6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had **the money box**; and he used to take what was put in it.

John 13:29

29 For some thought, because Judas had **the money box**, that Jesus had said to him, "Buy those things we need for the feast," or that he should give something to the poor.

Jesus so often dipped into this treasury that the disciples automatically assumed Judas was sent forth to (a) buy something for the feast, or (b) help the poor.

The church had a treasury:

Acts 2:44-45

44 Now all who believed were together, and had **all things in common**,

45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.

Acts 4:34-37

34 Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold,

35 and **laid them at the apostles' feet**; and they distributed to each as anyone had need.

36 And Joses, who was also named Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite of the country of Cyprus,

37 having land, sold it, and brought the money and **laid it at the apostles' feet**.

Acts 5:1-2

1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession.

2 And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and **laid it at the apostles' feet**.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2

1 Now concerning **the collection** for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also:

2 On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, **storing up** as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.

Here the church is to have a "collection" or "fund" or "treasury."

"storing up" (θησαυρίζωv) – lit. "treasuring up" – a treasury is necessarily implied

The corresponding noun (θησαυρός) is translated "treasure" in:

Mt 2:11 – the rich men opened their *treasures*

Mt 6:19 – do not lay up *treasures* on earth

Mt 13:44 – a man found *treasure* hidden in a field

Lk 12:34 – you will have *treasure* in heaven

Concerning 1 Cor 16:1-2, note the following:

- This is an "order" that "must be done"
- Each Christian was to participate
- The giving was to be according to one's income
- "By him" – i.e. "by himself." Each individual is to decide for himself how

much to give. The amount given is "not of compulsion" (see 2 Cor 9 below)

- The giving was to be every first day of the week
- The money was not stored at home, for then it would not matter what day of the week it was stored up.
- The money was not stored at home, for Paul wanted no collections of money made when he arrived.

1 Corinthians 16:3

3 And when I come, whomever you approve by your letters I will send to bear **your gift** to Jerusalem.

"gift" (singular) – i.e. the money had been collected into one common fund and became a singular treasury.

If people were storing their money at home:

- Collections would have to be made when Paul arrived.
- The singular word "gift" could not describe the money – for it would be "gifts" given by individual Christians.
- The money could not be called a gift of the "church" – for it was never in the control of the church.

2 Corinthians 9:5

5 Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren to go to you ahead of time, and prepare your generous **gift** beforehand, which you had previously promised, that **it** may be ready as a matter of generosity and not as a grudging obligation.

"gift ... it" (singular) – if men were storing up at home "gifts" would have been used to describe the money.

2 Corinthians 9:7

7 So **let each one give** as he purposes **in his heart**, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

"in his heart" – this explains 1 Cor 16:2 "*by himself*" – i.e. each person decides within himself how much to give into the collection. He is not to give grudgingly or of necessity. The worshipper decided by himself how much to give into the treasury.

A common treasury is necessarily implied in the following passages:

Acts 6:1-6

1 Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in **the daily distribution**.

2 Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and **serve tables**.

3 "Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business;

4 "but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch,

6 whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.

2 Corinthians 11:8

8 I robbed other churches, taking **wages** from them to minister to you.

Philippians 4:15-16

15 Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, **no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only**.

16 For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities.

1 Timothy 5:16

16 If any believing man or woman has widows, let them relieve them, and **do not let the church be burdened**, that it may relieve those who are really widows.

This treasury is to be collected and stored up each first day of the week (1 Cor 16:1-2) so that it will be ready to use when needs arise.

- 7) **Heb 9:16-17 – A will (testament) is made while a person is alive. It cannot be changed after a person dies. Since Jesus did not teach the first day of the week before He died, it cannot be added to the will (testament) after He died.**

While the Lord made His will before He died (cf. Mt 5-7), and while it did not come into

force till after He died (cf. Mt 17:9; Heb 9:16-17), yet His will was not *revealed* fully till after He had died, resurrected and ascended into heaven.

This objection is saying that a "last will and testament" must be fully revealed and disclosed to the public before the death of the testator, and that is certainly not so. The Lord Himself said all the terms and conditions would not be fully divulged until after His death and resurrection:

John 16:12-13

12 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.

13 "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

Matthew 16:19

19 "And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

To illustrate: When a man dies, though his will was made before death, it is read and revealed to the public after he dies. Many are surprised to learn of the details of the will.

Even so, the Lord promised that the Spirit would come and reveal all the terms and conditions of the NT to the apostles and they in turn would reveal these matters to the public.

Application: Though the Lord did not reveal the first day of the week would be the day of worship during His earthly ministry, He did reveal this information later (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 16:1-2; Heb 10:25).

- Revealing the contents of a will is not "changing" a will.
- The apostle John revealed a new command (1 Jn 2:8), but this did not mean the Lord's New Testament (will) was changed.

Q: Who is going to argue with the Lord and say, "*I refuse to worship on the first day of the week as you revealed through the apostles, because you did not make this information known before You died*"?

8) Rev 13 – Is "Sunday-keeping" the "mark of the beast"?

First, Sabbath-keepers who make this argument assume several things about this chapter:

- That the "beast" of Rev 13 is the Pope of the Catholic Church.
- That the "mark" of the beast is Sunday-keeping that has been enforced by the government.

Assumptions prove nothing.

Suppose one assumes (cf. Albertus Pieters, Studies in the Revelation of St. John) the "beast" is pagan-Rome which began to enforce "Emperor worship" upon people in the days of Emperor Domitian (81-96 AD). Not only were men required to give allegiance to the emperor, they were also required to worship him as deity.

As time grew on, this requirement to pay homage to the Emperor grew and grew. Eventually, statues of the Emperor were erected in towns and villages across Rome required men to burn incense before Caesar's statue. Refusal to do so was cited as evidence of disloyalty and was punishable by death.

Why could this not be the interpretation of the "mark of the beast"? Why does the "mark" have to refer to Sunday-keeping?

Second, neither Jesus nor any of His apostles commanded anyone to keep the Sabbath day in the NT era. If Sabbath-keeping is a mark of God's true people today, where is the command for any Christian to keep the Sabbath?

Third, Christians met for worship on the first day of the week long before there was any Pope or Catholic Church.

Acts 20:7

7 Now **on the first day of the week**, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2

1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also:

2 **On the first day of the week** let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.

Revelation 1:10

10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet,

Fourth, history records the fact that Christians were meeting on the first day of the week long before any Pope developed and long before the beginning of the Catholic church. Also, Christians were meeting on the first day of the week long before Constantine was Emperor of Rome. (See "History" in the next section.)

9) Where is any command to worship on the first day of the week?

First, OT:

Leviticus 23:15-21

15 'And you shall count for yourselves from **the day after the Sabbath**, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed.

16 'Count fifty days to **the day after the seventh Sabbath**; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD.

17 'You shall bring from your dwellings two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. They are the firstfruits to the LORD.

18 'And you shall offer with the bread seven lambs of the first year, without blemish, one young bull, and two rams. They shall be as a burnt offering to the LORD, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma to the LORD.

19 'Then you shall sacrifice one kid of the goats as a sin offering, and two male lambs of the first year as a sacrifice of a peace offering.

20 'The priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits as a wave offering before the LORD, with the two lambs. They shall be holy to the LORD for the priest.

21 'And you shall proclaim **on the same day that it is a holy convocation** to you. You shall do no customary work on it. It shall be a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

"holy convocation" – translated "sacred assembly" in the NIV.

Q: Was the Pope behind this command to have a sacred assembly on Sunday? Was Constantine? Was the Council of Laodicea?

Second, NT:

1 Corinthians 16:1-2

1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given **orders** to the churches of Galatia, so **you must do** also:

2 **On the first day of the week** let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.

Q: Was the Pope behind this command to have a sacred assembly on Sunday? Was Constantine? Was the Council of Laodicea?

HISTORY

1) **What about Constantine's Sunday law (321 AD)?**

First, let it be noted that if Constantine "changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday," then it cannot be argued later the Pope and Catholic church changed the day. It cannot be both ways.

CONSTANTINE'S EDICT of March 7, 321:

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

Assumptions:

- All Christians were keeping the Sabbath before this.
- None were worshipping on Sunday.
- The Sabbath is now illegal because of this edict.
- Sabbath-keepers will now be persecuted.
- Sunday worship is now required by law.
- Those not worshipping on Sunday will now be persecuted.

Not one of these assumptions are true – not one.

- Christians were already meeting together on the first day of the week – with divine approval (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 16:1-2; Heb 10:25; Rev 1:10).
- Constantine's law did not make the Sabbath "illegal."
- Constantine's law did not begin a persecution against "Sabbath-keepers."
- Sunday worship was not required; it was allowed, but not required.
- Non-Sunday worshippers were not "persecuted" because of this law.

2) What about the Council of Laodicea (364 AD)?

The council of Laodicea is believed by Sabbath-keepers to be the occasion when the Roman Catholic Church changed the Sabbath from the Seventh day to the First day.

First, if the Council of Laodicea "changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday," then it cannot be argued that Constantine changed the day. It cannot be both ways.

Second, the Sabbath was not *changed* at this Council. The Sabbath was and continues to be the seventh day of the week.

Third, here is what the council decreed:

*"Christians ought not to Judaize and to rest in the Sabbath, but to work in that day; but preferring **the Lord's Day**, should rest, if possible, as Christians. Wherefore if they shall be found to Judaize, let them be accursed from Christ."*

Here are some facts to note:

- Laodicea was not Rome – it was 1000 miles east of Rome.
- The Pope (bishop) of Rome did not attend this council (McClintock & Strong's Cyclopedia).
- The Pope (bishop) of Rome did not send a legate or delegate or anyone to represent him.
- The Council of Laodicea was held without the knowledge or consent of the Pope (bishop) of Rome.
- In 364 AD the Bishop of Rome did not have authority over other bishops. It would be 200 years later before he was invested with such authority over all the churches.

- The authority of the Roman bishop was resisted in the East – where this council was held.
- Liberius was bishop of Rome at the time of the Council of Laodicea. He was degraded from his office, banished, and treated with the utmost contempt. Bower says, in order to end his exile, Liberius "wrote in a most submissive and cringing style to the eastern Bishops." (History of the Popes, vol. 1, p. 64).

This is supposedly the "Pope" who changed the Sabbath at the Council of these same Eastern bishops, 1000 miles away, which he never attended?

- The Council of Laodicea was not a "general council," but a "local council." It is not even mentioned by Mosheim and other historians. McClintock & Strong's Cyclopedia says: "*Thirty-two bishops were present from different provinces in Asia.*" These were all Eastern church bishops – not one from the Roman church.

Yet, this is suppose to be the place and the time when the "Pope of Rome" changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday.

Recognizing a practice already in existence is different than originating a new practice. For example:

Council of Carthage (397 AD) stated the 27 books of the NT were inspired.

This did not make them inspired – they were already inspired – independent of any council.

This council merely recognized something that was already true.

Council of Laodicea merely recognized something already being practiced – first day of the week worship. They did not originate the practice.

3) What does history say about the Sabbath and the first day of the week?

IGNATIUS, the third bishop of Antioch, who died in 108 AD, wrote: "If, therefore, those who were brought up in the ancient order of things have come to the possession of a new hope, *no longer observing the Sabbath*, but living in the observance of the *Lord's Day*, on which also our life has sprung up again by Him... Let us therefore *no longer keep the Sabbath* after the Jewish manner, and rejoice in days of idleness; for "he that does not work, let him not eat."...let every friend of Christ keep the Lord's day as a festival, the resurrection-day, the queen and chief of all the days [of the week]." ("Epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians," Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 1, pp. 62-63).

IN 120 AD THE EPISTLE OF BARNABAS says in chapter 2: "Incense is a vain abomination unto me, and your new moons and Sabbaths I cannot endure. He has, therefore, abolished these things." Again: "Wherefore, also, we keep *the eighth day* with joyfulness, the day, also, on which Jesus rose again from the dead" (Ch 25).

JUSTIN MARTYR - 140 AD: In chapter 67 of his first Apology, entitled, "Weekly Worship of the Christians," writing to the pagan emperor, Justin states: "And on the day called *Sunday*, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things. Then we all rise together and pray, and, as we before said, when our prayer is ended, bread and wine and water are brought... But *Sunday* is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which God, having wrought the change in the darkness and matter, made the world; and Jesus Christ our Savior on the same day rose from the dead." (Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 1, pp. 185-186).

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

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

TERTULLIAN of Africa, wrote around 200 AD: In his Apology, Chapter 16, Tertullian says: "We solemnize *the day after Saturday* in contradistinction to those who call this day their Sabbath, and devote it to ease and eating, deviating from the old Jewish customs, which they are now very ignorant of."

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

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

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 1) Is the collection of 1 Cor 16:1-2 a religious service?
- 2) If 1 Cor 16:1-2 simply means setting money aside at home, why was the first day specified?
- 3) If each Christian at Corinth stored up his money at home, would there have to be a "*gathering*" when Paul arrived to pick the money up and take it to Judea?
- 4) Does the Seventh Day Adventist Church take up a collection of money? If so, what day do they take up the collection? What scripture do they cite for their practice?
- 5) Is there any connection between eating the Lord's supper and assembling together?
- 6) In 1 Cor 11:33, what did the brethren "*come together*" for?
- 7) In Acts 20:7, what did the brethren "*come together*" for?
- 8) If the meal of Acts 20:7 is a common meal, why wait seven days to have it? Why not meet earlier so Paul could go on – since he was in a hurry?
- 9) In Acts 20:7 Paul preached on the first day of the week. It is commonly argued that Paul preaching in a synagogue on the sabbath proves he "*kept the sabbath.*" Does this prove Paul "*kept the first day of the week*"?
- 10) Why is there no mention of disciples meeting together on the sabbath day in Acts 20?
- 11) Is there any record of any apostle commanding any group of Christians to rest or do anything else (religious or non-religious) on the seventh day of the week?
- 12) Why do sabbath-keepers fight the idea that "*the Lord's day*" is the first day of the week? Would it mean that the first day of the week was the proper day for worship if it was indeed "*the Lord's day*"?

THE 7th DAY SABBATH

Common questions about the Sabbath day:

- ***What day was the Sabbath?***
- ***Who gave this law?***
- ***To whom was it given?***
- ***When was it given?***
- ***Why was this law given?***
- ***What did Sabbath-keeping require?***
- ***What was the penalty for breaking the Sabbath?***
- ***Were the ten commandments a covenant?***
- ***When was the covenant made and with whom was it made?***
- ***Was the covenant “taken away”?***
- ***How does the New Testament view the ten commandments?***
- ***Is it permissible to keep part of the old law without keeping all of it?***
- ***Can men be saved apart from the Old Testament law?***
- ***Does the plural word “Sabbaths” in Col. 2:16 refer to the weekly Sabbath?***

These and other questions are explored in this booklet.



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THE SABBATH

The question considered in this booklet is as follows: *Is the seventh-day Sabbath of Exodus 20:8 is still binding upon men today?*

In order to answer this question, certain terms must be defined.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

"The seventh-day Sabbath" – the day commonly called Saturday; not Sunday.

"of Exodus 20:8" – the very same Sabbath described in the Old Testament (OT) Book of Exodus. This investigation does not concern an altered version of the Sabbath. The very same Sabbath of Exodus 20:8 means that very Sabbath with all the rules, regulations, and penalties that go with it.

If it is argued that *the rules, regulations and penalties no longer apply* today, then the seventh-day Sabbath "of Exodus 20:8" is not still binding.

If it is argued that *God's people today are not required to enforce the rules, regulations, and penalty* for violation of the seventh-day Sabbath, then the seventh-day Sabbath "of Exodus 20:8" is not still binding.

"still" – "continues to be," "yet." "Still" indicates the very same seventh-day Sabbath of Exodus 20:8 was bound in times past and continues to the present time.

"binding upon" – mandatory, obligatory. "Binding" implies a divine command. It must be shown that men living in the Christian Age were commanded to keep the Sabbath of Exodus 20:8. A passage of scripture exhorting men to simply "obey" is not enough to prove the Sabbath of Exodus 20:8 is still binding – for there are many other commands in the Bible besides the Sabbath or the ten commandments. It must be demonstrated that the Sabbath of Exodus 20:8 was commanded to men today.

"men" – not just Jews, but men in general – Jews and Gentiles.

"today" – at this present time – in this era of history known as the "Christian Age." Have men in the Christian Age been commanded to keep the seventh-day Sabbath of Exodus 20:8?

It will do no good to argue that men in the past (Moses, David, Jesus, or others) were commanded to keep the seventh-day Sabbath of Exodus 20:8. We already know this and already believe this. This investigation hinges on New Testament (NT) Christians being commanded to keep that very same seventh-day Sabbath of Exodus 20:8.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SABBATH

1) **What day is the Sabbath?**

Exodus 20:10

10 but **the seventh day is the Sabbath** of the LORD your God. ...

The Sabbath day was Saturday (the seventh day of the week) not Sunday (the first day of the week).

2) **Who gave the Sabbath law?**

God of course gave the Sabbath law, but He gave it thru Moses.

Nehemiah 9:13-14

13 "You came down also on Mount Sinai, And spoke with them from heaven, And gave them just ordinances and true laws, Good statutes and commandments.

14 **You made known to them Your holy Sabbath**, And commanded them precepts, statutes and laws, **By the hand of Moses Your servant**.

John 1:17

17 For the **law was given through Moses**, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

John 7:19

19 "**Did not Moses give you the law**, yet none of you keeps the law? Why do you seek to **kill Me?**"

Look at Jn 7:19 closely. These people were trying to kill Jesus. In trying to kill Jesus, these people were breaking the "law." The "law" which they were breaking was the "law of Moses" (Decalogue). In other words, the "law of Moses" included the ten commandments.

Look closely at the following chart:

<p><u>Matthew 15:4</u> 4 "For God commanded, saying, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.'</p>	<p><u>Mark 7:10</u> 10 "For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.'</p>
<p><u>Luke 2:22</u> 22 Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord</p>	<p><u>Luke 2:23</u> 23 (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the LORD"),</p>

This chart clearly demonstrates there is no difference between the "law of the Lord" and the "law of Moses."

God gave the law, including the Sabbath, thru Moses.

Ezra 7:6-21

6 this Ezra ... was a **skilled scribe in the Law of Moses**, which the LORD God of Israel had given. ...

11 ... Ezra the priest, the scribe, **expert in the words of the commandments of the LORD**, and of His statutes to Israel:

12 ... Ezra the priest, a **scribe of the Law of the God of heaven** ...

21 ... Ezra the priest, **the scribe of the Law of the God of heaven** ...

The "law of God" (vv12, 21) and the "law of Moses" (v6) are being used interchangeably because they are the same law.

Nehemiah 8

1 ... they told Ezra the scribe to bring **the Book of the Law of Moses**, which the LORD had commanded Israel.

8 So they read distinctly from **the book, in the Law of God**; and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading.

18 ... he read from **the Book of the Law of God**. ...

The "book of the law of Moses" (v1) and the "book of the law of God" (v8) are being used interchangeably because they are the same law.

So, God gave the Sabbath law, but because He gave it through Moses, it is called the "law of Moses." (See also the section of this booklet entitled: "*Law of Moses*" & "*Law of God*")

3) To whom was the Sabbath given?

Exodus 20:1-2

1 And God spoke all these words, saying:

2 "I am the LORD your God, who brought **you out of the land of Egypt**, out of the house of bondage.

[Then the 10 commandments are listed]

Deuteronomy 5

1 And Moses called all Israel, and said to them: "Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your hearing today, that you may learn them and be careful to observe them.

2 "**The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb.**

3 "**The LORD did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us, those who are here today, all of us who are alive.**

6 'I am the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

12 'Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you.

15 And remember that **you were a slave in the land of Egypt**, and the LORD your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; **therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.**

1 Kings 8:9

9 Nothing was in the ark except the two tablets of stone which Moses put there at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant **with the children of Israel**, when they came out of the land of Egypt.

Exodus 31:16-17

16 'Therefore **the children of Israel** shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant.

17 'It is a sign **between Me and the children of Israel** forever; for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.'

4) **Were Gentiles ever under the OT law?**

Deuteronomy 4:6-13

6 "Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'

7 "For what great nation is there that has God so near to it, as the LORD our God is to us, for whatever reason we may call upon Him?

8 **"And what great nation is there that has such statutes and righteous judgments as are in all this law which I set before you this day?"**

9 "Only take heed to yourself, and diligently keep yourself, lest you forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. And teach them to your children and your grandchildren,

10 "especially concerning the day you stood before the LORD your God in **Horeb**, when the LORD said to me, 'Gather the people to Me, and I will let them hear My words, that they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children.'

11 "Then you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, and the mountain burned with fire to the midst of heaven, with darkness, cloud, and thick darkness.

12 "And the LORD spoke to you out of the midst of the fire. You heard the sound of the words, but saw no form; you only heard a voice.

13 "So He declared to you **His covenant** which He commanded you to perform, **the Ten Commandments**; and He wrote them **on two tablets of stone**.

Q: What is the answer to the question of v8? What other nation besides Israel had the law – which included the ten commandments written on the tablets of stone (v13)?

Romans 2:14

14 for when **Gentiles, who do not have the law**, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves,

Romans 3:1-2

1 What advantage then has **the Jew**, or what is the profit of circumcision?

2 Much in every way! Chiefly because **to them were committed the oracles of God**.

1 Corinthians 9:20-21

20 and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to **those who are under the law**, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law;

21 to **those who are without law**, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win **those who are without law**;

5) When was the Sabbath law given?

Genesis 2:1-3

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

2 And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.

3 Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

"He rested" – past tense. God had already rested prior to blessing the seventh day. "He rested" first and blessed later. How much later?

Nehemiah 9:13-14

13 "You came down also **on Mount Sinai**, And spoke with them from heaven, And gave them just ordinances and true laws, Good statutes and commandments.

14 **You made known to them Your holy Sabbath**, And commanded them precepts, statutes and laws, By the hand of Moses Your servant.

No one kept the Sabbath before God revealed it to Israel in the wilderness.

6) Why was the Sabbath given?

Deuteronomy 5:15

15 And remember that **you were a slave in the land of Egypt**, and the LORD your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; **therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.**

Exodus 31:13

13 "Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: 'Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for **it is a sign between Me and you** throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you.

Ezekiel 20:12

12 "Moreover I also gave them My Sabbaths, **to be a sign between them and Me**, that they might know that I am the LORD who sanctifies them.

7) What did Sabbath-keeping require?

No work

Exodus 20:8-10

8 "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

10 but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall **do no work**: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates.

No cooking

Exodus 16:23

23 Then he said to them, "This is what the LORD has said: 'Tomorrow is a Sabbath rest, a holy Sabbath to the LORD. **Bake what you will bake today, and boil what you will boil; and lay up for yourselves all that remains, to be kept until morning.**'"

No fire

Exodus 35:3

3 "You shall **kindle no fire** throughout your dwellings on the Sabbath day."

No burden-bearing

Jeremiah 17:21-22

21 'Thus says the LORD: "Take heed to yourselves, and **bear no burden** on the Sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem;

22 "**nor carry a burden out of your houses** on the Sabbath day, nor do any work, but hallow the Sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers.

Offer two lambs

Numbers 28:9-10

9 'And on the Sabbath day **two lambs** in their first year, without blemish, and two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour as a grain offering, mixed with oil, with its drink offering;

10 'this is the burnt offering for every Sabbath, besides the regular burnt offering with its drink offering.

These are the regulations for the Sabbath of Ex 20:8. No one keeps this Sabbath by these rules. Sabbath-keepers today "pick and choose" which OT laws they want to observe. This is wrong according to Gal 3:10 and 5:3.

8) What was the penalty for violating the Sabbath?

Exodus 31:14-15

14 'You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it **shall surely be put to death**; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people.

15 'Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day, he **shall surely be put to death**.

Exodus 35:1-2

1 Then Moses gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together, and said to them, "These are the words which the LORD has commanded you to do:

2 "Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh day shall be a holy day for you, a Sabbath of rest to the LORD. Whoever does any work on it **shall be put to death**.

Numbers 15:32-36

32 Now while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man gathering sticks on the Sabbath day.

33 And those who found him gathering sticks brought him to Moses and Aaron, and to all the congregation.

34 They put him under guard, because it had not been explained what should be done to him.

35 **Then the LORD said to Moses, "The man must surely be put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones outside the camp."**

36 So, as the LORD commanded Moses, all the congregation brought him outside the camp and stoned him with stones, and he died.

You cannot have a law without the penalty that goes with violating that law.

Matthew 15:3-4

3 He answered and said to them, "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition?"

4 "For God commanded, saying, '**Honor your father and your mother**'; and, 'He who curses father or mother, **let him be put to death**.'



Jesus taught the penalty goes with the command. When men left off the penalty, Jesus said, "*You transgress the commandment of God.*"

- If the Sabbath of Ex 20 is still binding, and
- If the death penalty is not enforced on those who break that Sabbath,
- Then the commandment of God has been violated.

9) **Were the ten commandments a covenant?**

Exodus 34:27-28

27 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write these words, for according to the tenor of these words I have made a **covenant** with you and **with Israel**."

28 So he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he neither ate bread nor drank water. And He wrote on **the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments**.

Deuteronomy 4:13

13 "So He declared to you **His covenant** which He commanded you to perform, **the Ten Commandments**; and He wrote them on two tablets of stone.

Deuteronomy 9:9-11

9 "When I went up into the mountain to receive the **tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant** which the LORD made with you, then I stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights. I neither ate bread nor drank water.

10 "Then the LORD delivered to me **two tablets of stone written with the finger of God**, and on them were all the words which the LORD had spoken to you on the mountain from the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly.

11 "And it came to pass, at the end of forty days and forty nights, that the LORD gave me **the two tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant**.

2 Chronicles 6:11

11 "And there I have put **the ark, in which is the covenant of the LORD** which He made with the children of Israel."

10) **When was the covenant made with Israel?**

1 Kings 8:9-21

9 Nothing was in the ark except **the two tablets of stone** which Moses put there at Horeb, **when the LORD made a covenant** with the children of Israel, **when they came out of the land of Egypt**.

21 "And there I have made a place for the ark, in which is the covenant of the LORD which He made with our fathers, **when He brought them out of the land of Egypt**."

Deuteronomy 5:2-3

2 "The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb.

3 "**The LORD did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us, those who are here today, all of us who are alive.**

11) **Was this covenant (the one made when Israel came out of Egypt) "taken away"?**

Hebrews 8:6-13

6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.

7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second.

8 Because finding fault with them, He says: "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the

house of Israel and with the house of Judah;

9 "not according to **the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt**; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD.

10 "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

11 "None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them.

12 "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."

13 In that He says, "**A new covenant,**" **He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.**

Review:

- The ten commandments were a covenant (Ex 34:28).
- Only one covenant was made with Israel (Dt 5:2-3).
- This one covenant was made at Horeb when Israel was led out of Egypt (1 Kings 8:9, 21).
- This one covenant containing the ten commandments, which was made at Horeb when Israel was led out of Egypt was "growing old and ready to vanish away" (Heb 8:8-13).

Hebrews 9:1-5

1 Then indeed, even **the first covenant** had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary.

2 For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary;

3 and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All,

4 which had the golden censer and **the ark of the covenant** overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and **the tablets of the covenant**;

5 and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.

The tablets of stone containing the 10 commandments were part of the "first covenant."

Hebrews 10:9

9 then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." **He takes away the first that He may establish the second.**

After identifying the "first covenant" (containing the 10 commandments), we are plainly told Jesus "*took away the first*" and "*established the second.*"

Galatians 4:21-31

21 Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law?

22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman.

23 But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise,

24 which things are symbolic. For **these are the two covenants:** the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar;

25 for this **Hagar is Mount Sinai** in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children;

26 but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all.

27 For it is written: "Rejoice, O barren, You who do not bear! Break forth and shout, You who are not in labor! For the desolate has many more children Than she who has a husband."

28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise.

29 But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now.

30 **Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman."**

31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free.

Hagar, in this allegory, symbolized the ten commandment covenant. Christians are specifically told to "cast out" this covenant and do not try to keep it along with the NT laws. (cf. Rom 7:1-7).

12) **How does the NT view the ten commandments?**

The ten commandments were referred to as a "ministry of death." All the commandments had the death penalty associated with them:

	COMMAND	DEATH PENALTY
1)	Other gods	DEATH – Dt 13:6-9
2)	Graven images	DEATH – Ex 32:24-28
3)	God's name	DEATH – Lev 24:16
4)	Sabbath	DEATH – Ex 31:14
5)	Honor parents	DEATH – Mt 15:4
6)	Murder	DEATH – Num 35:16
7)	Adultery	DEATH – Lev 20:10
8)	Steal	DEATH – Ex 21:16
9)	Bear false witness	DEATH – Dt 19:16-21
10)	Covet	DEATH – Josh 7:21-26

The OT was a covenant of death! It was harsh and offered no hope.

Hebrews 10:28

28 Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

2 Corinthians 3:3-14

3 clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on **tablets of stone** but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.

4 And we have such trust through Christ toward God.

5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God,

6 who also made us sufficient as ministers of **the new covenant**, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

7 But if **the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones**, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away,

8 how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious?

9 For if the ministry of condemnation had glory, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory.

10 For even what was made glorious had no glory in this respect, because of the glory that excels.

11 For if what is passing away was glorious, what remains is much more glorious.

12 Therefore, since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech;

13 unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away.

14 But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil

remains unlifted in the reading of **the Old Testament**, because the veil is taken away in Christ.

Here is a clear contrast between the OT & NT:

- The **OT** (v14) and **NT** (v6) are specifically named.
- **OT** called "the letter" because it was written on stone tablets on Mt Sinai (v3) – a clear reference to the ten commandments.
- **NT** called "the Spirit" because it began on Pentecost when the Spirit was poured out (v3).

Notice the following contrast:

OT (v14)	NT (v6)
Written on stone (v3, 7)	Written on heart (v3)
"Kills" (v6)	"Gives life" (v6)
"Ministry of death" (v7)	"Ministry of the Spirit" (v8)
"Had glory" (v9)	"Exceeds in glory" (v9)
"Was passing away" (v11, 13)	"Remains" (v11)
No boldness (v13)	"Great boldness" (v12)
Men's hearts veiled (v14, 15)	"Veil taken away" (v14, 16)
No liberty – implied (v17)	"Liberty" (v17)

"[OT] had no glory in this respect" (v10) – when compared with the NT, the OT had no glory. (Remember – this refers to the OT covenant engraved on stone.)

"if what is passing away was glorious" (v11) – the OT was in the process of passing away. It was only temporary from the very beginning.

Galatians 3

16 Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to **your Seed,**" who is Christ.

19 What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, **till the Seed should come** to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator.

OT given until Christ should come.

"what remains is much more glorious" (v11) – the OT will pass away, the NT will remain.

13) **Is the Sabbath day still binding?**

Colossians 2:14-17

14 having **wiped out** the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has **taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.**

15 Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

16 **So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths,**

17 which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.

This law that was "wiped out" and "taken out of the way" is the same law that required the "Sabbath" day.

Ephesians 2:14-15

14 For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,

15 having **abolished** in His flesh the enmity, that is, **the law of commandments contained in ordinances**, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace,

What were the "ordinances"? Did they include the ten commandments?

Hebrews 9:1-4

1 Then indeed, even **the first covenant had ordinances** of divine service and the earthly sanctuary.

2 For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary;

3 and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All,

4 which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and **the tablets of the covenant;**

Romans 7:1-7

1 Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives?

2 For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband.

3 So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man.

4 Therefore, my brethren, **you also have become dead to the law** through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another; to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.

5 For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death.

6 But now **we have been delivered from the law**, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.

7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, "**You shall not covet.**"

A Christian cannot live under two laws at the same time. The law we are delivered from is the same law that said, "**Thou shalt not covet**" – one of the ten commandments. Thus, we are delivered from the ten commandments and all the laws of the OT.

Hebrews 7:12

12 For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is **also a change of the law**.

Hebrews 7:18-19

18 For on the one hand there is **an annulling of the former commandment** because of its weakness and unprofitableness,
19 for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a **better hope**, through which we draw near to God.

Galatians 3

19 What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, **till the Seed should come** to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator.

24 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

25 But after faith has come, **we are no longer under a tutor**.

Notice the contrast between the OT & NT:

OT	NT
"Old" (2 Cor 3:14)	"New" (2 Cor 3:6)
"Faulty" (Heb 8:7)	"Perfect" (Ja 1:25)
"Obsolete" (Heb 8:13)	"New" (Heb 8:13)
Given at Mt Sinai (Neh 9:13-14)	From Jerusalem (Isa 2:2-4)
Given only to Israel (Dt 5:1-3)	Offered to all (Mk 16:15-16)
Animal sacrifices (Heb 10:1-4)	Jesus' sacrifice (Heb 10:10)
Dedicated with animal blood (Heb 9:19-20)	Dedicated with Jesus' blood (Mt 26:28)
Yearly remembrance of sins (Heb 10:3)	Sins forgiven (Heb 8:12)
Given "till the seed should come" (Gal 3:19)	"Unto the end of the age" (Mt 28:20; Jn 12:48)
"Taken away" (Heb 10:9)	"Established" (Heb 10:9)
Levitical priesthood – which could not save (Heb 7:11)	Priesthood of Christ Himself – unchangeable (Heb 7:24)
"Dead" to this covenant (Rom 7:4,6)	"Married" to Christ (Rom 7:4,6)
Gentiles without God (Eph 2:11-12)	Gentiles "brought near" (Eph 2:13)
Gentiles "aliens" (Eph 2:12)	Gentiles "fellow citizens" (Eph 2:19)
Could not justify (Acts 13:39)	Justifies (Heb 10:10; Gal 2:16)
Fallen from grace (Gal 5:4)	Justified by faith (Gal 3:26-27)

ILL: In many ways the laws of the U.S.A. are similar to the laws of Britain. Yet, we may truthfully say, "We do not live under British law."

Likewise, in many ways the laws of the NT are similar to the laws of the OT. Yet, we may truthfully say, "We do not live under OT ten commandments."

14) Can we keep part of the OT law without keeping all of it?

Galatians 3:10

10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not continue in **all things** which are written in the book of the law, to do them."

Galatians 5:2-3

2 Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing.

3 And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep **the whole law**.

The OT had more than just the ten commandments:

- Circumcision (Lev 12:3)
- Passover (Lev 23)
- Feast of tabernacles (Lev 23)
- Feast of weeks (Lev 23)
- Animal sacrifice (Lev 1-7)
- Levitical priesthood (Lev 8-9)
- Food regulations (Lev 11), etc.

Cannot just take ten commandments. It's "all or nothing."

15) **Can men be saved today *WHILE KEEPING* the OT law?**

Galatians 2:16

16 "knowing that a man is **not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ**, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

Galatians 3:11-12

11 But that **no one is justified by the law in the sight of God** is evident, for "the just shall live by faith."

12 Yet the law is not of faith, but "the man who does them shall live by them."

Galatians 4:30

30 Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman."

Galatians 5:2-4

2 Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing.

3 And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep **the whole law**.

4 You have become estranged from Christ, **you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.**

Gal 4:30 and 5:3 introduce a new idea. Not only can men not be saved **by the law**, but men today cannot be saved **while keeping the law**. This new rule does not apply to men who lived while the OT was in force (e.g. Moses, David, Jesus, etc.), but it applies "to you" (v2) – i.e. people living in the NT era.

Acts 15

1 And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."

2 Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question.

22 Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, namely, Judas who was also named Barsabas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren.

23 They wrote this letter by them: The apostles, the elders, and the brethren, To the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia: Greetings.

24 Since we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying, "You must be circumcised and keep the law"; to whom we gave no such commandment;

25 it seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

26 men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

27 We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who will also report the same things by word of mouth.

28 For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than **these necessary things**:

29 that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.

The Sabbath was not delivered to the Gentile brethren.

16) Can men be saved without keeping the OT law?

Romans 3:19-28

19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to **those who are under the law**, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

20 Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

21 But now **the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed**, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,

22 even **the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ**, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference;

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by **the law of faith**.

28 Therefore we conclude that **a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.**

17) **If we are not under the ten commandments, does this mean we may steal, commit adultery, etc.?**

Nine laws similar to the ten commandments are restated in the NT law. Notice the chart:

No other gods	<u>Acts 14:15</u> 15 and saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them,
No graven images	<u>1 John 5:21</u> 21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols . Amen.
Do not take "God's name in vain"	<u>Matthew 5:34-37</u> 37 "But I say to you, do not swear at all : neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; 37 "But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.
Sabbath	Not reinstated
Honor father & mother	<u>Ephesians 6:1-2</u> 1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise:

No killing	<u>1 Peter 4:15</u> 15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer , a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters.
No adultery	<u>1 Corinthians 6:9-10</u> 9 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers , nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, 10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.
No stealing	<u>Ephesians 4:28</u> 28 Let him who stole steal no longer , but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.
No false witness	<u>Colossians 3:9</u> 9 Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds,
No coveting	<u>Ephesians 5:3</u> 3 But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness , let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints;

When a Christian steals, he does not break the ten commandments, but he breaks the law of Christ (1 Cor 9:21).

"LAW OF MOSES" & **"LAW OF GOD"**

- 1) **Does the Bible distinguish between "moral laws" and "ceremonial laws" and were only "ceremonial laws" "nailed to the cross"?**

Sabbath-keepers argue the OT was divided into: (a) "*Moral laws*" and (b) "*Ceremonial laws*." The "moral laws" (they say) refer to the ten commandments and the "ceremonial laws" refer to all the rest of the commandments of the OT. Finally, they argue the "ceremonial laws" were "nailed to the cross" (Col 2:14) and are no longer binding, but the "moral laws" (i.e. ten commandments) are still in force today.

First, no scripture teaches (a) God divided the OT laws into "moral laws" and "ceremonial laws" and (b) only the "ceremonial laws" were "nailed to the cross." If God Himself taught this, there should be supporting scripture to confirm this theory. If there are no supporting scriptures, it remains an unconfirmed theory.

Second, there are many laws which were not part of the ten commandments which could be classified as "moral laws." For example:

- laws against homosexuality (Lev 18:22)
- drunkenness (Lev 10:9)
- incest (Lev 18)

None of these "moral laws" are part of the decalogue. This demonstrates the division of the OT into "moral" and "ceremonial" laws is completely arbitrary and inconsistent on the part of Sabbath-keepers.

Matthew 22:36-40

36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?"

37 Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." [Dt 6:5]

38 "This is the first and great commandment.

39 "And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' [Lev 19:18]

40 "**On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.**"

The two greatest commandments of the OT, are recorded in the part of the OT labeled by Sabbath-keepers as "ceremonial law" that was "nailed to the cross" (according to their theory).

It is true that the two greatest commandments "underlie" the ten commandments, but it is also true that these two greatest commandments "underlie" every OT command (animal sacrifice, circumcision, etc.).

Third, the scriptures specifically state that the ten commandments themselves have "passed away."

2 Corinthians 3:6-16

6 who also made us sufficient as ministers of **the new covenant**, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

7 But if **the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones**, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, **which glory was passing away**,

8 how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious?

9 For if the ministry of condemnation had glory, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory.

10 For even what was made glorious had no glory in this respect, because of the glory that excels.

11 For if **what is passing away was glorious, what remains is much more glorious.**

12 Therefore, since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech;

13 unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was **passing away.**

14 But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of **the Old Testament**, because the veil is taken away in Christ.

15 But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart.

16 Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

2) Are the "Law of God" and the "Law of Moses" two separate laws?

Sabbath-keepers argue the OT was divided into: (a) the "*Law of God*" and (b) the "*Law of Moses*." The "Law of God" (they say) refers to the ten commandments and the "Law of Moses" refers to all the rest of the commandments of the OT. Finally, they argue the "Law of Moses" was "nailed to the cross" (Col 2:14) and is no longer binding, but the "Law of God" (i.e. ten commandments) is still in force today.

First, the distinction Sabbath-keepers are trying to make here cannot be proven by the scriptures. According to the Bible, the "Law of God" and the "Law of Moses" are one and the same. They were not two separate laws.

2 Corinthians 3:7-16

7 But if **the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones,** was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away,

13 unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away.

14 But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in **the reading of the Old Testament**, because the veil is taken away in Christ.

15 But **even to this day, when Moses is read**, a veil lies on their heart.

16 Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

Q: What does it mean to "read the Old Testament" (v14)?

A: It means to "read Moses" (v15).

Q: What does it mean to "read Moses" (v15)?

A: It means to read what was "written and engraved on stones" (v7).

This clearly demonstrates the "law of Moses," the "Old Testament," and the "ten commandments" all refer to the same, identical thing. This passage also shows the ten commandments were "taken away" (v16).

Second, if Israel was under two separate, distinct laws at the same time, they were actually committing "spiritual adultery." Notice:

Romans 7:1-4

1 Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives?

2 For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband.

3 So then **if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress**; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man.

4 Therefore, my brethren, **you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another**; to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.

(For more information, review Question #2: *Who gave the Sabbath?*, under "Questions about the Sabbath.")

3) Are the "tables of stone" and the "book of the law" two separate laws?

It is argued by Sabbath-keepers that the ten commandments were written on tables of stone by God Himself and they composed one law. These stone tablets were placed inside the ark of the covenant. Then Moses wrote a book with other laws and this book was placed on the outside of the ark. Sabbath-keepers believe only the book of laws written by Moses was "nailed to the cross," but the ten commandments written on stone tablets remained untouched.

First, the book written by Moses contained, not only "other laws," but also the ten commandments as well. If the "book" was "nailed to the cross," then all the laws contained therein (including the ten commandments) must have been nailed to the cross.

Second, the scriptures specifically state the ten commandments "passed away" and were "taken away." Notice:

2 Corinthians 3:7-16

7 But if **the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones**, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which glory **was passing away**,

13 unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what **was passing away**.

14 But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ.

15 But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart.

16 Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is **taken away**.

Third, if Israel was under two separate and distinct laws at the same time, they were actually committing "spiritual adultery." Notice:

Romans 7:1-4

1 Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives?

2 For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband.

3 So then **if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress**; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man.

4 Therefore, my brethren, **you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another**; to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.

COMMON OBJECTIONS

CONSIDERED

1) **Do passages on "obedience" prove the Sabbath is binding?**

Sabbath-keepers often read passages about obeying God and keeping His commandments. Examples:

- 1 Jn 2:3-5 – "Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments..."
- Jn 14:15 - "If you love Me, keep My commandments."
- Rev 22:14 – "Blessed are those who do His commandments, ..."

After reading such passages, they make this conclusion: "See ... we must keep the ten commandments – including the Sabbath day."

Q: Why is the word "commandments" being limited to just the ten commandments of the OT? Why can't "commandments" refer to any and every commandment given by God?

1 Corinthians 14:37

37 If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that **the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord.**

The apostle Paul did not write ten commandments in the epistle of 1 Corinthians, yet he did write the Lord's commandments. Why don't passages about "obedience" refer to NT commandments? (Cf. 2 Th. 3:14)

Q: Why does the word "commandments" in "obedience passages" not also refer to other commandments of the OT? Why doesn't it refer to:

- Circumcision?
- Animal sacrifices?
- Stoning to death Sabbath-breakers?

2) **Did the patriarchs keep the Sabbath?**

It is believed by Sabbath-keepers that patriarchs who lived before Moses kept the Sabbath day. Scriptures about some patriarch "obeying God" are quoted and it is concluded the patriarch kept the ten commandments. For example:

Genesis 26:5

5 "... Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws."

Sabbath-keepers say Abraham kept the Sabbath because this passage says he kept God's "commandments."

First, even if all the patriarchs did keep the Sabbath, this does not prove Christians today must keep the Sabbath. For example, all the patriarchs offered animal sacrifices. This does not prove Christians today must do so. Where did Christ, or any apostle command Christians to keep the Sabbath day?

Second, why does this passage (Gen 26:5) necessarily have to refer to the ten commandments? Why can't it refer to other commandments?

- "Get out of your country, to a land that I will show you" (Gen. 12:1)?
- "Be circumcised" (Gen. 17:11)?
- "Offer your son Isaac as a burnt offering" (Gen. 22:1)?

Second, the Sabbath was revealed to Israel after they came out of Egypt. It was not revealed to the patriarchs:

Nehemiah 9:13-14

13 "You came down also on Mount Sinai, And spoke with them from heaven, And gave them just ordinances and true laws, Good statutes and commandments.

14 **You made known to them Your holy Sabbath**, And commanded them precepts, statutes and laws, By the hand of Moses Your servant.

Third, the covenant (Ex 34:28) containing the ten commandments was not given to the patriarchs:

Deuteronomy 5:2-3

2 "The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb.

3 "**The LORD did not make this covenant with our fathers**, but with us, those who are here today, all of us who are alive.

Fourth, the Sabbath was to remind those who had been slaves in Egypt that they now had "rest" from their labors. It was not given to others besides Israel.

Deuteronomy 5:15

15 **And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt**, and the LORD your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; **therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.**

The patriarchs did not keep the Sabbath. If so, what scripture teaches such?

3) **Ex 20:8 → Does "remember" imply Israel was already keeping the Sabbath before Mt Sinai?**

First, the word "remember" does not necessarily mean Israel had been keeping the Sabbath before it was given in the wilderness. Notice the following passage:

Exodus 13:3

3 And Moses said to the people: "**Remember this day** [i.e. Passover] in which you went out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out of this place. No leavened bread shall be eaten.

Here Israel was told to "remember" the Passover, but they had never observed the Passover before. "Remember," in such cases as these, carries with it the idea of "observe." Ex 20:8 means simply, "Observe the Sabbath and keep it holy."

Deuteronomy 5:12

12 '**Observe** the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you.

Second, Ex 20:8 was spoken on Mt Sinai. Israel had already been introduced to the idea of the Sabbath in Ex 16:23 (the first occurrence of the word "Sabbath"). Even if it could be proven "remember" implies a previous observance of the Sabbath, it could not refer to a time prior to Ex 16:23 when Israel came out of Egyptian bondage (cf. Neh 9:13-14; Dt 5:15).

4) **Ex 20:11 → Isn't the Sabbath a "memorial of creation"? Shouldn't we keep this command to remember the Creator?**

First, the Sabbath is never said to be a "memorial of creation" in the scriptures. Instead, it is a memorial of God's rest **after** creation. If a day was given for remembering the creation, then the first six days of the week would be a reminder of creation – for on the first six days God created everything (Ex 20:11).

Second, even if the Sabbath was given to Israel as a "memorial of creation," it was never given to Christians. Notice the following passage:

Exodus 12:14

14 'So **this day** [i.e. Passover] shall be to you **a memorial**; and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.

Exodus 28:29

29 "So Aaron shall bear the names of the sons of Israel on **the breastplate** of judgment over his heart, when he goes into the holy place, as a **memorial before the LORD continually**.

Both of these were given as "memorials" to Israel, but they were not given to Christians. The same is true of the Sabbath.

5) **Ex 20:11 → Sabbath is the only command that identifies God as Creator.**

First, if this were true, it still does not prove men today are commanded to keep the Sabbath.

Second, it is not true that the sabbath was the only command identifying God as Creator. The very first command necessarily identifies God as Creator. Compare the following two passages:

Exodus 20:3

3 "You shall have no other gods before Me.

Isaiah 45:18

18 For thus says the LORD, Who created the heavens, Who is God, Who formed the earth and made it, Who has established it, Who did not create it in vain, Who formed it to be inhabited: "I am the LORD, and there is no other.

6) **Ex 31:16 → Doesn't this passage teach the Sabbath was "forever"?**

The Hebrew word for "*perpetual*" and "*forever*" is 'owlam'. It means "*age-lasting*." It would last throughout the Mosaic Age. Notice the following passages:

Exodus 12:17

17 'So you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, ... throughout your generations as **an everlasting ordinance**.

Exodus 29:9

9 "... The priesthood shall be theirs for **a perpetual statute**. ...

Exodus 30:8

8 "And when Aaron lights the lamps at twilight, he shall burn incense on it, **a perpetual incense** before the LORD throughout your generations.

Leviticus 3:17

17 "This [peace-offering] shall be a **perpetual statute** throughout your generations in all your dwellings: you shall eat neither fat nor blood."

Numbers 10:8

8 "... blow the trumpets; ... **an ordinance forever** throughout your generations.

Sabbath-keepers do not insist on these other items which are also said to be "perpetual" and "forever." They know "perpetual" and "forever" in the above passages mean "age-lasting" and has reference to the Mosaic dispensation. The same is true concerning the Sabbath being "forever."

7) **Ex 31:18 → the ten commandments were written on tables of stone by the finger of God. Doesn't this show their permanence?**

First, things written by the finger of God Himself can certainly be "blotted out."

- God wrote on the walls of Belshazzar (stone walls - Dan 5) and that writing was "blotted out."
- Jesus (God) wrote in the ground (Jn 8:6) and that writing was "blotted out."

Second, the material used for writing (stone) and the instrument used for writing (God's finger) do not, of themselves, indicate anything about permanence of the law.

Hebrews 1:1-2

1 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,

2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;

"various ways" – writing in stone tablets, dreams, visions, writing in palace walls, speaking directly from heaven. All of these methods were used in the past, but God now communicates with men thru His Son.

John 12:48

48 "He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him; the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.

The words spoken by Jesus, not the ten commandments, will judge men who are alive today.

8) 1 Chron 17:27 → What God blesses stays blessed "forever." Since God "blessed" the 7th day, isn't it blessed forever?

This passage is not speaking about the Sabbath. It's speaking about the house of David. We cannot take this passage and apply it to other things (e.g. Sabbath) that were not under consideration.

Deuteronomy 28:1-12

1 "Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth.

2 "And all these **blessings** shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God:

3 "**Blessed** shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the country.

4 "**Blessed** shall be the fruit of your body, the produce of your ground and the increase of your herds, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.

5 "**Blessed** shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.

6 "**Blessed** shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.

7 "The LORD will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before your face; they shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways.

8 "The LORD will command the **blessing** on you in your storehouses and in all to which you set your hand, and He will bless you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

12 "The LORD will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to **bless** all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow.

Q: Once Israel had been blessed like this, would it be possible for the blessing to be taken away? Would this blessing be "forever"? Is 1 Chron 17:27 teaching that Israel's blessings could not be taken away?

Deuteronomy 28:15-20

15 "But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these **curses** will come upon you and overtake you:

16 "**Cursed** shall you be in the city, and **cursed** shall you be in the country.

17 "**Cursed** shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.

18 "**Cursed** shall be the fruit of your body and the produce of your land, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.

19 "**Cursed** shall you be when you come in, and **cursed** shall you be when you go out.

20 "The LORD will send on you **cursing**, confusion, and rebuke in all that you set your hand to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, because of the wickedness of your doings in which you have forsaken Me.

The point is, 1 Chron 17:27 is not referring to all things blessed by God. Some things that once were blessed can become unblessed. In context, 1 Chron 17:27 is speaking about the house of King David.

9) **Ps 19:7 → The "law of the Lord is perfect" and therefore cannot be "nailed to the cross"?**

First, this refers to the entire law of God, not just the ten commandments. It includes all the feast days, all the sacrifices, all the death penalties. If this passage means the ten commandments are still in force, it also means animal sacrifices are still in force.

Second, "perfect" comes from the Hebrew word tamiym which means "*complete*" or "*whole*." Here are some other passages where this word is used:

- Lev 23:15 – "seven Sabbaths shall be *completed*"
- Lev 25:30 – "*full year*"
- Josh 10:13 – "*whole day*"
- Prov. 1:12 – "*whole*"
- Ezk. 15:5 – "*whole*"

The idea is "whole" or "complete" – lacking nothing.

The OT law did not "lack" anything concerning the purpose for which it was given. It accomplished what God designed it for. It was designed to bring men to Christ:

Galatians 3:24-25

24 Therefore the law was **our tutor to bring us to Christ**, that we might be justified by faith.

25 **But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.**

So the law was "perfect" or "complete" in accomplishing the work of bringing men to Christ ("converting the soul"), but after the NT system of faith has come, "we are no longer under" the law.

Galatians 2:21

21 "I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain."

10) Isa 42:21 → Wouldn't Jesus "magnify" the ten commandments?

First, Isa 42:21 does not say "ten commandments." It says "the law." Why limit this to just the ten commandments? If Isa 42:21 refers to OT law, then Jesus "magnified" all of the OT law by keeping it perfectly when He was on the earth – including circumcision (Lk 2:21), animal sacrifices (Mt 8:4), Passover (Mt 26:18).

All of these things have been "nailed to the cross." If Jesus could "magnify" these laws and yet "nail them to the cross," He could do the same thing with the Sabbath – i.e. He could "magnify" the Sabbath law and then "nail it to the cross." If nailing the Sabbath to the cross would "dishonor" the Sabbath, would nailing animal sacrifices to the cross "dishonor" animal sacrifice laws?

Second, Isa 42:21 might possibly refer to the Messiah's new law which people in the OT were still "waiting" for:

Isaiah 42:4

4 He will not fail nor be discouraged, Till He has established justice in the earth; And the coastlands shall **wait for His law.**"

His NT law had not come yet. The "coastlands" were "waiting" for it. Why couldn't v21 refer to the Messiah's new law (i.e. the Lord would "magnify the Messiah's new law")? Until it can be proven v21 refers exclusively to the ten commandments, there is no argument that can be made in favor of the Sabbath day.

11) Isa 58:13 → Since God called the Sabbath "My holy day," doesn't this mean men should keep the Sabbath today?

Just because something was "holy" under the OT, this does not mean it is still "holy" under the NT age. For example, the burnt sacrifices were called "most holy":

Leviticus 6:25

25 "Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, 'This is the law of **the sin offering**: In the place where the burnt offering is killed, the sin offering shall be killed before the LORD. **It is most holy.**'"

Sabbath-keepers admit animal sacrifices have been "nailed to the cross" even though they were "most holy." If something "most holy" could be "nailed to the cross," then something that is merely "holy" (Sabbath) could also be "nailed to the cross."

12) **Isa 66:22-23 → Doesn't this passage teach that in the new heavens and new earth "all flesh will come to worship" on the Sabbath?**

First, just because something is done in heaven does not mean Christians are authorized to do the same on earth. For example, infants who have died will be in heaven (Mt 18:1-10), but this does not authorize infant baptism/membership.

Second, if this passage teaches the Sabbath will be observed in the "new heavens and new earth," it also teaches there will be "new moon" festivals as well, yet Sabbath-keepers believe these feasts were "nailed to the cross" and should not be kept today. Likewise, the Sabbath was "nailed to the cross" (Col 2:14-16).

Third, if this passage teaches Sabbath-keeping in the "new heavens and new earth," then it also teaches the Levitical Priesthood will be activated. Notice:

Isaiah 66:21-23

21 "And I will also take some of them for priests and Levites," says the LORD.

22 "For as the new heavens and the new earth Which I will make shall remain before Me," says the LORD, "So shall your descendants and your name remain.

23 And it shall come to pass That from one New Moon to another, And from one Sabbath to another, All flesh shall come to worship before Me," says the LORD.

Fourth, it seems obvious Isaiah is using figurative, symbolic language to describe something yet in the future. Edward Young offers this reasonable comment:

Isaiah spoke as a prophet of the Old Testament dispensation, and employing the language that belonged to that dispensation he prefigured the spiritual truth of the new economy. Hence the words new moon and Sabbath, chosen as examples of true worship, are to be understood as teaching that the worship will be one perfectly in accord with God's commands. (Edward Young, Isaiah, vol. 3)

Isaiah 56:4-7

4 For thus says the LORD: "To the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, And choose what pleases Me, And hold fast My covenant,

5 Even to them I will give in My house And within My walls a place and a name Better than that of sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name That shall not be cut off.

6 "Also the sons of the foreigner Who join themselves to the LORD, to serve Him, And to love the name of the LORD, to be His servants; Everyone who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, And holds fast My covenant;

7 Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their **burnt offerings** and their **sacrifices** Will be accepted on My **altar**; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations."

We should no more contend for Sabbath day worship for Christians from this passage than we contend for burnt offerings and sacrifices on an altar. The prophet is simply using figures the people of his day were familiar with in order to show there will be a faithful, regular, legitimate worship of God on the part of all flesh in the new dispensation.

13) **Ezk 46:1 → Does this passage prophesy of Sabbath-keeping under the NT system?**

First, if this does prophesy Sabbath-keeping under the NT system, it also prophesies:

- New moon feasts (46:1)
- Priests and burnt-offerings (46:2)
- Six lambs (46:4-5)
- A bullock (46:6-8)
- Appointed feasts (46:9-12)
- Daily burnt-offerings (46:13)
- A grain offering (46:14)
- A sin offering (46:20)
- Boiling-houses for sacrifices (46:22-24)

Second, Ezk 46 is not binding on Christians today any of the above items. All these (including the Sabbath) were "shadows," or "symbols" of things to come under the NT system. These "shadows" and "symbols" were familiar to the people and were used to teach about spiritual things that were coming under the Messiah.

Colossians 2:16-17

16 So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths,

17 **which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.**

Hebrews 10:1

1 For the law, having a **shadow of the good things to come**, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.

14) **Dan 7:25 → Does this prophecy refer to the Pope or to Constantine changing the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday?**

First, the scriptures clearly teach the Sabbath was "taken away" (2 Cor 3:16) and "nailed to the cross" (Col 2:14-16). It was not "changed" by anyone. The "Lord's day" is an entirely different day.

Second, the apostles of Christ authorized meeting together on the first day of every week (1 Cor 16:1-2; Acts 20:7; Heb 10:25). This was before any Catholic Church or Pope or Constantine.

Third, Jesus is the One who authorized the "change" in the law that abolished the Sabbath and required worship on the first day of the week:

Hebrews 7:12

12 For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a **change of the law**.

Fourth, just because the Catholic Church makes a claim of "changing" the Sabbath from the seventh day to the first day of the week does not make it so. The Catholic Church makes many claims which Sabbath-keepers do not accept as true, yet they believe the claim about "changing the Sabbath." For example, the Catholic Church claims:

- They are the only true church.
- Catholic Church goes back to the apostles.
- Everyone outside Catholic Church are heretics.
- Peter was the first Pope.
- The Pope is Peter's successor.
- Pope holds the keys to heaven.
- Pope is the vicar of Christ on earth.
- Christians should pray thru Mary.
- Mary was a perpetual virgin.
- Mary conceived immaculately.
- Priests have power to absolve sin.
- Infants should be sprinkled.
- They changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday.

Here are 13 things claimed by the Catholic Church. Sabbath-keepers believe the Catholic Church is lying about every one of these claims except the last one.

Q: If a witness lied 12 times, why would anyone believe what he said about anything else?

Fifth, consider the text:

Daniel 7:25

25 He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall **intend to change times and law**. Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time.

Here are some assumptions made by Sabbath-keepers about this passage:

- **It is assumed the Lord Himself would never give a new law which differed from the ten commandment law** (yet Jeremiah 31:31 said He would).
- **It is assumed the "times" (plural) under consideration in Dan 7:25 is the weekly day (singular) of worship.** (Sabbath-keepers make the argument regarding Col 2:14-16 that the plural word "Sabbaths" cannot refer to the weekly Sabbath. Yet in Dan 7:25, they assume the plural word "times" means the weekly Sabbath)

In other words:

- "Times" (plural) supposedly cannot refer to annual feast days.
- Supposedly it must refer only to the weekly sabbath.

- **It is assumed the change under consideration is moving the day of worship to another day of the week.** It cannot mean substituting, deleting, or adding.

In other words:

- It cannot mean the "little horn" will substitute other events for the regular events of the day.
- It cannot mean the "little horn" will delete the sacredness of the day altogether.
- It cannot mean the "little horn" will add sacred days to the calendar.
- It can only mean he will move the sacredness of one day of the week to another day of the week.

- **It is assumed the word "intends" means the "little horn" actually accomplishes this feat.** (There is a big difference between "intending" to do something and actually accomplishing it.)
- **It is assumed the "little horn" was Constantine** – the 46th emperor of Rome even though the "little horn" was suppose to come after the 10th

king (7:24).

- **It is assumed this "little horn" was Constantine** – even though the "little horn" was suppose to defeat three kings (7:24), yet Constantine fought only two kings: Maxentius (312 AD) to gain control of Western Empire and Licinius (324 AD) to gain control of Eastern Empire.

Just because a day which use to be considered sacred, is no longer considered sacred does not mean:

- Christian are following after a "beast."
- Or the one who changed the day is the beast.

EXAMPLE:

- The 10th day of the 7th month use to be the Day of Atonement (Lev 23:27).
- That has been changed (Heb 7:12).
- The change was by the method of deletion – not moving.
- Now the 10th day of the 7th month is only an ordinary day of the year.
- This was done by God, not a "beast."

To prove anything, it must be first shown:

- That the Sabbath day was intended to be for all nations (cf. Dt 5:1-3).
- It was not a special sign just between God & Israel (cf. Ex 31:13).
- It was to last for all time (2 Cor 3:3-14).

15) Mal 3:6 → Isn't God unchangeable?

It is argued that: (a) since God doesn't change, and (b) since He required men to keep the Sabbath day in the OT days, (c) therefore He must require the Sabbath today.

God does not change, but His law did:

Hebrews 7:12

12 For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a **change of the law.**

Let us apply the same reasoning used by Sabbath-keepers and apply it to animal sacrifices. The argument would go like this: (a) since God doesn't change, and (b) since He required men to offer animal sacrifices in the OT days, (c) therefore He must require animal sacrifices today.

Sabbath-keepers are not ready to apply their "logic" to any other commands in the OT except the ten commandments. Why pick and choose to keep only the ten commandments?

16) **Mt 5:17-18 → Jesus said He would not "destroy the law or the prophets." Therefore, the Sabbath still binding.**

First, "*The law or the prophets*" means the entire OT law – not just the ten commandments. If this proves we must keep the Sabbath, then it also proves we must keep:

- Animal sacrifices
- Passover
- Stoning Sabbath-breakers
- Circumcision
- Day of Atonement

Second, Jesus is contrasting two methods – either of which will bring the OT to an end:

- **Destroy** – this would bring the law to an end.
- **Fulfill** – this would also bring the law to an end.

Jesus is merely showing which method He would use to bring the OT to an end.

Third, rather than contrasting "destroy" with "fulfill," Sabbath-keepers are trying to contrast "destroy" with "perpetuate." They think Jesus was going to perpetuate the "law and prophets."

If Jesus perpetuated the law and prophets, He would actually "destroy" them, because the law and prophets contained types, symbols, promises, and prophecies. If Jesus perpetuated these things, He would have destroyed them.

For example, if a man never "fulfills" his promises (he just "perpetuates" promises) eventually we say he has "broken" his word, because he never "fulfills" what he promised.

Either by destruction or by fulfillment, the OT was destined to come to an end. Jesus merely stated which process He would use to bring it to an end.

"Till heaven and earth pass" (Mt 5:18) – this is actually a proverb which speaks of the certainty of fulfillment rather than destruction. Notice Luke's parallel account:

Luke 16:17

17 "And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the law to fail.

"Till all be fulfilled" (Mt 5:18) – this means "all things" relative to the Lord's earthly ministry must be fulfilled before the law would end. The context makes this clear:

Matthew 5:17

17 "Do not think that **I came** to destroy the Law or the Prophets. **I did not come** to destroy but to fulfill.

Jesus is speaking about His "coming" to the earth. Everything about His "coming to the earth" must first occur before the OT is "fulfilled" and taken away.

Q: Did Jesus fulfill all things about His earthly ministry?

Luke 18:31

31 Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and **all things** that are written by the prophets **concerning the Son of Man** will be accomplished.

Luke 24:44

44 Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that **all things must be fulfilled** which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms **concerning Me.**"

John 17:4

4 "I have glorified You on the earth. **I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.**

John 19:30

30 So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "**It is finished!**" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

Acts 13:29

29 "Now when they had **fulfilled all that was written concerning Him**, they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb.

When Jesus fulfilled all that the law and prophets said, the OT was "taken away," not because it was "destroyed," but because it was "*fulfilled.*"

Colossians 2:14-16

14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

15 Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

16 So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths,

Hebrews 10:9

9 then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first that He may establish the second.

Galatians 3:24-25

24 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

17) **Mt 19:17 → Why did Jesus command people to keep the ten commandments if they are no longer binding today?**

Jesus was born under and lived under the OT law of Moses (Gal 4:4). He told people to keep all the OT laws while they were in force – not just the ten commandments:

Matthew 8:4

4 And Jesus said to him, "See that you tell no one; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and **offer the gift that Moses commanded**, as a testimony to them."

Matthew 23:2-3

2 saying: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat.

3 "Therefore **whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do**, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do.

Why focus on Jesus commanding people to keep the ten commandments? Why not insist on these other laws which He also commanded?

The OT law ended when Jesus was "nailed to the cross" (Col 2:14) and the NT law came into force after He died (Heb 9:16-17).

18) **Mt 24:20 → Doesn't this passage demonstrate Jesus expected His people to keep the Sabbath?**

First, Mt 24:20 is discussing the destruction of Jerusalem which was coming in 70 AD. Unbelieving Jews would keep the Sabbath until 70 AD – just as they do today. This is not evidence of divine approval. It is merely a statement of what Jews would be doing.

Second, Jesus gave these instructions because fleeing Jerusalem would be difficult on the Sabbath or in the winter. Why? The city gates would be shut on the Sabbath day:

Nehemiah 13:19

19 So it was, at the gates of Jerusalem, as it began to be dark before the Sabbath, that I **commanded the gates to be shut, and charged that they must not be opened till after the Sabbath.** ...

Third, Sabbath-keepers interpret this passage to mean: When Jerusalem was being surrounded by Romans, and about to be destroyed, if it occurs on the Sabbath, God's people would not be allowed to flee, but would have to "rest" on the Sabbath until it was over and then they could flee – if it wasn't too late.

Think of how absurd this is:

Matthew 12:11-12

11 Then He said to them, "What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out?"

12 "Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath."

Jesus taught that a sheep could be spared on the Sabbath, but this argument (on Mt 24:20) is actually saying a sheep is more valuable than a man – the exact opposite of what Jesus taught!

Mark 2:27

27 And He said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.

If this present objection (based on Mt 24:20) means anything, it means the exact opposite of what Jesus taught!

19) Mk 2:28 → Isn't Jesus is "Lord of the Sabbath"? Therefore, isn't the Sabbath still binding today?

Mark 2:28

28 "Therefore the Son of Man is **also** Lord of the Sabbath."

Jesus is said to be "also Lord of the Sabbath." This means He is Lord of more than just the Sabbath.

Acts 10:36

36 "... Jesus Christ; He is **Lord of all**;

If Jesus is "Lord of all," then that means:

- He is "Lord of the first day of the week." Does this mean we must observe the first day of the week as a special holy day?
- He is "Lord of Monday."
- He is "Lord of Tuesday."
- He is Lord of every day.

Does any of this prove there is some special day that must be kept?

"Lord of the Sabbath" – this means the Lord could do what He wanted on that day – because He is the Lord of that day.

- "Lord" means "Master." Jesus is the Master of the Sabbath.
- The Sabbath was not His master.

Matthew 12:5-8

5 "Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?"

6 "Yet I say to you that in this place there is **One greater than the temple.**

7 "But if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless.

8 "For the Son of Man is Lord **even** of the Sabbath."

- One greater than the temple was there.
- One greater than the Sabbath was there.
- This One greater than the Sabbath was the "Lord (Master) of the Sabbath."

Rather than proving the Sabbath is necessary, this passage proves just the opposite. It proves Jesus is the Master and He can do with the Sabbath what ever He wants, and if He wants to "nail it to His cross" – He may certainly do so!

According to Mt 12:5, the priests "*profane the Sabbath and are blameless.*" Here is a question: If the Sabbath is a moral law and equivalent to the other nine commandments, may any of the other commandments be "profaned" (violated) on occasion and people remain blameless?

- May people "have other gods" on special occasions?
- "Graven images"?
- "Take God's name in vain"?
- "Dishonor their parents"?
- "Murder"?
- "Commit adultery"?

- "Steal"? (cf. Prov. 6:30-31)
- "Bear false witness"?
- "Covet"?

The Sabbath day was not a moral law. Priests could "profane" the Sabbath and be blameless, but no one could "profane" a moral law and be blameless.

20) Lk 4:16 → Jesus kept the Sabbath. Aren't we suppose to imitate Him?

Jesus kept more than the Sabbath. He kept all of the Law of Moses – including circumcision (Lk 2:21), animal sacrifice (Lk 2:22-23), leprosy laws (Lk 5:14), and the Passover (Mt 26:18). The reason He kept all these laws is because He lived while the Law of Moses was in force:

Galatians 4:4

4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born **under the law**,

Hebrews 9:15-17

15 And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

16 For **where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.**

17 For **a testament is in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives.**

Matthew 17

3 And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.

4 Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

5 While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. **Hear Him!**"

9 Now as they came down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, "**Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead.**"

Men would be told to listen to Jesus rather than Moses and the prophets. When? After the "Son of Man is risen from the dead."

Deuteronomy 18:18-19

18 'I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.

19 'And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him.

Matthew 28:18-20

18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

20 **"teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you;** and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

"teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you" – Where did Jesus or the apostles command anyone to keep the Sabbath after the resurrection – for this was the time men should begin to *"hear Him"*? The answer: No one was commanded to keep the Sabbath after the resurrection.

21) Acts 13:14 → Why did Paul assemble with Jews on the Sabbath?

Paul was not "observing the Sabbath" with fellow Christians. He was using such occasions as an opportunity to teach unbelievers the gospel of Christ? Notice what He taught inside the synagogue:

Acts 13:38-39

38 "Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins;

39 **"and by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.**

Obviously Paul used these occasions to teach that the OT was no longer in force and that men should obey the gospel.

1 Corinthians 9:20-21

20 **and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law;**

21 to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law;

Q: In Acts 20:7 we see Paul preaching on the "first day of the week." If Paul preaching on the Sabbath means he "kept the Sabbath," does the same "logic" hold true regarding the first day of the week? Does His preaching on the first day of the week mean he "kept the first day"?

22) Col 2:14 → How can holy commandments be "against" us?

It was "against" us because men are imperfect. Men sin and need grace and forgiveness, but the law itself only condemned and brought death (2 Cor 3:3-14).

(Refer back to questions about the Sabbath, #12: *How does the NT view the ten commandments?*)

23) Col 2:14-16 → Does the plural word "Sabbaths" in this passage refer to the weekly Sabbath?

Colossians 2:14-16

14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

15 Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

16 So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths,

This passage teaches that the Sabbath has been "nailed to the cross" (v14). However, to avoid the force of this passage, it is argued that, because "Sabbaths" (v16) is plural, it cannot refer to the weekly Sabbath day. Instead it supposedly refers to yearly festivals of Israel.

First, yearly feasts are already mentioned in this passage. Sabbath-keepers make v16 read like this:

Colossians 2:16 (Sabbath-keepers' version)

16 So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding an **annual feast day** or a new moon or **an annual feast day**.

Second, in passages where "feasts," "new moons," and "Sabbaths" are all mentioned together, the plural word "Sabbaths" always refers to the weekly Sabbath.

- Feasts = annual feast days
- New moon = monthly holy days
- Sabbaths = weekly holy day

1 Chronicles 23:31

31 ... the Sabbaths and on the New Moons and on the set feasts,
...

2 Chronicles 2:4

4 ... the Sabbaths, on the New Moons, and on the set feasts of the
LORD our God. ...

2 Chronicles 8:13

13 ... the Sabbaths, the New Moons, and the three appointed
yearly feasts; the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks,
and the Feast of Tabernacles.

2 Chronicles 31:3

3 ... the Sabbaths and the New Moons and the set feasts, as it is
written in the Law of the LORD.

Nehemiah 10:33

33 ... the Sabbaths, the New Moons, and the set feasts; ...

Ezekiel 45:17

17 "... the feasts, the New Moons, the Sabbaths, ...

Galatians 4:10

10 You observe days and months and seasons and years.

In every one of these passages "Sabbaths" is plural, yet refers to the weekly Sabbath – distinguished from the yearly feast days. Yet, Col 2:16 is the only passage (we are told) where "Sabbaths" cannot refer to the weekly Sabbath day because it's plural. Why make such an argument unless Col 2:14-16 is fatal to the Sabbath-keeping position?

Luke 4:16

16 So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on **the Sabbath day** (τῆ ἡμέρᾳ τῶν σαββάτων), and stood up to read.

Here the words "Sabbath day" come from the Greek σαββάτων. This is the plural form of Greek word for Sabbath (σάββατον) and is identical to the Greek of Col 2:16. Although "Sabbath" is plural in Lk 4:16, even Sabbath-keepers agree it refers to the weekly Sabbath. Notice the next two examples:

Acts 13:14

14 But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on **the Sabbath day** (τῆ ἡμέρᾳ τῶν σαββάτων) and sat down.

Acts 16:13

13 And on the **Sabbath day** (τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῶν σαββάτων) we went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met there.

"Sabbath" in both of the above passages is plural in the Greek and identical in form to the Greek construction of Col 2:16. Although "Sabbath" is plural in both Acts 13:14 and Acts 16:13, even Sabbath-keepers agree the weekly Sabbath is under consideration in these passages.

Acts 17:2

2 Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three **Sabbaths** (σάββατα) reasoned with them from the Scriptures,

Here the word "Sabbaths" is plural in both English and Greek and even Sabbath-keepers agree it refers to the weekly Sabbath. However, Sabbath-keepers say the following usage of "Sabbaths" is a reference to an annual feast day because it is in the plural form:

Colossians 2:16

16 So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or **Sabbaths** (σαββάτων),

In the NT the word "Sabbath" occurs in its plural form in the NT twelve times. Here are the totals:

- 11 times the plural form refers to the weekly Sabbath (everyone agrees).
- 1 time (we are told) it refers to annual feast days.

However, in Col 2:16 annual feast days ("holy days") are mentioned separately. Therefore the word "Sabbaths" cannot refer to anything except the weekly Sabbath. So the argument is invalid. The plural "Sabbaths" of Col 2:16 clearly refers to the weekly Sabbath day. Col 2:14-16 teaches the weekly Sabbath was "nailed to the cross."

24) Col 2:14-16 → Does the word "ordinances" refer to "ceremonial laws"?

Sabbath-keepers sometimes argue the word "ordinances" refers to "ceremonial laws," but not to the ten commandments. Therefore, only "ceremonies" such as animal sacrifices, incense, etc. were "nailed to the cross," but not the ten commandments.

First, the word "ordinance" means "rule, regulation, law; order, decree" (USB). The ten commandments are certainly laws, rules, orders and decrees. The word "ordinance" alone does not prove only "ceremonial laws" are envisioned in Col 2:14-16.

Second, it cannot be proven that the Bible distinguishes between "ceremonial laws" and "moral laws." This distinction has been made by men, but not God. God simply has laws. The command to offer a certain kind of fire in worship (Lev 10:1-2) is just as important as the command, "Do not commit adultery" (Dt 5:18).

Third, the words "ordinances," "laws," "statutes," "commandments," "precepts" and "laws" surround the word "sabbath" in passages like Neh 9:13-14 and Neh 10:29-35. (See also Dt 5:1-22).

Fourth, the weekly sabbath day (Lev 23:3) is listed and regulated along with other "holy days" (Lev 23:4-44). Sabbath-keepers say the "holy days" are "ordinances" which were "nailed to the cross" (Col 2:14-16), but they say the weekly sabbath day is a "moral law" which continues even today. What gives them the right to say this? The Bible makes no such distinction.

Fifth, notice the following passage:

Hebrews 9:1-4

1 Then indeed, even the first covenant had **ordinances of divine service** and the earthly sanctuary.

2 For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary;

3 and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All,

4 which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant;

This passage begins to list the "ordinances" that were contained in the "first covenant." (Remember, an "ordinance" is simply a decree, commandment or law.) The underlined words show the "ordinances" contained in the first covenant. The "tablets of the covenant" are specifically named as one of the "ordinances." The ten commandments were part of the "first covenant" which was "taken away" (Heb 10:9). Therefore, the "handwriting of ordinances" mentioned in Col 2:14 refers to the ten commandments as well as all other commandments of the OT.

25) Heb 4:9 → Doesn't this passage teach we must keep the Sabbath?

To understand this passage, let's look at the context:

Hebrews 4:1-11

1 Therefore, since a **promise** remains of entering **His rest**, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it.

2 For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but

the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it.

3 For we who have believed do enter that rest, as He has said: "So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest,' " although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

4 For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all His works";

5 and again in this place: "They shall not enter My rest."

6 Since therefore it remains that some must enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience,

7 again He designates a certain day, saying in David, "Today," after such a long time, as it has been said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts."

8 For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of **another day**.

9 There remains therefore a rest for the people of God.

10 For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His.

11 Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.

"His rest" (v1) – This refers to "a promise." The weekly Sabbath was not a "promise," but a command. This passage is speaking of rest in heaven, of which the weekly Sabbath was a symbol.

"they shall not enter My rest" (v5) – Was God speaking about the weekly Sabbath day here? Was He saying, "I will not allow disobedient people to keep My weekly Sabbath day"? Or was He saying, "I will not allow disobedient people to enter into the eternal rest in heaven"?

"those ... did not enter because of disobedience" (v6) – Again, is this saying disobedient people never "entered into" the weekly Sabbath day? How are people not allowed to "enter into" a day of the week? Or is this speaking of "rest" in heaven which the disobedient were not allowed to enter into?

"if Joshua had given them rest" (v8) – Israel had the weekly Sabbath in the days of Joshua, but the "rest" spoken of in Heb 4 was not given to Israel by Joshua.

"another day" (v8) – The "rest" of verse 9 is clearly "another day" than the seventh day weekly Sabbath.

"there remains therefore a rest for the people of God" (v9) – This "rest which remains":

- Requires "fear" in order to enter (v1)
- Requires "belief" in order to enter (v2)
- Requires "obedience" in order to enter (v6)

- Requires "soft hearts" in order to enter (v7)
- Is for the "people of God" (v9)
- Requires "diligence" to enter (v11)

Although the weekly Sabbath day is alluded to in v4, it is being used as a foreshadow of eternal rest in heaven.

Colossians 2:16-17

16 So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or **Sabbaths**,
 17 which are a **shadow of things to come**, but the substance is of Christ.

Revelation 14:13

13 Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.' " "Yes," says the Spirit, "that **they may rest from their labors**, and their works follow them."

26) Heb 13:8 → Isn't Jesus the "same yesterday, today, and forever"?

It is argued that: (a) since Jesus doesn't change, and (b) since He required men to keep the Sabbath day in the OT days, (c) therefore He must require the Sabbath today.

Jesus does not change, but His law changed:

Hebrews 7:12

12 For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a **change of the law**.

Let us apply the same reasoning used by Sabbath-keepers and apply it to animal sacrifices. The argument would go something like this: (a) since Jesus doesn't change, and (b) since He required men to offer animal sacrifices in the OT days, (c) therefore He must require animal sacrifices today.

Sabbath-keepers are not ready to apply their "logic" to any other commands in the OT except the ten commandments. Why pick and choose to keep only the ten commandments?

27) Rev 13 → Is "Sunday-keeping" the "mark of the beast"?

First, Sabbath-keepers who make this argument assume several things about this chapter:

- They assume the "beast" of Rev 13 is the Pope of the Catholic Church.
- They assume the "mark" of the beast is Sunday-keeping that has been enforced by the government.

Assumptions prove nothing.

Suppose one assumes (cf. Albertus Pieters, Studies in the Revelation of St. John) the "beast" is pagan-Rome which began to enforce "Emperor worship" upon people in the days of Emperor Domitian (81-96 AD). Not only were men required to give allegiance to the emperor, they were also required to worship him as deity.

As time grew on, this requirement to pay homage to the Emperor grew and grew. Eventually, statues of the Emperor were erected in towns and villages across Rome required men to burn incense before Caesar's statue. Refusal to do so was cited as evidence of disloyalty and was punishable by death.

Why could this not be the interpretation of the "mark of the beast"? Why does the "mark" have to refer to Sunday-keeping?

Second, neither Jesus nor any of His apostles commanded anyone to keep the Sabbath day in the NT era. If Sabbath-keeping is a mark of God's true people today, where is the command for any Christian to keep the Sabbath?

Third, Christians met for worship on the first day of the week long before there was any Pope or Catholic Church.

Acts 20:7

7 Now **on the first day of the week**, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2

1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also:

2 **On the first day of the week** let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.

Revelation 1:10

10 I was in the Spirit **on the Lord's Day**, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet,

Fourth, history records the fact that Christians were meeting on the first day of the week long before any Pope developed and long before the beginning of the Catholic church. Also, Christians were meeting on the first day of the week long before Constantine was Emperor of Rome. (See "History" in the next section.)

28) Rev 22:14 → Doesn't this passage teach we should keep the ten commandments?

This passage teaches only that men should obey God. Nothing in this passage speaks about the Sabbath or the ten commandments.

- Christians were to "observe all things which Jesus commanded" (Mt 28:20). These are the commandments to which Rev 22:14 refers.
- Men are to "obey the gospel" (2 Th. 1:8). The commandments of the gospel are being referenced in Rev 22:14.

Q: If Rev. 22:14 refers to the OT ten commandments, why does it not also refer to the commandments for circumcision (Ex 12:48), passover (Ex 12:14), and animal sacrifices (Lev 1-7)?

29) Where is any command to worship on the first day of the week?

First, here is a passage in the OT:

Leviticus 23:15-21

15 'And you shall count for yourselves from **the day after the Sabbath**, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed.

16 'Count fifty days to **the day after the seventh Sabbath**; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD.

17 'You shall bring from your dwellings two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. They are the firstfruits to the LORD.

18 'And you shall offer with the bread seven lambs of the first year, without blemish, one young bull, and two rams. They shall be as a burnt offering to the LORD, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma to the LORD.

19 'Then you shall sacrifice one kid of the goats as a sin offering, and two male lambs of the first year as a sacrifice of a peace offering.

20 'The priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits as a wave offering before the LORD, with the two lambs. They shall be holy to the LORD for the priest.

21 'And you shall proclaim **on the same day that it is a holy convocation** to you. You shall do no customary work on it. It shall be a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

"holy convocation" – This is translated "sacred assembly" in the NIV.

Q: Was the Pope behind this command to have a sacred assembly on Sunday? Was Constantine? Was the Council of Laodicea? Of course not.

Second, here is a passage in the NT:

1 Corinthians 16:1-2

1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given **orders** to the churches of Galatia, so **you must do** also:

2 **On the first day of the week** let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.

Q: Was the Pope behind this command to have a sacred assembly on Sunday? Was Constantine? Was the Council of Laodicea? Of course not.

HISTORY

1) What about Constantine's Sunday law (321 AD)?

First, let it be noted that if Constantine "changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday," then it cannot be argued later the Pope and Catholic church changed the day. It cannot be both ways.

CONSTANTINE'S EDICT of March 7, 321:

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

Assumptions:

- All Christians were keeping the Sabbath before this.
- None were worshipping on Sunday.
- The Sabbath is now illegal because of this edict.
- Sabbath-keepers will now be persecuted.
- Sunday worship is now required by law.
- Those not worshipping on Sunday will now be persecuted.

Not one of these assumptions are true – not one.

- Christians were already meeting together on the first day of the week – with divine approval (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 16:1-2; Heb 10:25; Rev. 1:10).
- Constantine's law did not make the Sabbath "illegal."
- Constantine's law did not begin a persecution against "Sabbath-keepers."
- Sunday worship was not required; it was allowed, but not required.
- Non-Sunday worshippers were not "persecuted" because of this law.

2) What about the Council of Laodicea (364 AD)?

The council of Laodicea is believed by Sabbath-keepers to be the occasion when the Roman Catholic Church changed the Sabbath from the Seventh day to the First day.

First, if the Council of Laodicea "changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday," then it cannot be argued that Constantine changed the day. It cannot be both ways.

Second, the Sabbath was not *changed* at this Council. The Sabbath was and continues to be the seventh day of the week.

Third, here is what the council decreed:

*"Christians ought not to Judaize and to rest in the Sabbath, but to work in that day; but preferring **the Lord's Day**, should rest, if possible, as Christians. Wherefore if they shall be found to Judaize, let them be accursed from Christ."*

Here are some facts to note:

- Laodicea was not Rome – it was 1000 miles east of Rome.
- The Pope (bishop) of Rome did not attend this council (McClintock &

Strong's Cyclopeda).

- The Pope (bishop) of Rome did not send a legate or delegate or anyone to represent him.
- The Council of Laodicea was held without the knowledge or consent of the Pope (bishop) of Rome.
- In 364 AD the Bishop of Rome did not have authority over other bishops. It would be 200 years later before he was invested with such authority over all the churches.
- The authority of the Roman bishop was resisted in the East – where this council was held.
- Liberius was bishop of Rome at the time of the Council of Laodicea. He was degraded from his office, banished, and treated with the utmost contempt. Bower says, in order to end his exile, Liberius "wrote in a most submissive and cringing style to the eastern Bishops." (History of the Popes, vol. 1, p. 64).

This is supposedly the "Pope" who changed the Sabbath at the Council of these same Eastern bishops, 1000 miles away, which he never attended?

- The Council of Laodicea was not a "general council," but a "local council." It is not even mentioned by Mosheim and other historians. McClintock & Strong's Cyclopeda says: "*Thirty-two bishops were present from different provinces in Asia.*" These were all Eastern church bishops – not one from the Roman church.

Yet, this is suppose to be the place and the time when the "Pope of Rome" changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday.

Recognizing a practice already in existence is different than originating a new practice. For example:

Council of Carthage (397 AD) stated the 27 books of the NT were inspired.

This did not make them inspired – they were already inspired – independent of any council.

This council merely recognized something that was already true.

Council of Laodicea merely recognized something already being practiced – first day of the week worship. They did not originate the practice.

3) What does history say about the Sabbath and the first day of the week?

IGNATIUS, the third bishop of Antioch, who died in 108 AD, wrote: "If, therefore, those who were brought up in the ancient order of things have come to the possession of a new hope, *no longer observing the Sabbath*, but living in the observance of *the Lord's Day*, on which also our life has sprung up again by Him... Let us therefore *no longer keep the Sabbath* after the Jewish manner, and rejoice in days of idleness; for "he that does not work, let him not eat."...let every friend of Christ keep the Lord's day as a festival, the resurrection-day, the queen and chief of all the days [of the week]." ("Epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians," Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 1, pp. 62-63).

IN 120 AD THE EPISTLE OF BARNABAS says in chapter 2: "Incense is a vain abomination unto me, and your new moons and Sabbaths I cannot endure. He has, therefore, abolished these things." Again: "Wherefore, also, we keep *the eighth day* with joyfulness, the day, also, on which Jesus rose again from the dead" (Ch 25).

JUSTIN MARTYR - 140 AD: In chapter 67 of his first Apology, entitled, "Weekly Worship of the Christians," writing to the pagan emperor, Justin states: "And on the day called *Sunday*, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things. Then we all rise together and pray, and, as we before said, when our prayer is ended, bread and wine and water are brought... But *Sunday* is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which God, having wrought the change in the darkness and matter, made the world; and Jesus Christ our Savior on the same day rose from the dead." (Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 1, pp. 185-186).

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

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

TERTULLIAN of Africa, wrote around 200 AD: In his Apology, Chapter 16, Tertullian says: "We solemnize *the day after Saturday* in contradistinction to those who call this day their Sabbath, and devote it to ease and eating, deviating from the old Jewish customs, which they are now very ignorant of."

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

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

QUESTIONS FOR **SABBATH-KEEPERS**

- 1) How many covenants did God make with Israel when He led them out of Egypt? (Jer 31:31-33; Heb 8:8-10)
- 2) Were the ten commandments a covenant? (Ex 34:28; Dt 4:13; 9:9-11)
- 3) When was this covenant made? (Dt 5:1-15; Heb 8:8-10)
- 4) Heb 8:7 speaks of the "first covenant" and the "second." What was the "first covenant" and what was the "second"?
- 5) According to Heb 8:7, did the "first covenant" have faults?
- 6) According to Heb 8:13, was the "first covenant" going to "vanish away"?
- 7) If the ten commandments were the "first covenant" (Ex 34:28), according to Heb 10:9 ("He takes away the first that He may establish the second") were the ten commandments "taken away"?
- 8) Where was a NT Christian ever commanded to keep the Sabbath day holy?
- 9) Is the word "Sabbath" in Lk 4:16, Acts 13:14, and 16:13 plural in the Greek? If so, is it the exact same plural form as Col 2:16? If so, does this plural Greek work in Lk 4:16, Acts 13:14, and 16:13 refer to the weekly Sabbath day?
- 10) Where does the Bible ever use the phrase "the law" to refer to the ten commandments and at the same time exclude all other commandments? For example, when we read, "Fear God and keep His commandments" (Ecc 12:13), does this refer only to the ten commandments and exclude all other OT commandments? If so, how do we know this?
- 11) What passage plainly shows the "law of Moses" was one law and the "law of God" was a different law?

- 12) Where were the ten commandments specifically called the "Law of God"?
- 13) What passage plainly shows the law of God was divided into "ceremonial laws" and "moral laws"? Where did God make such a distinction?
- 14) Are "ceremonial laws" completely void of all morals?
- 15) Are "moral laws" completely void of all ceremonies? For example, does the command, "Do not bear false witness," involve any oath-taking ceremony on someone's part? Does the command, "Do not commit adultery," necessarily imply a wedding ceremony on someone's part?
- 16) Is the command against homosexuality (Lev 18:22) part of the "ceremonial law" or part of the "moral law"? If it is part of the "moral law," does this mean the laws of the Book of Leviticus are still binding upon men?
- 17) Did God simply "revise" the old law and give us a "revised version," or did he "take away" the old law completely and give us a "new law"?
- 18) What is the difference between "moral law" and "positive law"? Does the Sabbath commandment fit the description of "moral law" or "positive law" in light of Ex 16:4?
- 19) If the Sabbath day is a "moral law," does this mean non-Sabbath-keepers are immoral people?
- 20) Are the ten commandments a complete and perfect moral law? If so, which of the ten commandments condemns homosexuality? Which of the ten commandments condemns drunkenness?
- 21) If the Sabbath day law is a "moral law," why could priests would "profane" the Sabbath inside the temple (Mt 12:5) and remain blameless? Does this mean they would commit immorality inside the temple and remain blameless?
- 22) Is the "law of Christ" a separate and distinct law from the ten commandments? If so, are Christians under two distinct laws at the very same time?
- 23) Why is there no record of Gentiles being condemned for breaking the Sabbath?
- 24) In Jn 7:19 and Mk 7:10, what commandments are ascribed to Moses?
- 25) If God blessing the seventh day means He was making the seventh day a "memorial of creation," does God blessing the fish of the sea (Gen 1:22) mean He was making the fish of the sea a memorial of creation? If fish are a "memorial of creation," does this mean the Sabbath day is not the only "memorial of creation"?

- 26) If God blessing the seventh day means He was making the seventh day a "memorial of creation," does God blessing the man and woman (Gen 1:28) mean He was making the man and woman a memorial of creation? If man and woman are a "memorial of creation," does this mean the Sabbath day is not the only "memorial of creation"?
- 27) To be justified, must men keep the Sabbath? If no, they why teach that men must keep the Sabbath? If yes, then explain Gal 5:4.
- 28) What's the difference between insisting that men keep the sabbath and those in Acts 15 who insisted that "men be circumcised and keep the law"?

GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

To be saved from past sins, God requires the following steps:

- 1) **Believe** in Christ as the only begotten Son of God (Jn 3:16).
- 2) **Repent** of sins ("turn away from sin") (Acts 17:30).
- 3) **Verbally Confess** faith in Christ (Rom 10:10).
- 4) **Be baptized** (immersed) into Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).

Acts 2:38

38 Then Peter said to them, "**Repent**, and let every one of you **be baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ **for the remission of sins**; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 22:16

16 'And now why are you waiting? Arise and **be baptized**, and **wash away your sins**, calling on the name of the Lord.'

Romans 6:3-4

3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were **baptized into Christ Jesus** were **baptized into His death**?

4 Therefore we were **buried with Him through baptism into death**, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Baptism is the "*point in time*" that God applies the blood of Christ to the sinner's life. The sinner is baptized into the death of Christ (Rom 6:3-4). Sinners were never told to "*pray the sinner's prayer*" as is commonly believed today (see Jn 9:31). Only Christians have the privilege of praying for forgiveness of sins (1 Jn 1:9; 2:1 – notice these verses were written to Christians, not sinners). Those who have not been baptized correctly must be rebaptized (see Acts 19:1-5) in order to be saved (1 Pet 3:20-21).

While it *may* be true that the "thief on the cross" was never baptized (perhaps he may have been—see Mt 3:5), it must be remembered he was saved while the Old Testament law was still in force (Heb 9:16-17). This is exactly what the controversy over the Sabbath day revolves around—which law applies today and what does the Lord require of men today. The Lord's requirement of baptism "*for the remission of sins*" came after His death and resurrection (Mt 28:18-20; Mk 16:15-16).

After baptism, we must continue in "*all things*" which the Lord "commanded" (Mt 28:20). We must be careful "*lest we fall*" (1 Cor 10:12). Even saved Christians can "*fall away*" (Gal 5:4), have their name removed from the "*book of life*" (Rev. 22:19), and suffer a worse fate than "*death without mercy*" (Heb 10:26-29). Christians must "*make their calling and election sure*" by "*giving all diligence*" (2 Pet 1:5-11).

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These notes were prepared by George Battey for use during an “Open Bible Study” scheduled Saturday, June 12, 2010 and distributed to those who attended the discussion.

Mr. Jerry States, a minister from the Seventh Day Adventist Church, affirmed that the seventh-day Sabbath of Ex. 20:8 is still binding upon men.

Mr. George Battey, a minister from the “*church of Christ*” (Rom. 16:16), affirmed two things:

- (a) that there are no holy days (i.e. “holidays” which require cessation from work, closing up shops, etc.) in the NT era and
- (b) that God requires worship in an assembly which takes place on the first day of each week.

This discussion was held at the Church of Christ meeting on Good Hope Rd. & Hwy 99 in Seminole, OK.

Two booklets were prepared by brother George and distributed:

- (a) one concerning the Sabbath day and
- (b) one concerning first day of the week.

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