

DID CHRIST AND THE APOSTLES KEEP SUNDAY?

A question paramount in the minds of Christians is whether or not Christ and the apostles kept Sunday as the Sabbath. This matter of which day is the Sabbath is one of the most important subjects before the Christian world today. The Bible reveals only one Sabbath day, and that is the seventh day of the week. But strange though it may seem, the great majority of people in the world are keeping the first day of the week.

God has seen fit to attach the word "REMEMBER" to the Sabbath commandment. Cardinal Wiseman says: "Almighty God did not give a commandment that men should keep holy one day in seven; but He named His own day . . . and assigned a reason for choosing this day . . . a reason which belongs only to the seventh day of the week, and cannot be applied to the rest." "The Clifton Tracts," Vol. 4, p. 4. God has given us the Sabbath as a reminder of His great power and all-sufficient grace.

In Eze. 20:20 God says: "And hallow my sabbaths; and they SHALL BE A SIGN between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God." The word **sign** used here is equivalent to the word **mark**. In opposition to the mark of the beast, God says that His Sabbath is His sign or mark. Christ has chosen the Sabbath as a sign of His creative work, and also of His power to recreate or redeem mankind.

Prof. E. W. Thomas has said: "The original Sabbath being a perpetual memorial of God, the Creator, calling man to imitate God in the observance of the same, **MAN COULD NOT KEEP THE ORIGINAL SABBATH AND FORGET GOD.**" "Heralds of Gospel Liberty," June 19, 1870. Fifty-two times in a year Christ displays before all men everywhere this sign of His deity as the Creator and the world's only Saviour. If we want God to know that we regard Him as the true God, we must keep His Sabbath. But that is the day the whole world has forgotten.

The Protestant world finds itself in a great dilemma today over this matter of which day to keep as the Sabbath. Rev. George Hodges, pastor of one of the largest churches in Pittsburgh, Penn., says: "The seventh day, the commandment says, is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. No kind of arithmetic, no kind of almanac, can make seven equal to one, or the seventh mean the first, nor Saturday mean Sunday . . . The fact is that we are all Sabbath-breakers, every one of us." The Protestants claim that the Bible is their only guide, and yet are not able to find Bible authority for keeping Sunday, which puts them in an embarrassing situation.

Great efforts have been put forth by Protestant ministers to find some authority for the keeping of Sunday. Alexander Campbell, Baptist minister, says: "'But,' say some, 'it was changed from the seventh to the first day.' Where? When? and by whom? No man can tell." *The Christian Baptist*, p. 44. There are those who claim that Christ changed the Sabbath. Others try to prove that the

apostles changed it. But nowhere in the Bible can proof be found. In fact numerous offers have been made to those who could find any such text.

From Stanberry, Missouri, Rev. A. M. Dugger, Editor of the Church of God publication, "The Bible Advocate," wrote a letter as follows: "Dear Sir: In regard to the matter of what day we ought to keep, I will hereby offer you or anyone, \$5,000 if they will produce one text from the New Testament which says we ought to keep the first day of the week, or Sunday, as a holy day." This is a very liberal offer. Surely it is worth our while to look for this text, for some of us have to work more than a year to earn that much money. If we could obtain it by finding just one such text, think how well off we would be.

I have a copy of another letter from Priest Enright. He is called Father Enright by members of the papal church, but God says: "Call no man your Father." This letter from Priest Enright was not sent to me but to a minister in Michigan. Here is what it says: "The assertion that I have withdrawn the offer is utterly false. I still offer \$1,000 to anyone who can prove to me, from the Bible alone, that I am bound under pain of grievous sin, to keep Sunday holy." Now if we take this offer and the other that has been made, and can find the text, we will surely be well off. So far we have \$6,000 offered for just one text.

Tonight we are going to consider EVERY TEXT in the New Testament that mentions the first day of the week. The eight texts are as follows: Matt. 28: 1; Mark 16:1, 2; Mark 16:9; Luke 24:1; John 20:1; John 20:19; Acts 20:7; and I Cor. 16:2. If any of these intimate that Sunday is the Sabbath, we will have accomplished a great work. And if we can find one text that tells us that Christ or the apostles were Sunday-keepers, or that they changed the Sabbath from Saturday to another day, we would settle a problem of greatest consequence.

We shall consider the testimony of Matthew first, written about six years after the cross. By this time he would surely have known if the Sabbath had been changed. Let us read Matt. 28:1: "IN THE END OF THE SABBATH, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre." Can we find the proof we seek in this text and claim the thousands of dollars reward? Examine the text closely. It says that the Sabbath was already ended when the first day of the week arrived. There doesn't seem to be any proof here for Sunday keeping. In fact, according to this text, Sunday is one day too late to be the Sabbath. Writing under the inspiration of God, six years after the cross, Matthew says that the Sabbath precedes Sunday.

Our next reference is found in Mark 16:9. This text was written under the inspiration of God ten years after the cross. Mark says: "Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he

had cast seven devils." This text merely tells us that Jesus rose early on the first day of the week. He appeared to Mary but said nothing about the day's being holy. We surely couldn't lay claim to the money on the basis of this text.

Let us read the other text written by Mark that refers to the first day of the week. "And WHEN THE SABBATH WAS PAST, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had brought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun." Mark 16:1, 2. This reference again throws Sunday-keepers into a dilemma, for it tells us that when the Sunday of the resurrection dawned, the Sabbath was already past. Does anyone feel that these texts authorize Sunday-keeping?

Next we shall go to the writings of Luke. Luke tells us that when the disciples saw Jesus die on the cross, they returned home. "And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and RESTED THE SABBATH DAY according to the commandments." Luke 23:56. I want you to notice that the disciples, after Jesus' death, returned to their homes and kept the Sabbath as they had been taught in the ten commandments. Jesus had not said anything to them about a new Sabbath. If He had, they certainly would not have kept the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.

Mark tells us: "And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost . . . It was the preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath." Mark 15:37, 42. So the followers of Jesus returned home and prepared their spices and ointments. But, feeling that it would not be right to anoint the body on the Sabbath, they waited until Sunday morning to return to the tomb to anoint the body of Jesus. They rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.

After they had rested on the Sabbath of the commandment, Luke says: "Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them." Luke 24:1. Luke mentions the first day of the week, but he makes it clear that they had already kept the Sabbath, and that when the Sabbath was over, they went to anoint His body. Now Luke wrote thirty years after the cross, under the inspiration of God, saying that they kept the Sabbath of the commandment, the one that says: "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God."

Dr. Edward T. Hiscox, author of "The Baptist Manual," says: "To me it seems unaccountable that Jesus, during three years' intercourse with His disciples . . . never alluded to any transference of the day; also, that during forty days of His resurrection life, no such thing was intimated." This was in a paper read before a New York Ministers' Conference held Nov. 13, 1893. Isn't it strange that some people think that when Jesus died, it brought the Sabbath to an end? But Jesus' mother and his followers certainly did not know anything about that, for, while Jesus rested in the tomb on the Sabbath day, they rested in their homes.

In the House of Representatives, Mr. Bowers of

California, once said: "Saturday is the only Sabbath day. It was the Sabbath day when Christ was on earth, and it is the Sabbath day now." "Congressional Record," July 12, 1892. If a change is to be made in a man's will it has to be done before he dies. Everything that Christ wanted His followers to do He revealed to them before His death. We cannot change a man's will after he dies. Neither can we change the commands of Christ after His death.

It is interesting to note that in every reference to the first day of the week in the New Testament there is no indication whatever that it is the Sabbath or a holy day. It is merely the first day of the week. Just another day! The true Sabbath of God is different from all the other days of the week, just as the Bible is different from all other books. The only day that God names in the Bible is the seventh day, and He calls this the Sabbath. The other days merely have numbers.

Now let us turn to the writings of John who penned his gospel sixty years after the cross. He says: "The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre." There isn't any revelation here of a change in the Sabbath. This text merely says that Mary came to the tomb and found Jesus risen. It would be impossible to claim the \$6,000 offered on the basis of this reference, John 20:1.

Dear Friends, Jesus died on the day before the Sabbath, according to the Bible. The Bible tells us that it was the preparation day, that His followers went home to rest on the Sabbath after they laid His body in the tomb. Then when the first day of the week came, and the Sabbath was already past, according to Matthew and Mark, they discovered that the body of Jesus was gone. They believed that His body had been taken out of the tomb by His enemies. At first they did not believe that He had risen.

The disciples went back to their quarters and locked the door, hiding for fear of the Jews. John 30:19 says: "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were ASSEMBLED FOR FEAR OF THE JEWS, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you." Jesus had a meeting on the first day of the week with His disciples, according to this text. But look carefully! On the day that Jesus rose, sometime in the evening, He sought out His disciples who were hiding from the Jews. The followers of Jesus were hiding in terror. This was not a religious meeting, but a gathering for self-protection.

In Mark 16:9-11, we read: "Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene . . . And she went and told them that had been with him . . . And they . . . BELIEVED NOT." The disciples of Jesus did not believe that He had risen from the grave, even though Mary had seen Him and told them of it. So they certainly did not keep that Sunday in commemoration of Jesus's resurrection, for they did not even believe that He was risen.

Mark says further in the 12th and 13th verses: "After that he appeared in another form unto two

of them as they walked, and went into the country. And they went and told it unto the residue: **NEITHER BELIEVED THEY THEM.**" There is not a word in these texts to even suggest a religious meeting commemorating His resurrection. Jesus had sent Mary to tell the disciples that He was risen. The two disciples returning from Emmaus told the rest of the disciples that Jesus was alive; but they just could not believe it. So Jesus finally appeared to them in person to reveal Himself.

Many say that it was the custom of Jesus to meet with the disciples on the first day of the week after His resurrection. John tells us of the second meeting of Jesus with the disciples in John 20:26: "And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you." "After eight days." I have never been able to count eight days from Sunday and make it fall on the following Sunday. Have you? Therefore this meeting was not a Sunday meeting at all, neither was it a religious gathering.

The next time that Jesus appeared to His disciples they were out fishing. Now, if that did happen to be on the first day of the week, although the Bible does not say what day it was, they were certainly not keeping the day holy. They were fishing. Of course some people say that it is perfectly proper to go fishing on Sunday, and I must admit that I agree with them because the Bible does not say that Sunday is a holy day, anyway. But the thought that I wish to convey to you is that Jesus did not, after His resurrection appear to His disciples every Sunday to conduct religious meetings.

The Catholic Author Vincent J. Kelly says: "The fact, however, that Christ until His death, and His Apostles at least for a time after Christ's Ascension, observed the Sabbath is evidence enough that our Lord Himself did not substitute the Lord's day for the Sabbath, during His lifetime on earth." **Forbidden Sunday and Feast Day Occupations**, pp. 19, 20. Some wonder why Jesus and the disciples did not have more to say about the Sabbath in their preaching. Well, that is simple. They did not need to. The people back there kept the Sabbath. There was no question about it. It was accepted by all.

There is a text in the Bible that has been misquoted many times to try to prove Sunday sacredness. A man came to me not long ago and said that the Bible says "We are not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together on the first day of the week." He was very surprised when I told him that is not the way it reads. I turned and read Heb. 10:25: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." It does not say in this text on what day they were to assemble. Everybody knew it was the Sabbath. He merely reminds them not to forget to go. But this man told me that he had depended on this text all his life as authority for Sunday-keeping.

So far we have read six of the texts that men-

tion the first day of the week. Let us consider another, in I Cor. 16:2: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." Many presume this to be a collection at church. It is true Paul is writing to the believers in Corinth, but he was asking them to lay aside money for the saints at Jerusalem who were hungry because of famine. It merely asks them to lay by in store or storage. When you lay by in storage, you are not taking up a public collection.

When we took up the collection tonight you were not laying that collection in store or storage. You were giving it to us. You do not have it anymore. You cannot store it. That money is in our hands. It was the custom of the people in those days to close their business enterprises before sundown on Friday evening. That is because God reckons His Sabbath from sunset to sunset. When they closed their business just before the Sabbath, they had no time to do the bookkeeping. So early on the first day of the week, they figured out their profits for the preceding week. Paul suggested that when they did the bookkeeping and saw how God had prospered them the preceding week, they were to figure out how much they were able to give and lay it by in store until he came.

Other versions of the Bible translate this text to clearly convey the thought that this offering was to be put aside in storage at home. Let us read from the Weymouth's New Testament in Modern Speech: "On the first day of every week let each of you put on one side and **STORE UP AT HIS HOME** whatever gain has been granted to him; so that whenever I come, there may then be no collections going on." Here it is made plain that this was something done at home, not at church.

In Goodspeed's American Translation it gives I Cor. 16:2 as follows: "On the first of every week each of you is to put aside and **STORE UP WHATEVER HE GAINS**, so that money will not have to be collected after I come." This certainly does not sound like a Sunday meeting. It says nothing about the first day of the week being holy.

In Moffatt's Translation I Cor. 16:2 reads thus: "On the first day of the week, let each of you **PUT ASIDE A SUM FROM HIS WEEKLY GAINS**, so that the money may not have to be collected when I come." If they did not lay this money aside each week, they would no doubt have it all spent by the time Paul got there to collect it. Knowing that he would not be there long, Paul desired no delay at that time.

The Syriac Version of I Cor. 16:2 reads: "On each first day of the week, let every one of you lay aside and **PRESERVE AT HOME**, what he is able; that there be no collections after I come." All of these translations merely say that they were to lay by an offering at home. Friends, when we truly study the Bible with care and let it explain itself, we can see that there is no evidence here or anywhere else for Sunday-keeping. Some just read into the Bible what they want to read.

We have one more text that mentions the first day of the week in the Bible. We must find our authority for Sunday-keeping in this text or else

we must admit that there is no authority whatever in the Bible for Sunday observance. Here it is in Acts 20:7: "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." If we read the entire chapter, we find that Paul was conducting a farewell meeting with the Christians, for he was about to leave them.

They never expected to see Paul again, for he would soon die as a martyr. They wanted to hear him as long as possible, so Paul preached until midnight. In fact, he preached so long that a young man named Eutychus went to sleep and fell down from the third story window where he had been sitting. Paul went down and raised the young man to life again. This is the reason the story is told at all, to tell of this wonderful miracle of raising the dead. It was not given to teach that a new Sabbath had been established.

Now if Paul preached to them until midnight of the first day of the week, that would have to be on Saturday night. Conybeare and Howson, learned Bible students say: "It was the evening which succeeded the Jewish Sabbath. On the Sunday morning the vessel was about to sail." *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, Vol. 2, p. 206. These followers of Christ had already kept the Sabbath and were just listening to Paul's parting instructions late Saturday night.

Kitto's Encyclopedia, in the article on "The Lord's Day" says: "It has . . . been inferred that the assembly commenced after sunset on the Sabbath, at which hour the first day of the week had commenced, according to the Jewish reckoning, which would hardly agree with the idea of a commemoration of the resurrection." Christ certainly was not resurrected Saturday night but early Sunday morning. So they would not be celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Saturday night.

Rev. G. C. Brewer, of the Church of Christ, says: "Now if Luke, the writer, reckoned time according to the Jewish count this was on Saturday night as we count time. There is no reason at all to suppose that Luke used the Roman method of counting time here, since he never did anywhere else." *Contending for the Faith*, pp. 329, 330. Reckoning time from midnight to midnight is comparatively modern, having been in common usage since the 12th century. This is called the Roman method of counting time.

God does not reckon time according to man's method from midnight to midnight. After all, the sun is God's time piece, and a very accurate time piece it is! According to the Bible the day begins when the sun has set in the evening. In Gen. 1:5 it says: "And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day." Keeping the Sabbath from midnight to midnight is not according to God's instruction but according to the Pontiff of Rome who has tried to change God's time and God's law.

Protestant ministers of many denominations agree that this meeting of the Apostle Paul was held on Saturday night. Dr. Horatio B. Hackett, Professor of Greek in Rochester Theological Semi-

nary, says: "The Jews reckoned the day from evening to morning, and on that principle the evening of the first day of the week would be our SATURDAY NIGHT . . . The apostle . . . held his last religious service . . . on Saturday evening, and consequently resumed his journey on Sunday morning." *Commentary on Acts*, pp. 329, 330. This Sunday journey was a long, wearisome trip, much more than a Sabbath day's journey.

The Most Rev. John Hughes, D.D., a Catholic priest, says: "Let Protestants keep holy, if they will, the first day of the week, in order that they may resemble those Christians who were gathered together on that day in the upper chamber in Troas; but let them REMEMBER THAT THIS CANNOT POSSIBLY RELEASE THEM FROM THE OBLIGATION OF KEEPING HOLY ANOTHER DAY." *Clifton Tracts*, Vol. 4, p. 10. "Another day" of course refers to the seventh-day Sabbath.

This question of when the day begins and ends is an important matter. The Bible says in Lev. 23:32: ". . . From even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath." And in Mark 1:32 it is very clear: "And at even, when the sun did set . . ." God says plainly that the Sabbath should be kept from even unto even, or from sunset to sunset. When God created the world He made the day begin at even. When the sun sets on Monday night, Tuesday has begun in the sight of God. So when Paul preached on the first day of the week until midnight, he was certainly preaching on the dark part of the first day of the week which began at sunset Saturday night.

Paul had been preaching to them on Sabbath. Since this was to be his farewell, he continued right on until midnight. The next day which was Sunday, he journeyed a long distance, about 17 miles to a place called Assos, then boarded a ship and went 40 miles more. Now if Paul had been a Sunday-keeper, this was not very good Sunday keeping, all this travel after the meeting that lasted till midnight. Even if it were true that they had a farewell meeting on Sunday, that would of course not make the day holy.

In the *New York Tribune*, May 24, 1900, the editor says: "Neither Christ, nor His apostles, nor the first Christians, celebrated the first day of the week instead of the seventh as the Sabbath." After carefully examining every text in the New Testament which mentions the first day of the week, we have found that there is nothing in any of these texts that intimates that the first day became the Lord's day in honor of the Lord's resurrection or that Christians were commanded to keep the first day of the week holy. There is nothing in any of these texts that reveals that Christ or His disciples kept Sunday as a holy day.

Henry M. Taber, an atheist and close friend of Robert Ingersoll, says: "No student of the Bible has ever brought to light a single verse, line or word, which can, by any possibility, be construed into a warrant for the religious observance of Sunday." *Faith or Fact*, p. 144. The only conclusion that we can draw is the same as Henry Taber's—THERE IS NO BIBLE AUTHORITY FOR KEEPING SUNDAY.

Henry M. Taber continues: "Why will not Christian people investigate and find out for themselves (which they easily can), that the keeping of Sunday as a 'holy Sabbath day,' is wholly without warrant." *Faith or Fact*, (Preface by Robert G. Ingersoll), p. 114. Many, like Mr. Taber, have accepted atheistic views, rather than accept the un-Biblical teachings of many Protestant churches today.

But someone says: "Doesn't the civil law say to keep Sunday?" Yes, the civil law does say that. There are Sunday blue laws in practically every state in the Union, but that does not make it right. Sometime ago in the State of Tennessee a man was arrested for digging potatoes on Sunday. But because the civil law commands that we keep Sunday does not supersede God's holy law which teaches us that the seventh-day is the Sabbath. These laws will soon be enforced much more strictly than they are today. The time will come when those who refuse to keep the first day of the week as the Sabbath will be put in prison.

No matter how many man-made laws and traditions we may have, the true Christian must still pledge his allegiance to God. God says: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it." Ex. 20:8-11.

When God created this earth He RESTED on the seventh day, and that was the first Sabbath. God BLESSED the Sabbath. It is a blessed day. God did not make any other day blessed. He also SANCTIFIED the Sabbath. Noah Webster says: "SANCTIFY . . . To make sacred or holy; to set apart to a holy or religious use; to consecrate by appropriate rites; to hallow." So the Sabbath is sacred and holy. And no man has the power to take away the sacredness and holiness of this day, which God sanctified at Creation.

We are told in I Chron. 17:27: "Thou blessest, O Lord, and it shall be BLESSED FOREVER." And in Num. 23: 19, 20 Moses says: ". . . HE HATH BLESSED; AND I CANNOT REVERSE IT." Who am I to try to reverse the blessing of God? When God blesses something, it is blessed forever. I cannot take the blessing from God's Sabbath and place it on another day. Neither can you. And neither can the Pope of Rome or anyone else.

Edgar J. Goodspeed, prominent Bible scholar and translator, says: "Taken together, the story of the seven days is, of course, the story of the Institution of the Sabbath, which is thus made to appear wrought into the VERY FABRIC OF THE UNIVERSE." "Religion in Life," Winter number, 1947-1948, p. 18. Satan has tried through evolution theories to discourage belief in the literal 7-day creation week; for if we do not believe in Gen. 1 there would be no reason for our keeping the seventh-day Sabbath.

Some say that it makes no difference which day we keep just so long as we keep one day in seven. Well, if that is true, God would not have said: "REMEMBER THE SEVENTH DAY," but He would have said, "REMEMBER A SEVENTH DAY." This would have been entirely different. Suppose a young man is interested in the daughter of a neighbor of his. That neighbor happens to have seven daughters. One day he goes to his neighbor and says: "I would like to marry one of your daughters." The man asks, "Which one?" The young man answers, "Any one of them will do." This seems ridiculous, yet this is exactly what men say about keeping the Sabbath when they say, "ANY DAY WILL DO."

Years after Jesus had returned to heaven, we find the disciples still faithfully keeping the Sabbath day without any question. They still did not know about any change of the Sabbath. In Acts 13:14 it says: "But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue ON THE SABBATH DAY, and sat down." Luke, under the inspiration of God, still calls the seventh day the Sabbath day. If there had been a change surely Luke would have known about it, and said something about going into the synagogue on the "old Sabbath day."

Again in Acts 13:42 I read: "And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the NEXT SABBATH." Now these converted Gentiles did not say, "Preach to us next Sunday." But they said, "NEXT SABBATH." Then what happened? Verse 44: "And the NEXT SABBATH day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God." The disciples preached to all peoples, Jews, Gentiles, yes, even barbarians who would listen to them, on the seventh day, the Sabbath.

In Acts 18: 4, 11 it tells of Paul's visit to Corinth: "And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath . . . And he continued there a year and six months . . ." Again it says that both Jews and Greeks were attending the synagogue to hear Paul preach. Every Sabbath for a year and a half would be 78 consecutive Sabbath days.

THE BIBLE RECORD OF PAUL'S SABBATH KEEPING

(Acts 13:14) "Went into the synagogue on the Sabbath." (Antioch) 1

(Acts 13:42) "Preached to them the next sabbath." (Antioch) 1

(Acts 16:13) "On the sabbath we went . . . by a river." (Philippi) 1

(Acts 17:2) "Three sabbaths reasoned with them." (Thessalonica) 3

(Acts 18:4, 11) "Every sabbath . . . a year and six months." (Corinth) 78

ON SATURDAY (SABBATH) PAUL PREACHED EIGHTY-FOUR TIMES. But on SUNDAY (SATURDAY NIGHT) HE PREACHED ONLY ONCE! It seems foolish to take this as authority to keep Sunday.

Some of the indisputable facts about the Sabbath versus Sunday are: (a) There is not a text where the first day of the week, Sunday, is ever called the Sabbath, or given any sacred title. (b)

There is not a single text where we are told to keep the first day of the week for any reason whatsoever. (c) There is no text where God or Christ ever hallowed Sunday. (d) There is not a text where we are told not to work on Sunday. It is ever regarded as an ordinary work day and called "the first day of the week." (e) Neither God, Christ, angels, or inspired men have ever said one word in favor of Sunday as a holy day. **THE KEEPING OF SUNDAY IS ONLY A HUMAN ORDINANCE**, which was introduced after the days of the apostles, and is **NOT A DIVINE COMMAND**.

If Sunday is not kept because of a divine command, who authorized Sunday-keeping? In a letter from Cardinal Gibbons, by his chancellor, C. F. Thomas, he says: "It was the Catholic Church that authorized and sanctioned the change in the Lord's Day from the 7th day of the week to the 1st . . . By the end of the 3rd, or beginning of the 4th century the custom and practice were universal." So the Roman Catholic Church admits that she changed it, between the third and fourth centuries.

In Canon 29, Council of Laodicea (A.D. 364), we read: "Christians shall not Judaize and be idle on Saturday (Sabbath, original), but shall work on that day; but the Lord's day they shall especially honor, and, as being Christians, shall IF POSSIBLE do no work on that day. If, however, they are found Judaizing, they shall be accursed from Christ." The Roman Catholic Church voted that anybody who kept the seventh day Sabbath would be anathematized, driven out, and persecuted. They commanded every one to keep the first day of the week holy, but this is not the command of God; it is the command of the antichrist.

Alexander Campbell, of the Christian Church, says: "It is all old wive's fables to talk of the change of the sabbath from the seventh to the first day. If it be changed, it was that august personage changed it who changes times and laws ex officio—I think his name is DOCTOR ANTI-CHRIST." "The Christian Baptist," Feb. 2, 1824. My Friend, will you accept the authority of the antichrist in opposition to God's authority? God tells us that it is a grievous thing to Him when we wipe our feet on His holy day. (Isa. 58:13). If you have been wiping your feet on God's holy day, I plead, I beg you not to do it anymore, for it grieves God.

But, say some, isn't Sunday called the Lord's Day? Yes, by the Pontiff of Rome, but God in the Bible has never called the first day of the week the Lord's day. Just once in the Bible is the "Lord's day" mentioned, in Rev. 1:10: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day . . ." John the Revelator was given a vision on that day, but he does not say what day it was; but God has a day, and He tells us what day is the Lord's day.

God says in Matt. 12:8: "For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day." Friends, Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath day, and the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord. There is only one Lord's day, and that is the seventh day, the day that God has blessed and sanctified.

T. C. Blake, a Presbyterian minister, says: "God Himself made the Sabbath . . . Until, therefore it can be shown that the whole Moral Law

has been repealed, the Sabbath will stand. No one, of course, will assert that this has been done, for **SUCH A THING WOULD DETHRONE GOD**, and would permit, without condemnation, angels and men to become devils!" **Theology Condensed**, p. 474. No, dear Friends, God's commandments have not been changed, for He says they stand fast forever.

Sunday keeping is tradition and based on the commandments of men. D. B. Ray, a Catholic, says: "From this same Catholic Church you have accepted your Sunday, and that Sunday, as the Lord's day, she handed down as a **TRADITION**; and the entire Protestant world has accepted it as a tradition, for you have not an iota of Scripture to establish it." **The Papal Controversy**, p. 179. While Protestants claim the Bible only as the source of their beliefs, how can they continue to accept Sunday as a Holy day?

Jesus says in Matt. 15:3, 9: ". . . Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? . . . But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." If we could produce just one text in the Bible that would uphold Sunday keeping, we would have some justification for keeping that day. But there are scores of texts that tell us that the seventh day is God's Sabbath. Why transgress the commands of God, for if we accept the doctrine of men instead of the authority of God, our worship is in vain.

Jesus also said in Matt. 15:13: ". . . Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." My Friends, the Sunday sabbath is a plant of man. It was never planted by God. But the Lord tells us that it will be rooted up. In these last days God is revealing His true Sabbath, and the false sabbath is being rooted up. Jesus came to this world to abolish traditions and the commandments of men. Jesus lived a perfect life of obedience to His Father's will. He wants us to do the same.

Here is a beautiful poem that should describe the experience of each of us:

"He saw God's truth, but did not stay
To ask if others saw the way;
Content was he in heart to know
That Jesus walked there, here below.

"And evermore He walks with men,
That men may walk His paths again;
And He is more than all besides
For others fail, but He abides."

So many people stop to ask if others see the way. We should not be concerned about what others are doing. The majority of people will be in the broad way that leads to destruction. Let us not ask if others see these things but let us follow the Lord Jesus Christ who gave us an example that we should follow in His steps.

Did Jesus keep the Sabbath? O, yes, He did. The Bible says in Luke 4:16: ". . . As his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day . . ." And in Heb. 13:8 it says: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever." If Jesus were on earth today He would keep the

same Sabbath that He kept while here. He probably would not be very popular for doing this any more than He was popular 1900 years ago. If Jesus were to return to this earth tonight and preach that the seventh day is the Sabbath, He would be opposed by many of the religious leaders of this world. Many would say that He was teaching heresy.

Dear Friends, are you willing to walk as Jesus walked even if it means sacrifice? Are you willing to go all the way with Jesus? Do you love Him that much? Or will you say as did the Jews 1900 years ago, "Away with Him, Away with Him." The people then would not accept His teaching, and the same condition prevails today. I want to be on Jesus' side, dear Friends. I cannot fight the truth of God when I know that Jesus died for me. I will, I must stand for Him.

It is true that the majority of church-goers today are keeping Sunday. Dr. Robert Henry Charles says: "Christianity has abrogated the Sabbath. It has altered the day of the week, the hours when it begins and closes, and likewise the grounds for, and the manner of, its observance." **The Decalogue**, p. 156. This so-called CHRISTIANITY that is urging Sunday observance today includes the cardinals, the bishops, the priests, and the Pope of the Papal Church. It includes the evangelists and preachers of the popular churches of the world today and their flocks of misguided members. Many earnest members of these churches today are unaware that they are following only tradition.

These popular churches are beckoning for us to come over to their side. They claim that most people are on their side anyway and that proves that they are right. T. G. Wallace, Canon of St. James, London, Canada, says: "We say we shall

observe one day a week as a day of rest and we agree on the first day of the week; it is a MATTER OF CONVENIENCE for the largest number, a matter of being able to act in common." **The Religious Digest**, Nov. 1942. We can see that religionists in general are placing themselves behind the Sunday sign or mark of papal power. But if the whole world keeps Sunday, does that make it right?

It does seem that the majority are on that side, keeping Sunday. But actually the majority are keeping the Sabbath, if we stop to consider the angels of heaven. And when we think of all the great patriarchs and prophets of old, like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Noah, Elijah, Daniel; yes, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, Peter, James, John, Paul, and all the rest. But head and shoulders above these is Jesus Christ Himself.

Philip Schaff, a Presbyterian, says: "The Sabbath is not a degradation . . . It is not a legal ceremonial bondage, but rather a precious gift of grace, a privilege, a holy rest in God . . . a foretaste and pledge of the never-ending Sabbath in heaven." **History of the Christian Church**, p. 479. How many of you want to accept this gift of grace, this holy rest, and look forward to the wonderful privilege of keeping the Sabbath in the New Earth?

How many believe that you have been hearing the truth of God's Word in these meetings? Jesus is holding out those nail-pierced hands and beckons all to follow Him. How many of you are determined to stand on the side of Jesus Christ and His wonderful Word? Will you stand to your feet? Ah, yes, I see many standing. I know it takes a lot of courage to stand for Christ. It always has, it always will, but God will bless us for it.