

## Bible Study Lectures

the first as the Sabbath. The Gospel of John was written 63 years after the resurrection, and yet in his writings there is not a single trace of Sunday sacredness.

John 20:1 simply refers to the first day as a day of activity, after the Sabbath was passed, as in the other gospels. Our next text, after the six already covered in the gospels, is Acts 20:7. This is the only reference to a religious meeting on the first day of the week, in the whole of the New Testament. And this was a Saturday night meeting. It was a night meeting, for Paul preached till midnight. Now in Bible times the day was reckoned from “even unto even.” Leviticus 23:32. The first day of the week commenced as the sun set on Saturday night. This meeting mentioned in Acts 20 was a night meeting on the first day, hence it was a Saturday night meeting. The noted commentary by Conybeare and Howson, entitled “Life and Epistles of the Apostle Paul,” dealing with this chapter, says: “It was the evening which succeeded the Jewish Sabbath. On the Sunday morning the vessel was about to sail.”

There is no evidence or suggestion here of first day sacredness. The holding of a meeting does not make a day holy. Nor does the partaking of the communion supper on a certain day make that day holy. If that were the case, then Thursday would be holy, for it was on the Thursday evening, the day before the crucifixion, that the Lord instituted the ordinance of the Lord’s supper. And Acts 2:46 teaches that the breaking of bread was a daily matter in apostolic times.

### PAUL’S FAREWELL SERMON

The teaching of Acts 20 shows that while Paul preached his farewell sermon, his companions set off and were sailing around the peninsula. Then on the Sunday morning, Paul set off across country to meet these members of his company at Assos, a trip of 19 miles. Hence none of them regarded Sunday as anything more than an ordinary day.

The one remaining text that mentions the first day of the week in the New Testament is 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2. Here Paul taught that one of the first duties of the week was for each to lay by him in store, as God had prospered him, “that there be no gatherings when I come.” This was a systematic way of providing for the poor saints at Jerusalem. The Bible here says to “lay by him in store.” Various different translations make it clear that each person was to lay aside these gifts at his own house in readiness for Paul’s visit. It was not a collection at a public meeting.

Weymouth’s “New Testament in Modern Speech” translates this verse, “On the first day of the week let each of you put on one side and store up at his home.” The Tyndale version reads, “Let every one of you put a side at home and lay up.” The Syriac Peshito Version, “Let every one of you lay aside and preserve at home.” Three French versions read “at his own house, at home”. Luther’s translation, “by himself; at home.” From a complete survey of all the New Testament first day references, it is evident that we must look outside of the Bible for Sunday sacredness.

## 49. SEVENTH-DAY SABBATH

Sixty References in New Testament

SPEAKING on the subject, “Sixty References to Seventh-day Sabbath in the New Testament,” in the Naval Hall on Sunday night, Pastor Mitchell said:

Back in the year 1924, when engaged in evangelical mission work in Taree, a north-coast town of New South Wales, I was accosted by a well-dressed man in one of the business establishments of that town. “You seem to be stirring up the town,” he said. “And now the people are wondering whether they should keep the Lord’s day or the Sabbath,” he continued. I replied, “If you will show me the difference between the ‘Lord’s day’ and the ‘Sabbath,’ then I will keep the Lord’s day in preference to the Sabbath.”

Then he responded, “the Sabbath is not mentioned in the New Testament, is it?” I stated that the Sabbath was mentioned 57 times in the New Testament. The gentleman seemed incredulous, and asked if I could show him the references. I assured him that I could. After my interesting new acquaintance had left, the manager of the business firm informed me that I had been speaking with one of the ministers of the town, which to my surprise I found out to be the case, for later I attended one of his church services. Well now, I suppose there is some excuse for the man who sits in the pew, if the preacher who occupies the desk so far misses the mark as to suppose that the Sabbath is not mentioned in the New Testament. Now that was nearly twelve years ago, and between that time and the present I have met many others who seem to think

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that somehow the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is not taught in the New Testament. So, right now, we shall notice a few facts concerning the Sabbath of the Lord, as we find it in the New Testament.

### SABBATH AND LORD'S DAY

When speaking to my former minister acquaintance, I actually underestimated the number of Sabbath references in the New Testament, when I said it was mentioned 57 times therein. I was sure I could find it mentioned 57 times, but after a more careful search I find that the Sabbath is referred to 60 times in the New Testament, 59 times by the term, "Sabbath," and once by the term "Lord's day."

In addition to this, the term "Sabbath days," referring to the yearly typical Sabbaths is used once. Rather strange that the clergyman should have no knowledge of 59 references to the weekly Sabbath, and yet be aware of the one reference to the term "Lord's day."

The only place in the New Testament where God's sacred day is referred to in the possessive case is Revelation 1:10: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." The term "Lord's day" is not used anywhere else in Scripture, but other scriptures clearly show that it is merely another way of referring to the Lord's Sabbath. There is only one day that God ever claimed as His, and that day He elsewhere calls the Sabbath. Mark 2:28 teaches that the "Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath." This is the only day of which He claims to be Lord; therefore, the Sabbath must be the Lord's day. Again notice the words of Isaiah 58:13: "If you turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day." And then the commandment says, "the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." Exodus 20:10.

The day that the Lord claims as His must of necessity be the Lord's day. "The Lord's day, the Sabbath of the Lord thy God," and "My holy day," are synonymous terms.

In the previous lecture when we examined all the eight New Testament "first day" texts, there was not even a suggestion of its being the Lord's day. No, there is not a suggestion in the whole of the Bible that the Lord's day of Revelation 1:10 is any other day than the usual Bible Sabbath.

Now we come to the regular Sabbath day references in the New Testament. It is obvious that I cannot deal with all of the texts at length in this one address. I will tell you where they are found. Then I will refer to those that show plainly that the original Bible Sabbath did not cease at the cross, but continued according to God's plan in the Christian era, being observed by all the apostolic Christians. In fact, it has been observed by millions of Christians through the ages of the Christian era even to our day.

The Gospel of Matthew refers to the Sabbath ten times, Mark eleven times, Luke eighteen times, John eleven times, Acts nine times, and Revelation once, thus making a total of sixty references. That the Sabbath was observed after the crucifixion is clearly seen from Luke 23:56.

### JESUS AND THE SABBATH

That Jesus intended all His followers to continue to observe the Sabbath is clearly taught in Matthew 24:20: "But pray you that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day." Here Jesus foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, and the need for His followers to flee from the city. Jerusalem was not destroyed till AD 70, 39 years after the resurrection of Christ and the organization of the Christian church. Thus the followers of Christ were commanded by Him to pray for 39 years that their flight would not be on the Sabbath day 39 years of prayer that one Sabbath day be not disregarded.

Now for a glimpse at the example set by Paul the apostle. Acts 13:42-44 states: "And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath. And the next Sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the Word of God." The fact that it was the Gentiles that requested a meeting again "the next Sabbath" is evidence that they knew nothing of first-day sacredness. And the fact that "almost the whole city," Jews and Gentiles, worshipped on the Sabbath day is evidence that that was the recognized sacred-day of worship in apostolic times, many years this side of the cross. There is no New Testament record telling us that almost a whole city worshipped on the first day of the week.

The first recorded Christian meeting to be held on European soil was on the Sabbath day: "And on the Sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made and we sat down, and spoke unto the women which resorted thither." Acts 16:13. Acts 17:2 teaches that the conducting of meetings on the Sabbath was Paul's "manner."

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### PAUL OBSERVES THE SABBATH

Acts 18:1-11 teaches that while at Corinth, Paul worked at his trade for a year and six months, but one day in the week for the whole eighteen months his trade was forgotten. "And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks." There is no record here of Paul's abstaining from work at his trade on the first day of the week, commonly called Sunday.

No, the Sabbath was the day he ceased working at his trade. The Sabbath was his day of worship, many years this side of the cross.

A correspondent of our city daily contrasts the numbers of first-day Christians of today with the smaller number of seventh-day Christians. But we have seen that in apostolic days all Christians observed the seventh day. On the "Sabbath day came almost the whole city together," none came on Sunday. Today there are 220,000,000 Mohammedans keeping Friday. A great number of Christians keep Sunday. But what says the Scripture? Christ was crucified between two thieves, but He remained the true, spotless Lamb of God. His Sabbath today is crucified between the Mohammedan Friday and the so-called "Christian" Sunday, but it still remains the only true Sabbath of Scripture. Why is it that people object to keeping the seventh day, which is mentioned so many times in both Old and New Testaments, and yet are willing to keep Sunday, which was never commanded at all, either in the Old or the New Testament?

"He shall think to change times and the laws." Daniel 7:25, R.V.

### 50. WHO CHANGED THE SABBATH?

Saturday to Sunday

As advertised, I am to speak at this time on the subject, "Who changed the Sabbath?, or, more correctly, who is responsible for the public recognition of the first day of the week, Sunday, as a sacred day, instead, of Saturday, the seventh day, as commanded by God? With these words Pastor Mitchell opened an address in the Naval Hall on Wednesday night.

Continuing, he said: You will naturally be anxious to get an intelligent understanding of this subject, since our previous exhaustive Bible study lectures have revealed the plain truth that the seventh day Bible Sabbath is the only day recognized in Scripture as the Lord's day of rest. From a thorough analysis of Scripture we have already seen that neither Christ nor His disciples recognized Sunday as anything but one of the six working days of Ezekiel 46:1. On the other hand the Bible Sabbath is part of the eternal law of God of which Christ said, "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail."

Now it may come as a surprise to you to know that God clearly foretold that a certain power would presume to change His law. Daniel, referring to a power emanating from the fourth great monarchy, or the great Roman Empire, which later disintegrated into the ten kingdoms of Western Europe, says: "And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws." Daniel 7:25. The Revised Version says, "times and the law." From this it is plain that God foresaw the rise of a power that would attempt a change in His law. One of the commandments is a time commandment, and, strange as it may seem, that commandment has met with an attempted change.

### CONSTANTINE'S EDICT

Now I am going to point you to sound evidence which you can verify. You can go into your public library, and read this statement for yourself in Chambers' Encyclopedia, referring to Constantine, the once powerful Roman emperor. "Unquestionably the first law, either ecclesiastical or civil, by which the Sabbatical observance of Sunday is known to have been ordained is the Sabbatical edict of Constantine, AD 321." (Article "Sunday.") Under the same heading in the Encyclopedia Britannica, we read: "It was Constantine the Great who first made a law for the proper observance of Sunday; who appointed it should be regularly celebrated throughout the Roman Empire."

Sunday was the day dedicated to sun-worship, which Ezekiel 8:16 shows existed back in the days of remote antiquity. The North British Review speaks of Sunday as "the wild solar holiday of all pagan times." "Verkstegan's Antiquities," published in London in the year 1628, states of our Saxon, ancestors: "Unto the day dedicated unto the special adoration of the sun, they gave the name of Sunday, as much as to

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say the sun's day, or the day of the sun." (Page 68.) The following is found in the same volume, page 10: "The most ancient Germans being pagans, and having appropriated their first day of the week to the peculiar adoration of the sun, whereof that day doth yet in our English tongue retain the name of Sunday."

In the days of Constantine, the leaders of the Christian church unfortunately compromised with the sun worshippers in order to gain a greater influx of members from paganism. And while the observance of the Bible Sabbath continued throughout the ages by a minority of Christians, even being found in Scotland in the twelfth century, yet the majority gradually followed the example set by the church leaders in the world's commercial centre of the fourth century, most of whom under pressure relinquished their observance of the Bible, Sabbath for the pagan counterfeit.

Further evidence that the change came in the fourth century, and not in apostolic days, is found in standard books published by the church which can trace its history back to those days, and still rules at Rome. I am now going to read from "The Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine," page 50:

"Q. Which is the Sabbath day?

"A. Saturday is the Sabbath day.

"Q. Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?

"A. We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church, in the Council of Laodicea (AD 336), transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday. "

The next book from which I will read is one that I bought from the Catholic bookstore in Christchurch, New Zealand is "The Catechism Simply Explained," by H. Canon Cafferata. It was published in London by Burns Oates and Washbourne Ltd., publishers to the Holy See, 1924. Listen to what I read from page 89. "A word about Sunday. God said, 'Remember that you keep holy the Sabbath day.' The Sabbath was Saturday, not Sunday; why, then, do we keep Sunday holy instead of Saturday? The church altered the observance of the Sabbath to the observance of Sunday. . . . Protestants who say that they go by the Bible and the Bible only, and that they do not believe anything that is not in the Bible, must be rather puzzled by the keeping of Sunday when God distinctly said, 'Keep holy the Sabbath day.' The word Sunday does not come anywhere in the Bible, so, without knowing it, they are obeying the authority of the Catholic Church."

The next authority to which I refer is another standard Catholic book that I have brought along from my library, called "The Question Box," by Conway. I understand this book is procurable at any Catholic book depot for a very small amount. I was fortunate enough to have this one presented to me. This is what I read on page 179: "What Bible authority is there for changing the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week? Who gave the Pope the authority to change a command of God?

"If the Bible is the only guide for the Christian, then the Seventh day Adventist is right in observing the Saturday with the Jew. Is it not strange that those who make the Bible their only teacher should inconsistently follow in this matter the tradition of the church?" Now that is a candid admission. I have these books, and anyone may examine the statements that I have read.

There is another statement, as published in the Weekly Call of February 22, 1884, "The Bible commands you to keep the Sabbath day. Sunday is not the Sabbath day. No man dares to assert that it is. For the Bible says as plainly as words can make it that the seventh day is the Sabbath, that is Saturday; for we know Sunday to be the first day of the week. I will give \$1,000.00 dollars to any man who will prove by the Bible alone that Sunday is the day we are bound to keep. The observance of Sunday is solely a law of the Catholic Church. The church changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and all the world bows down and worships upon that day, in silent obedience to the mandates of the Catholic Church."

The above sum of money is not the only sum offered for Bible evidence for Sunday observance. A Church of England vicar in London made a similar offer of £100 in the year 1924. And other offers have been made. And now I am going to make an offer. I am not a rich man, and support a home of seven. A month's unemployment, and I would qualify financially for intermittent work, but here is my offer. I will give £5 cash to anyone who, after a careful study of the Bible, will produce Bible evidence proving Sunday sacredness.

Sabbath keeping is commanded by God, Sunday keeping by man.. Matthew 15. 8, 9 declares that worship according to man-made commandments is "vain worship." In the face of the facts of Scripture and history, dear friends, will you not begin now to obey all God's laws, and keep His Sabbath?