

Friendly Bible Talks

“So you see the judgment begins before the second coming of Christ, and lasts for over a thousand years. The execution of its sentence against sinners is the end of the history of sin and of the present sin-cursed earth. A new earth is promised in which there shall be no more curse. But it is late, and we must close tonight’s study.”

A Breach In The Law

“LAST week,” said Mr. Summers, as the three friends gathered once more around the table in his sitting-room, with their Bibles before them, “we read some scriptures concerning the judgment, and learned something of its searching investigation of our lives, of the holy standard by which we shall be measured, and of the rewards that Christ will bring to His own. Tonight I would like to study with you about one particular point in which there is a grave and widespread departure from the law of God. Nearly all Christians, most of them unwittingly, are breaking one of the commandments, and the matter is one that calls for earnest study. If the course taken by the majority of Christians is wrong, a decided change ought to be made, for we cannot come up to the Second Advent of our Savior and be ready for Him if we are walking in sin.”

“True enough,” said Mr. Rogers. “Which commandment are you referring to?”

“Let us look at them, and you will soon see,” was Mr. Summers’ answer.

All accordingly turned to the twentieth chapter of Exodus, while Mr. Summers read one commandment after another. “Thou shall have no other gods before Me,” was the first.

“Perhaps that is the commandment you mean?” suggested Mr. Rogers.

“No,” was the answer. “This one is not kept as it ought to be. There are a good many forms of idolatry even in our own enlightened country, but Christians design, at least, to avoid them. So with the second, they do not bow down and worship graven images. Nor do they consider it right, to take God’s name in vain. But look now at the fourth,” Mr. Summers continued. “What does it say?”

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shall thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shall 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.”

“Do Christians profess to keep this commandment?” he asked. “We read it regularly in church,” answered Mr. Barker.

“But is the commandment itself actually obeyed?” inquired Mr. Summers.

“Well, of course we don’t keep the old Jewish Sabbath in this dispensation,” said Mr. Barker.

“The commandment does not tell us to keep the old Jewish Sabbath,” replied Mr. Summers. “It bids us remember the Sabbath of the Lord.”

“Christ changed the old Sabbath for the Christian Sunday;” put in Mr. Rogers. “That is why we keep the first day instead of the seventh.”

“Now we are getting at something definite,” said Mr. Summers. “Where do you read that Christ changed the day of the Sabbath, Mr. Rogers?”

“Oh, there are several texts in the New Testament,” answered Mr. Rogers. “I can’t put my finger on one just now. But I can bring you plenty next week.”

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“Very well; we will leave that side of the question till next week,” answered Mr. Summers. “Meanwhile let us notice how important in God’s sight is the Sabbath which He commanded us to keep. This fourth commandment is worthy of careful study. What is its first word?”

“Remember,” answered Mr. Barker.

“Yes; remember what?” asked Mr. Summers.

“Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,” quoted Mr. Rogers. “So the Sabbath day is a holy day, and we are to remember to keep it so. How came it to be holy?” asked Mr. Summers.

“The Lord blessed the Sabbath day,” read Mr. Barker, “and hallowed it.”

“So, then, it took three steps to complete the Sabbath day which we are to remember to keep holy,” remarked Mr. Summers. “First, the Lord rested on the seventh day, then He blessed the seventh day, and then He hallowed it. Thus it became a holy, blessed rest-day of the Lord. That was how God made the Sabbath. Could man make a Sabbath equal to it?”

“No,” answered Mr. Barker. “Because man could not create the world in six days and rest on the seventh; he could not bless the day, and he could not make it holy. Man might appoint a rest-day of his own, but he could not bless it or hallow it.”

“Well,” continued Mr. Summers, “did God wish man to appoint rest-days for himself, to suit his own ideas? Read Mark 2:27.”

Mr. Rogers turned to the place, and read: “The Sabbath was made for man.”

“So you see,” said Mr. Summers, “the Creator who provided man with all that was good for him, provided also a rest-day that was very good, for it was God’s own rest-day, blessed and hallowed by Himself. For whom does the text say, Mr. Rogers, that the Sabbath was made for the Jews?”

“No,” was the answer. “For man.”

“Think for a moment,” said Mr. Summers. “God bids us keep holy a rest-day of His own appointment, which He Himself has blessed and sanctified. He presents this rest-day to man, to the whole race, to be by them observed in memory of His creative work. Surely, if any change is to be made in this institution, we may reasonably expect that the new day of rest will be equally distinguished by God, and given with equal authority to the whole race. Before any change can be made in the day of the Sabbath, the seventh day must be deprived of its character as God’s rest-day, it must be stripped of its blessing and of its holiness, and it must be brought down to the level of the other days. Then the new rest-day must be explicitly set apart from the others as a day of divine appointment, and it must be pronounced by God Himself to be blessed and holy. God’s own voice proclaimed the sacredness of the Sabbath from Mount Sinai. No lesser authority will serve to substitute a new Sabbath for the one commanded by Jehovah.”

“But,” said Mr. Barker, “there was the Passover, and circumcision, and many other institutions, that all passed away when Christ came. Did not the old Sabbath pass away with them?”

“There is a very important distinction,” said Mr. Summers, “between the Sabbath and the Passover and such ceremonies, which we must not overlook. When was the Passover instituted?”

“When Israel came out of Egypt,” replied Mr. Rogers.

“Yes,” said Mr. Summers; “and you will find that circumcision began in the days of Abraham, and that all the temporary institutions which were types of the work of Jesus, the world’s Redeemer, were every one brought into existence after sin entered. There was no need of them before. Man had not fallen, and did not need to be pointed forward to a Savior. It was different with the Sabbath. That was given to man before sin

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ever entered our world. It was given in Eden, and it was given to the father of the human race. So it was clearly intended for the whole human family. It was not a type of Christ's redemptive work, for man did not need a Redeemer when the Sabbath was given. The Sabbath, as God tells us in the very words of the fourth commandment, was a memorial, not a type, of a work already accomplished. It bore witness to the fact that God had made the heavens and the earth by His creative power. Now how long would it be proper to keep up such a memorial? Would it not naturally hold good just as long as the heavens and the earth remained in existence?"

"It would seem so," said Mr. Barker.

"Certainly," continued Mr. Summers; "and, moreover, if sin had never entered this earth, but man had remained in Eden, holy and happy, do you think the human family would still be keeping the Sabbath?"

"I suppose they would," answered Mr. Rogers.

"And which day of the week would they be keeping holy?" pursued Mr. Summers. "The seventh or the first?"

"That we don't know, do we?" was the cautious answer of Mr. Rogers.

"Yes; we do know," said Mr. Summers. "God does not leave us to speculate on matters of the highest importance. We may be quite certain that if it were not for the entrance of sin, the people of this earth would still be keeping the seventh day holy. We know it because we are told distinctly that in the new earth the redeemed will keep the Sabbath day."

"Where is that text?" asked Mr. Barker.

"In Isaiah sixty-six;" was the answer. "Please read us the twenty second and twenty-third verses, Mr. Barker."

Mr. Barker accordingly turned to the passage, and read these words: "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, said the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, said the Lord."

"Do you notice how reasonable this statement concerning the Sabbath is?" inquired Mr. Summers. "We have seen that the Sabbath is a memorial of God's creation, and so ought properly to last as long as the creation of which it is a memorial. Accordingly the Lord says that as the new heavens and the new earth remain, so shall His people remain an everlasting race, everlastingly honoring His creative power by the observance of the memorial which commemorates it."

"That statement in the words of Isaiah about new moons is rather strange, don't you think," queried Mr. Barker, "if his words are intended for Christians? Was not the feast of the new moon a Jewish observance that passed away with Christ?"

"No," answered Mr. Summers. "You will not find any instruction given to Israel concerning any feast connected with the new moon. Whatever they did in the way of celebrating that occasion was not typical of Christ's work. But we have a suggestion in the book of Revelation as to why the nations of the redeemed should gather to worship God once a month. We read of the tree of life that it bears twelve manner of fruits, and will yield its fruit every month. Now the fruit of that tree is one of the delights of heaven, promised as a great reward to the over comer, and by putting these facts together we can see that every month will witness a joyous festival in the New Jerusalem, at which one prominent feature will be the eating of the fruit produced during that month by the tree of life."

"Will there be a moon, then, in the new earth?" asked Mr. Rogers.

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“Yes,” replied Mr. Summers. “We are told that the city will have no need of the sun nor of the moon to give it light, because the glory of God and of the Lamb will flood it with superior radiance, but the sun and the moon will still be for seasons and days and years. Isaiah, who was shown so much of the new earth, tells us in his thirtieth chapter: ‘Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord binds up the breach of His people, and heals the stroke of their wound.’ So you see the sun will still pursue his daily round, and the moon will continue its course in the heavens. There will still be days and nights, and weeks and months, and every seventh day for ever and ever will bring round again the memorial of the wonderful works of God.”

“All that you say about the Sabbath,” remarked Mr. Rogers, “sounds very plausible, but how is anyone to know now which day is the seventh day?”

“Do you know which day is the first?” asked Mr. Summers.

“Why Sunday is, of course,” was the answer, “the day of the resurrection.”

“Then if we know which day is the first, where is the difficulty in calculating which is the seventh?” answered Mr. Summers. “A child could work that out.”

“I mean that the reckoning of time has been lost, over and over again, hasn’t it? so that nobody could tell which was the real seventh day that God hallowed,” said Mr. Rogers.

“I never heard anything about time being lost,” answered Mr. Summers. “When was it?”

“I am not prepared to say definitely, but surely there must have been many times in our world’s history when nations relapsed into barbarism, and lost the reckoning of days,” said Mr. Rogers.

“Well, let us see,” answered Mr. Summers. “We can soon glance over the past and see where such a loss of reckoning was possible. God Himself started the numbering of the days, and made the week consist of six working days followed by a day of rest. This week He gave to Adam as a pattern for all succeeding weeks. How long did Adam live to hand on the knowledge of the divinely ordained week?”

“Nine hundred and thirty years,” replied Mr. Barker.

“Yes,” replied Mr. Summers. “Nearly one-sixth of the time covered by human history. Methusaleh was 243 years old when Adam died; and Methusaleh lived until the year of the deluge. In that year Shem was a hundred years old and Shem did not die till Jacob was about forty years of age. So you see it was a very simple thing for the patriarchs to keep alive the knowledge of what God had said to Adam. There was no chance for losing the reckoning of the days before Jacob’s time, was there?”

“Not so much as I had supposed there would be,” confessed Mr. Rogers. “I never noticed the figures you refer to, but I can see from what you say that very few links were necessary to span the first two thousand years. But what about the time Israel was in Egypt, in the house of bondage? Might they not lose their reckoning there?”

“They might, but it is not likely. God did not leave them to forget His promises nor His commandments; but even if Israel had been unmindful of the sacred seventh day, God Himself would have corrected their error when He brought them out of Egypt. Don’t you remember how, before they came to Sinai, they were commanded to observe the Sabbath, and how the manna fell on six days only? Whose reckoning was it that regulated the supply of manna?”

“God’s,” answered Mr. Rogers.

“Then we know which was the true seventh day at the time of the exodus,” answered Mr. Summers, “for we cannot suppose for one moment that God made a mistake, and withheld the manna on the wrong day.”

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From that time until Shiloh came the Jews remained a distinct people. It is true that a large part of Israel became idolatrous to such an extent that ten of the tribes were separated from the nation and scattered, but the remaining two tribes never lost the knowledge of God. In their darkest hours, they had prophets who kept alive the worship of the true God. Even in the seventy years' captivity in Babylon, God was honored and obeyed by some, as we may gather from the book of Daniel. And when we read of the return from Babylon, we find the leaders of the Jews very strict about the observance of the Sabbath. You remember also how much they had to say about the Sabbath when Christ was on earth?"

"I suppose," put in Mr. Barker, "that no-one would question that Christ kept the right day as the Sabbath, and I don't think there has been any possibility of losing count since."

"That is true," replied Mr. Summers. "There has been more or less civilization prevailing in Europe ever since the establishment of Christianity, so that time could not be lost. In addition to this, the Jews, scattered in all parts of the world, and unanimous in observing the seventh day, are a testimony that that day has not been lost. Again, for a large portion of the Christian era the first day of the week has been observed by the large majority, and everywhere you go on the face of the earth there is agreement as to which day of the week is the first. Now you can see that if ever a single day had been lost, in any part of the world, there would today be some disagreement among Christians somewhere, as to the true first day, or the same difficulty among some sections of the Jews, somewhere, as to the true seventh day. But no such difficulty exists in all the world, consequently we know that, beyond all question, we have the same reckoning of the days of the week as prevailed in Christ's time, and back of that even to the first week of creation. Therefore no-one need raise any difficulty about the observance of the Bible Sabbath on the ground that we cannot identify the day, for no such uncertainty exists."

"Granted that all you say is true, do you think," asked Mr. Rogers, "that the Lord cares very much which day we keep, so long as we observe one day in seven? Why can we not rest just as well on Sunday as on Saturday?"

"Suppose we take your last question first," answered Mr. Summers. "If the whole object of the Sabbath was to secure for the body a certain proportion of physical rest, naturally one day would answer as well as another. But that is not the reason assigned for giving the Sabbath to man. Remember what the commandment itself says. We are to cease from our work on the seventh day because the Lord rested on that day, and blessed and hallowed it. It is not our Sabbath, but 'the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.' Never mind about 'Jewish Sabbaths' and 'Christian Sabbaths' and any other kinds of Sabbaths. The Sabbath for God's children to keep is 'the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.' We need not concern ourselves to ask whether men have changed the Sabbath. The important question is: Has God changed His Sabbath? If He has, He will have told us so. If He has not, it remains true that 'the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God,' and that it is the Sabbath for His children to keep. But let us read one or two of God's reasons for giving us the Sabbath. You will notice that the idea of bodily rest is kept strictly in the background. Mr. Barker, will you read from Exodus, chapter thirty-one, verse thirteen."

Mr. Barker turned to the place, and read as follows: "Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily 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 that doth sanctify you."

"So the meaning of the Sabbath," said Mr. Summers, "for God's people is much more than weekly cessation from toil. It constitutes a token between Him and them of a certain relation that exists between them. He makes them a holy people, and they are willing that it should be so. Notice the fitness of the sign or token. It is itself a holy day, made so by the sanctifying power of Jehovah. His people keep it as a holy day in token of the fact that He is able to make holy, and in recognition further of the fact that He, the holy God, does make them, His children, holy. Notice, then, on whom the Sabbath forcibly teaches men to depend for holiness. Not on themselves, but on God. The Sabbath was given to direct the mind to God as the source, not only of created life, but also of holiness of character. If Israel had learned that lesson, they would not have become self-righteous, to their own destruction. Do we not ourselves need to be reminded continually of the same truth, and is not the Sabbath as necessary for Christians as it ever was for Jews?"

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“There are some further verses about the Sabbath in this chapter,” said Mr. Barker, “that seem to bear on what you are just saying.”

“Read them, will you?” replied Mr. Summers. Mr. Barker accordingly proceeded to read from the sixteenth verse: “Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel for ever.”

“Thank you,” said Mr. Summers. “You can see from these words that, in God’s mind, there was the idea that the lesson of the Sabbath would always be needed by His children. The relation between Him and them, of which it was a sign, was to be a perpetual covenant; therefore the sign would also be perpetual. On the part of God’s children it would be an acknowledgment of their utter dependence on Him for sanctification. That this was the chief intent of the Sabbath is stated again by the prophet Ezekiel. Will you read the twelfth verse of his twentieth chapter, Mr. Rogers?”

After finding the passage Mr. Rogers read these words: “Moreover also I gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.”

“Thank you,” said Mr. Summers. “Now I think we are in a position to answer your question, Mr. Rogers, as to why we cannot rest on one day just as well as on another. The main object of the Sabbath is to point us away from ourselves to the Creator, as the source of sanctification. Now if in our keeping the Sabbath we take it upon ourselves to vary God’s instruction, and set it aside or alter it at our own pleasure, how much utter dependence upon Him do we manifest? Why, in such a case the very thing that ought to be a sign on our part that we rest implicitly in Him, and trust His way, becomes, by our alterations, a sort of declaration of independence on our part, and a sign of distrust of His ways, a token that we feel able to improve on what He has done. Moreover, if we set aside His holy day, and set up a holy day of human authority, we practically claim by such an act to be able ourselves to impart sanctity when we choose to do so. But if we can make anything else holy, it follows that we can make ourselves holy, and do not need that God shall do this for us. Can you not see, then, that to set up another Sabbath in the place of God’s holy day is to set up ourselves as independent of His sanctifying power, and our human Sabbath becomes a sign that we set up ourselves in the place of God? Vastly more is involved in this question than the advantage of one day above another for the purposes of bodily rest.”

“You draw a very alarming picture,” said Mr. Rogers. “If what you say is true, it is a serious matter to depart from the keeping of the original Sabbath.”

“Now you have answered yourself the other question you raised,” said Mr. Summers. “You asked if the Lord was particular about the observance of one day of the week above another. Well, one text will show whether He regarded the observance of a particular day as vitally important. It is in the passage we have already drawn from, in the thirty-first of Exodus. In view of what we have just learned of the deep significance of God’s Sabbath, you will appreciate better the reason for the fourteenth and fifteenth verses. Read them, please.”

Mr. Rogers read as follows: “You shall keep the Sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defiles it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.”

“How was it,” asked Mr. Rogers, “if the Sabbath was so helpful an institution, and so full of meaning, that the Jews were not prevented by it from backsliding and finally rejecting their Messiah?”

“Because they did not keep the Sabbath as they should,” answered Mr. Summers. “They failed to enter into its true meaning. And you must not lay the blame for this on the Sabbath. It is true, of course, that there was no blessing in it for those who did not keep the Sabbath. Jesus, the Son of God, was full of grace and truth, but these did not profit the people who rejected Him.”

“But I thought the Jews were so particular about observing the Sabbath,” said Mr. Rogers.

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“They were at times,” answered Mr. Summers, “especially in their later history; but there were many times when God had to chastise them for their disregard of His holy day. And even when Christ came, and found them intensely anxious about the proper observance of the Sabbath, it was their own traditions to which they paid honor rather than the law of God. We will read what Amos was commissioned to say to Israel in his day, some eight centuries before Christ, about their observance of the Sabbath. Mr. Barker, will you please read from the fourth to the sixth verses of his eighth chapter?”

Mr. Barker accordingly read as follows: “Hear this, O you that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat?”

“Now,” remarked Mr. Summers, “this kind of Sabbath observance may have seemed very fair outwardly, but the Lord looks on the heart. It displeased Him that in the hearts where He expected to find thoughts of love and gratitude in return for His great blessings, He saw only selfishness and avarice. Instead of using the Sabbath aright, men were occupying the holy time with plans for defrauding their poorer neighbors. This was altogether inconsistent with God’s conception of Sabbath-keeping. The fourth commandment itself requires that we give as much thought to the rest of those under our care and the stranger within our gates as we take for our own rest, and God does not acknowledge as Sabbath-keeping a mere easy, selfish enjoyment of the good things of life, that is content to see others suffering for want of what we can give. He made this plain through the prophet Isaiah, who declared that the blessings that were to follow upon true Sabbath-keeping were for those who fed the hungry and dealt bountifully with the needy. The whole of the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah’s prophecy deals with the wonderful blessedness that follows unselfish ministry to others, and the chapter concludes thus: ‘If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from-doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words: then shall thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it.’”

“That is a very high standard of Sabbath-keeping that the prophet sets up,” said Mr. Barker.

“It is indeed,” assented Mr. Summers; “and these words go to show how very imperfect an idea men have of the Sabbath when they speak of it slightly as a Jewish ceremony. God says we do honor to Him when we call the Sabbath a delight, holy, honorable. Why, if the Jews had only kept the Sabbath aright, they would today have been still enjoying the favor of God, and Jerusalem would have been in existence at the present time.”

“I should like to know why you make such a statement as that, Mr. Summers,” said Mr. Rogers.

“I can very soon satisfy you,” was the answer. “Turn to the seventeenth chapter of Jeremiah, and read a few of the closing verses. Begin at the twentieth.”

Mr. Rogers turned to the place, and read thus: “Hear you the word of the Lord, you kings of Judah, and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem that enter in by these gates: thus said the Lord; “Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath day, but hallow you the Sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers. And it shall come to pass, if you diligently hearken unto Me, said the Lord, then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, ... and this city shall remain for ever.”

“But if you will not hearken unto Me to hallow the Sabbath day, then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched.”

“Now you can both see,” said Mr. Summers, “that Sabbath keeping, of the kind that God could accept, would have saved Jerusalem from all the evil it has suffered since the days of Jeremiah. This shows us

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plainly that the Sabbath, in God's sight, was of vital importance to His people. On their attitude toward it depended their welfare and very existence as a people. But we must close our study for tonight.

Do not forget, Mr. Rogers, that you are to bring us a number of texts next week to prove your statement that the Sabbath was changed by Christ from the seventh to the first day of the week."

The Christian Sabbath

"WELL, what have you discovered, Mr. Rogers, about the change of the Sabbath to the first day of the week?" asked Mr. Summers, as the three friends met once more for their weekly Bible study.

"I have several texts," replied Mr. Rogers. "At first I began to be afraid I had undertaken too much; there didn't seem to be as many statements in the New Testament about the first day of the week as I had thought, and what there was did not seem to help me much. In fact, I was a bit disappointed with the result of my investigation, and I had to ask somebody else to help me. But I think I have got it all right now. The apostles undoubtedly kept the first day of the week in honor of Christ's resurrection, and He taught them to do so by repeatedly meeting with them on that day."

"Very well," said Mr. Summers. "Let us begin with Christ's instruction, then. Where is it recorded that He taught the disciples to observe the first day?"

"Why," answered Mr. Rogers, "there is no definite statement that the disciples were to observe the first day. They kept it in honor of the resurrection of their Lord."

"Did He ask them to do so?" Mr. Summers inquired.

"That isn't recorded," admitted Mr. Rogers.

"Well, is it recorded anywhere that the disciples kept the first day of the week in honor of the resurrection?" asked Mr. Summers.

"Not in so many words," was the answer, "but we can infer it from their frequent meetings on that day."

"Wait a moment," said Mr. Summers. "Do you mean to tell me that you are going to set up a mere inference against the fourth commandment? You have the Word of God for the seventh day, and for the first day you confess that you have no definite command of Christ, and no definite statement by the apostles, only an inference, and that drawn, not by an inspired writer, but by uninspired men."

"But let me give you the texts," replied Mr. Rogers. "When you put them all together, I think they furnish a good reason for keeping the first day of the week."

"Very well; give us the texts," answered Mr. Summers.

"First, then," said Mr. Rogers, "I will deal with Christ's meetings with His disciples on the first day of the week. All of the evangelists speak of these. Matthew does so in the last chapter of his gospel, which begins: '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 sepulcher.' That is one text referring to the first day of the week."

"You notice, of course," put in Mr. Summers, "that the first day is not the Sabbath, but quite distinct from it, in the mind of Matthew."

"But that was before the resurrection," said Mr. Rogers, "when they still regarded the seventh day as the Sabbath."