

15. THE SABBATH

DURING the French Revolution an attempt was made to get entirely away from the Christian religion. In order to do so the week of seven days was officially abolished and a period of ten days instituted in its place. This ten-day cycle, however, did not fit in with man, beast, or the material world itself, and was soon given up. It seemed that even the horses in the streets broke down under this sort of regime. Neither could the people stand it. One skeptical writer was so impressed that he said it was easier to believe that Moses was inspired by some supernatural revelation to adopt the week of seven days than to believe that he just happened upon it by chance. "In fact," said this writer, "it would be as easy to believe that Moses came upon this great principle of six days of labor and one of rest by chance, as it would be to believe that the Iliad was written by a hog scribbling with its snout." This may seem a strange way to put it, but so the skeptic wrote, and I am inclined to agree with him.

H. L. Hastings drew attention to the fact that some fevers—for instance, typhoid—run seven, fourteen, twenty one, twenty-eight days, changing every seventh day, as do other diseases that result from physical exhaustion. Many believe that man is built on this seven-day plan and, therefore, needs a weekly rest day, just as an eight day clock needs to be wound up every week. It seems there is a law of sevens inwrought in our nature, as well as revealed in the fourth commandment.

However that may be, it was our Lord Jesus Christ who said, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." Mark 2:27. It must have been needful to man, or it would not have been divinely made for him. Certainly both man and beast need rest, and the God who made all things knows how much rest is needed. To provide this rest, He gave the Sabbath, for the word Sabbath means "rest." It is a time not only for physical rest but also for devotion and spiritual refreshment. Just think of it—one who has lived seven years has lived a full year of Sabbaths! At twenty-one he has had three years of Sabbaths for his spiritual improvement. At thirty-five he has had five years of Sabbaths. At seventy he has had ten whole years of Sabbaths.

What have these years of Sabbaths meant to you and to me? Have they been times of spiritual blessing and growth? Have these times of divine grace been blessed to us, or have we ignored them? Will they accuse us in the day of judgment?

Some people consider every day alike, but it is clear from plain Scriptural statements that Christ recognizes one specific day as His own. Let us turn to Revelation 1: 10: I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." We see here that the Apostle John considered one day, in a special sense, to be the Lord's day. It was different from other days. It was "the Lord's day." And on this day the heavenly vision came to him.

Now what is this Lord's day called? We turn again to the words of our Savior in Mark 2:28: "The Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath." It is clear that the Lord has a day, and that this day is called the Sabbath.

But what day is the Sabbath? We turn now to the first mention of the Sabbath in Holy Writ—Genesis 2:1-3: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." This is the story of the making of the Sabbath.

The world and all things in it were finished in six days. On the seventh day God ended His work; that is, He rested. After He had rested on that seventh day, He blessed it, then sanctified it, or set it apart for a holy use. Adam and Eve, being the only people on earth at that time, were the ones who kept the Sabbath; for they were the only ones there who could put it to a holy use.

Three times in this divine record of the origin of the Sabbath, the word made appears: (1) "On the seventh day God ended his work which he had made"; (2) "He rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made"; (3) "God blessed ... and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." This is the record of the making of the Sabbath, and it is to this that our Lord referred when He said, "The Sabbath was made for man." The word man here, of course, is used in its generic sense: mankind; it does not apply to any one race, tribe, or people. Some have felt that the Sabbath was made for the Jews only, but we notice that it was made at creation, many centuries before the Jewish race as such appeared. It was made for man—all mankind.

Our next question is, Who made the Sabbath? This also is answered clearly from the Scripture: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was

made." John 1:1-3.

Who is this divine Word? In the fourteenth verse we have the answer: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." It was by the Son of God the Father created or made all things.

That Christ's power is revealed in creation, as well as in redemption, we find in the words of the Apostle Paul in Colossians 1: 14-16. Speaking of our Savior, he says: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him."

To settle in our minds once and for all the great truth that the Son of God was the active agent in creation, we read the inspired words of Hebrews 1: 1, 2: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, bath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he bath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." Being the Son of God, He is divine and has the authority to the very name of God. Now verses eight to ten: "But unto the Son he said, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou has loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning has laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of your hands."

We see here who actually made the Sabbath. The Sabbath was one of the things that was made (Mark 2:27); therefore Christ must have made it. And in a special sense He is the Lord of it, since the Sabbath is the memorial of creation. Every recurring Sabbath, believers are reminded of the creative power of Christ, who not only made all things in the beginning, but whose re-creative, regenerative power has made them new creatures. We are born again, not of the flesh or the will of man (John 1: 13), but of "the word of God, which lives and abides for ever." (1 Peter 1:23.)

Surely, then, Jesus Christ would be a perfect judge of the true design of the Sabbath and of its proper observance. We are not speaking now of the so-called Sunday-Sabbath, but of the true Bible Sabbath, the seventh day of the week.

A few years ago almost everyone could repeat the Ten Commandments. Fewer can today, but all should be able to do so. There would be far less juvenile and adult delinquency in the world if both old and young not only memorized, but obeyed, the Ten Commandments. The fourth commandment is the Sabbath commandment, found in the very heart of the law of God. It is preceded by commands against worshipping false gods, and the making and worshipping of images or likeness of the divine Being, and the prohibition of taking His name in vain. It is followed by the second table of the law, which prohibits murder, stealing, adultery, false witness, and covetousness.

The Sabbath command reads as follows: "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." Exodus 20:8-11.

Notice, in this commandment the reason for the Sabbath is given as the fact that God created the heavens and the earth in six days and rested on the seventh day. The Sabbath, then, is a memorial of creation, the birthday of the world. It forever draws the minds of all mankind to the living God, who created all things and who sustains all things by the word of His power. Since we know that Jesus was the active agent in creation, and that all things were made by Him, the Sabbath not only reminds us of His glory but also testifies that He is Lord of all. It is, therefore, the true Lord's day, since it was made by Jesus Christ, the Lord.

Here we have a clear line of truth: God has a day. (Revelation 1: 10.) That day is called the Sabbath. (Mark 2:27, 28.) The Sabbath is the seventh day. (Genesis 2:1, 2.) All these facts are strengthened and upheld by the fourth commandment, spoken by God Himself in audible words on Mount Sinai, written with His own finger on tables of stone, and later, under the new covenant, written in the believer's heart. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, said the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." Hebrews 8: 10.

When Jesus was here on earth, the true nature of the Sabbath had been perverted by human interference. Its gracious design was largely lost because of the traditions of men which had been heaped

upon it. It was covered with the rubbish of human inventions. It was made a burden, which, instead of blessing men, was hard to bear. Jesus came to cast away these purely human enactments and to bring the Sabbath back to its rightful position as the blessed holy Sabbath of the Lord. He declared that it was made for man, and that it was to be a blessing and help to him.

Much of our Savior's ministry and teaching was devoted to the proper observance of the Sabbath. For those who teach that He came to destroy the Sabbath, this is difficult to explain. We read that at the very beginning of His ministry, "Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all. And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read." Luke 4:14-16. Our Savior attended the Sabbath service and took part in it. He did not need to do this in order to get a congregation, for vast crowds followed Him wherever He went. But in this way, He evidently intended to show His regard for the holy day of God.

The first recorded miracles which our Savior performed on the Sabbath are described in Luke 4:30-39. In Capernaum Jesus taught on the Sabbath days. "And in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice, saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him." Verses 33-35. The people were astounded at this miracle and said: "What a word is this! for with authority and power he commanded the unclean spirits, and they come out." Verse 36.

Then Jesus left the synagogue and went into the home of the Apostle Peter. We read in verses thirty eight and thirty-nine: "Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her. And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and ministered unto them." This was indeed a wonderful Sabbath at Capernaum. In fact, many of our Savior's miracles were wrought upon the Sabbath.

The Jewish people in Capernaum were so careful regarding the observance of the Sabbath that they waited until sunset, when the Sabbath was past, to bring their sick to be healed. Then "they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils. And all the city was gathered together at the door. And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils." Mark 1:32-34. The Sabbath, of course, begins and ends at sunset. The Bible method of reckoning days was not from midnight to midnight, but from sunset to sunset. "The evening and the morning were the first day." Genesis 1:5. "From even unto even, shall you celebrate your Sabbath." Leviticus 23:32. Even means "sunset"-"At even, at the going down of the sun." (Deuteronomy 16:6.) "At even, when the sun did set." (Mark 1:32.) According to the commandment, then, the Sabbath is from sunset Friday evening to sunset Saturday evening.

The next mention of the Sabbath in the public ministry of Christ is found in the twelfth chapter of Matthew. He and His disciples were passing through a grain field on the Sabbath day. The disciples, being hungry, plucked some of the ears of grain and ate them. The Pharisees, always ready to find fault with Christ and His teachings, accused the disciples of breaking the Sabbath and doing that which was not lawful. Of course, there is nothing in the Sabbath commandment against doing what they did. Such a prohibition was wholly in the Jewish ecclesiastical and traditional laws. So Jesus gave examples from Bible history to prove that the disciples did no wrong.

First, He referred these religious leaders to David's experience when he and his men, being very hungry, came to the temple and ate the show bread, which, according to the ceremonial law, was not lawful for any but the priests to eat. The show bread was placed on the golden table fresh every Sabbath day. The Savior also referred to the priests who labored hard in the temple on the Sabbath, offering the daily sacrifices and the extra ones that were necessary on that day. Yet, He said, they were blameless. I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple." Matthew 12:6. Jesus Himself was the One who made the Sabbath, and He knew how it should be kept. Then He added, "But if you had known what this means, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, you would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day." Verses 7, 8. The disciples were not guilty of breaking the Sabbath, even though the Pharisees had accused them of it.

Christ's argument here is that if David, in his necessity, did right in eating the show bread, which belonged only to the priests, how much less should blame be attached to the disciples for plucking and eating the grain from the field on the Sabbath! In referring to the priests in the temple, Jesus emphasized the words of the fourth commandment, which says, "Six days shall thou labor, and do all thy work."

Exodus 20:9. But the Sabbath was a day on which God's work could be carried on without blame. It was not a day for carrying on business, nor for the usual avocations or pleasures of life; but a day for God's work, for rest and worship.

Our Savior gave the true perspective on Sabbath keeping to these men of old. He declared that if they had known the meaning of the scripture, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice," they would not have accused the disciples. The Sabbath is a merciful institution. It is to bring rest for the weary. It is to point us to God. It is a time for spiritual refreshment, for religious convocations and services, for the reading of the Scripture, for prayer, for meditation. And acts of mercy are far more acceptable to God than sacrifice.

There are some people who have a strange idea of Sabbath keeping. They make it more of a burden and hardship than a blessing. The Youth's Companion once carried the story of a minister who, while traveling in northern Scotland, stopped over Sunday with a local family. These good people considered Sunday to be the Sabbath, and they kept it with what they considered to be proper strictness. The day was dark and rainy and the house was completely shut up. The little room in which they were sitting became very close and stuffy. The minister suggested that a window he raised to admit some fresh air.

"Mom," said the old woman, with stern disapproval in her voice and countenance, "Don't you think that we can have fresh air in this house on the Sabbath? "

Jesus knew why the Sabbath was made, and for what it was made. He says that it was made for man, and the acts which were necessary to give it existence were familiar to Him. These acts did not take place at Mount Sinai; they did not take place in Jerusalem; they did not take place in the wilderness; but they did take place in Paradise, with God's rest, His blessing, and His sanctification.

The Lord, who made man in the beginning, knew what he needed for rest, refreshment, and delight. The Sabbath has sustained this character from that time to this, but men had largely lost sight of it in Christ's day. Here is a promise which the men of His time should have remembered-Isaiah 58:13, 14: 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 hath spoken it."

We see that Jesus claimed the authority to teach proper observance of the Sabbath, and this was greatly resented by the theologians of His time. They not only criticized Him but finally sought to kill Him because of His teaching on the Sabbath question and His performing of miracles on that day.

On one Sabbath day our Savior entered the synagogue and saw a man with a withered hand. His enemies "asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath days? That they might accuse him. And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days. [That is, according to law; in harmony with the law of God.] Then said he to the man, Stretch forth your hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other. Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him." Matthew 12:10-14. Compare Mark 3:1-6 and Luke 6:6-11.

What made these men so angry? It was because the man stretched forth his arm and the Savior spoke the word of healing on the Sabbath. The Sabbath law did not forbid either of these acts. Jesus did not break the Sabbath, but He did transgress the tradition of the Pharisees that forbade doing anything to heal the sick upon the Sabbath. Really He had only acted in behalf of the Sabbath, showing its true meaning and beauty, and setting aside the traditions that had perverted it.

Jesus had not broken the Sabbath law. He had honored the Sabbath. He had shown what real Sabbath observance is by keeping it in the most wonderful, beautiful, and righteous manner. The Savior came to sweep away cruel traditions, but these men were so wedded to them that they were actually consulting together how they might destroy Jesus.

It is possible for people today to be wedded to some particular view of the Sabbath which is not in harmony with the Scriptures. They think they are defending the Sabbath, when they are merely defending a human tradition regarding it. It is well for us all to get back to the Bible and to the actual teaching of Jesus on this subject.

Jesus made it clear that works of mercy are in perfect harmony with God's plan and intent for the Sabbath day. In all our Savior's miracles there was a wise purpose. When He healed the poor man who had been ill with an infirmity for thirty-eight years, and who had lain at the Pool of Bethesda, hoping for someone to

carry him into the water, He was able to give sound instruction regarding Sabbath observance. The misguided theologians of that day tried to kill Jesus because of this mighty miracle (John 5:1-19), and some time later this same healing was brought under discussion again by the enemies of Jesus in an effort to prove Him a Sabbath breaker.

After healing this man, Jesus told him to take up his bed and walk. And "the man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole. And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the Sabbath day. But Jesus answered them, My Father works hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God." John 5:15-18.

Here are two crimes charged against the Savior: (1) that He had broken the Sabbath, and (2) that He had made Himself equal with God. Certainly He had violated no law by healing the sick man. But He had set at naught the tradition which forbade doing anything for the cure of disease on the Sabbath and had commanded the man to carry his bed. This, however, was not the sort of burden forbidden by Scripture. (See Jeremiah 17:21-27.) It was only a small thing, like a coat or a mat, and carrying it was designed to show the reality of the cure which had been wrought by the Lord of the Sabbath.

Jesus justified what He had done by referring to what His Father had done hitherto, that is, from the beginning of the creation. He had preserved mankind. He had kept the world going. He had sustained the whole universe in its motions. The acts of God are acts of mercy, kindness, and love toward the human race and toward all created things. But this does not mean that the Father had hitherto lightly esteemed the Sabbath. God had solemnly enjoined Sabbath observance in both the law and the prophets. (Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:8-11; Isaiah 58:13, 14; Ezekiel 20.) Jesus recognized the authority of the prophets of God. (Matthew 5:17-19; 7:12; Luke 16:17.) There was no ground on which to accuse Him of disregarding the Sabbath, since He followed the example of the Father from the beginning. In answer to these two charges, Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father do: for what things so ever he does, these also does the Son likewise." John 5:19.

Our Savior made it clear to those about Him that it was in harmony with the Sabbath law to heal the afflicted and relieve suffering on that day. He said, "My Father works hitherto, and I work." All days are God's in which to carry out His divine plan for the human race. To satisfy some of these critics, God Himself would have to stop working and put an end to His oversight of the universe on one day of the week. The heavenly systems would have to stand still, the wheat stop growing in the field, the fruit on the trees; the flowers would not put forth their buds nor blossom on the Sabbath. But if God should withhold His power on the Sabbath, all life would cease; even man himself would faint and die.

There are certain acts that may be performed in harmony with God's plan for the Sabbath. "The necessities of life must be attended to, the sick must be cared for, the wants of the needy must be supplied. He will not be held guiltless who neglects to relieve suffering on the Sabbath. God's holy rest day was made for man, and acts of mercy are in perfect harmony with its intent. God does not desire His creatures to suffer an hour's pain that may be relieved upon the Sabbath or any other day." Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 207.

Although the Sabbath commandment forbids secular labor on that day, it is not to be a day of inactivity. Neither is it a day for men to toil for a livelihood or labor for worldly pleasure or profit. As God ceased His labor of creation and rested on the Sabbath, so man is to leave the occupations of His daily toil and devote the sacred hours of the Sabbath to healthful rest, to worship, and to holy deeds.

It is clear from the New Testament record that our Savior risked His life to free the Sabbath from the burdensome restrictions placed on it by those who claimed to be its proponents but who actually were its enemies. On one Sabbath Jesus healed a woman who had been bound by Satan for eighteen years. At that time He met the arguments of His opponents by giving instruction on proper Sabbath-keeping. See Luke 13:10-17.

On another Sabbath day Christ met a man who had been born blind. In His divine compassion He moistened clay and anointed the blind eyes, and sent the man to the Pool of Siloam to wash, after which he came seeing. Some looked upon this as a violation of the Sabbath. See John 9. On another occasion, when the Savior went to dinner at the house of a Pharisee on the Sabbath and there healed a man afflicted with dropsy, He taught still more regarding true Sabbath keeping. (Luke 14:1-6.)

No wonder the bigoted religionists who opposed Him said, "This man is not of God, because he keeps not the Sabbath day"! John 9:16. He did not keep it according to the human restrictions which they had placed upon it. He who was the Lord of the Sabbath and had made it in the beginning knew how it should be kept; and this false charge, like others made against Him, only confirmed the fact that Jesus came

not to destroy God's law, but to fulfill it. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets," he said; "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 5:17-20.

We are not to think, much less to say, that Jesus came to do away with God's commandments, which include the fourth commandment declaring that "the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." A careful reading of the record of our Savior's works of mercy upon the Sabbath day reveals that the plan to destroy Him began in connection with His true attitude toward the Sabbath. It was carried on until it finally resulted in His crucifixion. "Therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the Sabbath day." John 5:16.

Our Savior's mission was one of restoration, of salvation, of life-giving. When He asked His enemies the question, "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill?" (Mark 3:4), He made this clear. There are some today who have the same spirit of enmity against true Sabbath keeping as had these religionists of old. If others have views regarding the Sabbath, either as to the day or the manner of its observance, that do not agree with theirs, they persecute them; and, through legislation and alliance with political power, seek to compel them to conform to their ideas.

Israel, the chosen people of God, went into idolatry and refused to observe the Sabbath that God had given them. (Jeremiah 17:24-27; 25:8-11, compared with 2 Chronicles 36:5-21) After they returned from the BabyIonian captivity, which came upon them as a punishment, especially for their Sabbath breaking, they went to the other extreme and surrounded the Sabbath with human traditions and laws which were a burden too great to be borne (Matthew 23:4). And when Jesus came and swept these traditions away, they persecuted Him and finally took part in His crucifixion. They were so wedded to their traditions that, rather than bring their views back into harmony with God's true revelation of the meaning and blessing of the Sabbath and its observance, they crucified the Lord of the Sabbath Himself and rejected the salvation so freely offered to them by the Son of God.

And now we come to the final scenes in the earthly life of our Savior. He was betrayed by a friend, forsaken by His disciples, judged by His enemies, crucified by wicked hands, taken down from the cross by two secret disciples, and laid in the Garden Tomb. The day of shame and torture was over. The sun had set, which ushered in the Sabbath of the Lord. Our Savior's work of atoning sacrifice was completed, and He rested through the sacred hours of the Sabbath day.

"In the beginning the Father and Son had rested upon the Sabbath after their work of creation. Now Jesus rested from the work of redemption; and though there was grief among those who loved Him on earth, yet there was joy in heaven. Glorious to the eyes of heavenly beings was the promise of the future. A restored creation, a redeemed race, that having conquered sin could never fall, this, the result to flow from Christ's completed work, God and angels saw." Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 769.

Someday there will be a restoration of "all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Acts 3:21. Then the creation Sabbath, the Sabbath that Christ made, the Sabbath that Christ kept, will still be a day of rest, a day of rejoicing; and all the earth will unite in His praise, as from one Sabbath to another the nations of the saved come to worship before God. (Isaiah 66:23.)

Please note the following Biblical facts:

1. Jesus called Himself the Lord of the Sabbath. (Mark 2:27, 28.) It was an honor to the Sabbath that God's only Son claimed to be its Lord. The expression He is "Lord even of the Sabbath day" (Matthew 12:8) shows that this was no small honor. This title implies that Christ is the protector, not the destroyer, of the Sabbath. Therefore, He is the rightful One to decide what its true observance should be.

2. It was the custom of Jesus to observe the Sabbath. (Luke 4:16.)

3. Jesus freed the Sabbath from the burdensome traditions which the Pharisees had added to it. (Matthew 12:1-8; John 7:22-24.)

4. By His acts of healing, Jesus taught the gospel of restoration and showed that acts of mercy were consistent with true Sabbath keeping. (Matthew 12:12; Mark 3:1-5.)

5. In His great prophecy of the future, Jesus recognized that the Sabbath would be in existence at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem in AD. 70. (Matthew 24:20.)

6. At the time of His crucifixion the Sabbath was recognized as the day just before the first day of the week. (Matthew 28:1.)

7. At that time the Sabbath commandment was observed by Christ's most intimate disciples. (Luke 23:56.)

Certainly all Christians will agree that the example of Jesus Christ, as recorded in the New Testament, is for them to follow. Let us, therefore, follow the example of Him who said that the Sabbath was made for man, and that He Himself is Lord even of the Sabbath day. The Sabbath of creation, the seventh day that was blessed and sanctified by the Lord Jesus Christ who made it, and the very day which He declared belonged to Him as its Lord, is the Lord's day and the Christian Sabbath. It should, therefore, be so recognized by all Christians, and will be so recognized at last when all flesh come to worship before the Lord.

BIBLE FACTS ABOUT THE SEVENTH-DAY SABBATH

1. After working six days in creation, God rested on the seventh day. (Genesis 2: 1~3.)
2. The Creator blessed the seventh day. (Genesis 2:3.)
3. He sanctified the seventh day. (Genesis 2:3; Exodus 20: 11)
4. God made the Sabbath in the Garden of Eden before the fall. Therefore, it is not a type, for types were not introduced until
after the fall. (Genesis 2:1-3.)
5. Jesus said that the Sabbath was made for man (Mark 2:27); that is, for the human race, including Gentiles as well as Jews.
6. It is a memorial of creation. (Exodus 20:11; 31:16, 17.) Every time we observe the Sabbath, we commemorate that
grand event.
7. It was given to Adam, the head of the human race (Mark 2:27; Genesis 2:1-3), as, the representative of all nations.
(Acts 17:26.)
8. It is not a Jewish institution, having been made 2,300 years before there was such a race. The Bible never calls it the Jewish
Sabbath. It is always "the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." We should be careful how we refer to God's holy day.
9. It was part of God's law before Sinai. (Exodus 16A, 5, 27-29.) Later God placed it in the heart of His moral law, the Ten
Commandments. (Exodus 20:1-17.)
10. The seventh-day Sabbath was commanded by the voice of the living God. (Deuteronomy 4:12, 13.)
11. Then He wrote the commandment with His own finger. (Exodus 31:18.)
12. It was preserved in the ark in the holy of holies of the sanctuary. (Deuteronomy 10:1-5.)
13. God forbade work upon the Sabbath, even in the busiest times. (Exodus 34:21.)
14. He destroyed many of the Israelites in the wilderness because they profaned the Sabbath. (Ezekiel 20:12, 13.)
15. It is the sign of the true God. (Ezekiel 20:20.)
16. God promised that Jerusalem would stand forever if its people kept the Sabbath. (Jeremiah 17:24, 25.)
17. He sent them into Babylonian captivity for breaking the Sabbath. (Nehemiah 13:17, IS.)
18. God pronounced a special blessing upon all Gentiles who keep it. (Isaiah 56:6, T)
19. God requires us to call the Sabbath "honorable." (Isaiah 58:13.)
20. After being trodden down for "many generations," the holy Sabbath is to be restored in the last days. (Isaiah 58:12, 13.)
21. All the holy prophets kept the seventh day. Jesus kept the seventh day all His life. (Luke 4:16.)
22. In this He followed His Father's example at creation. (John 15: 10.) Shall we not follow the example of both the
Father and the Son?
23. The Sabbath day is the Lord's day. (Revelation 1: 10; Mark 2:28; Isaiah 58:13; Exodus 20: 10.)
24. As the husband is lord of the wife, to love and cherish her (1 Peter 3:6), so Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath to love and protect
it. (Mark 2:28.)
25. Jesus vindicated the Sabbath as, a merciful institution. (Matthew 12:5-8.)
26. Instead of abolishing the Sabbath, Jesus taught how it should be observed. (Matthew 12:1-13.)

27. Forty years after His resurrection Jesus told His apostles that they should prayerfully regard the Sabbath. (Matthew 24:20.)
28. Holy women observed the Sabbath carefully after His death. (Luke 23:56.)
29. Thirty years after Christ's resurrection the Holy Spirit calls it "the Sabbath day." (Acts 13:14.)
30. In AD. 45 Paul, the great apostle to the Gentiles, called it the "Sabbath day." (Acts 13:27.)
31. Luke, the inspired historian, writing as late as AD. 62, calls it the "Sabbath day." (Acts 13:44.)
32. The Apostle James at the great Christian council in AD. 52, in the presence of the apostles and thousands of Christians,
called it the "Sabbath day." (Acts 15:21.)
33. It was the custom of the Apostle Paul to preach upon that day. (Acts 17:2.)
34. The Book of Acts alone records many meetings upon the Sabbath. (Acts 13:14, 44; 16:13; 17:2; 18:4, 1 l.)
35. There never was any dispute between the Christians and the Jews over the identity of the Sabbath day. This is proof that
the Christians in apostolic times observed the same day that the Jews did. In all their accusations against the Apostle Paul they never charged him with disregarding the Sabbath day. The Apostle Paul himself says, "Neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor yet against Caesar, have I offended any thing at all." Acts 25:8.
36. The Sabbath is mentioned fifty-eight times in the New Testament, where it is called "the Sabbath day," and always with
respect. There is not a word anywhere in the New Testament about the Sabbath being abolished, done away with, changed, or annulled.
37. There is no record in the New Testament, either after or before the resurrection, of any Christian's doing ordinary work
upon the seventh day. Why should modern Christians differ from Bible Christians? There is no record that God ever removed His blessing and sanctification from the seventh day.
38. As the Sabbath day was kept in Eden before the fall of man, so it will be observed eternally in the new earth after the
restitution. (Isaiah 66:22, 23.)
39. Jesus condemned the Pharisees for pretending to love God while making void one of the Ten Commandments by their
tradition. (Mark 7:13.)
40. The seventh-day Sabbath is an important part of the law of God, the Ten Commandments, spoken by His own mouth and
written by His own finger upon tables of stone. (Exodus 20.)
41. Jesus declared that He had not come to destroy the law: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets."
Matthew 5:17.

SOME BIBLE FACTS ABOUT THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK

1. The first work recorded in the Bible was done on Sunday, the first day of the week (Genesis 1: 1-5), and the work was done by God Himself.
2. God calls it one of the six working days. (Exodus 20:8-11.)
3. There is no record that any of the patriarchs ever kept it.
4. None of the holy prophets ever kept it.
5. God again calls it a working day. (Ezekiel 46: 1.)
6. God did not rest upon it. He never blessed it.
7. Christ did not rest upon it. He never blessed it.
8. There is no record that the apostles ever rested upon it.
9. It was never sanctified.
10. There was no law given to enforce its observance. Hence there is no transgression in working upon it.
"For where no law is, there is no transgression." Romans 4:15.
11. The New Testament nowhere forbids work upon it. There is no penalty provided for its violation, no blessing promised for

- its observance, no regulation given as to how it should be observed.
12. It is never called the Christian Sabbath; never called the Sabbath day at all; never called the Lord's day; never even called a rest day. No sacred title whatever is applied to it. It is simply called "the first day of the week."
 13. Jesus never mentioned it in any way.
 14. The word Sunday does not occur in the Bible.
 15. The first day of the week is mentioned only eight times in all the New Testament: Matthew 28: 1; Mark 16:2, 9; Luke 24: 1; John 20:1, 19; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2. Six of these texts refer to the same first day of the week, the resurrection day. The Apostle Paul directed the saints to look over their secular affairs on that day. (1 Corinthians 16:2.)
 16. In the entire New Testament there is recorded only one religious meeting held on the first day of the week, and even that was a night meeting (Acts 20:5-12.) There is no intimation that a meeting was ever held upon that day before or after this one time. It was not the custom of the early Christians to meet on that day. There was no requirement to break bread upon that day more than upon any other. We have an account of only one instance in which this was done, and that was after midnight. (Acts 20:7-11.)
 17. Jesus celebrated the Lord's Supper on Thursday evening. (Luke 22.) The disciples sometimes did it every day. (Acts 2:42-46.)
 18. The Bible nowhere says that the first day of the week commemorates the resurrection. This is a tradition of men which makes void the law of God. (Matthew 15:1-9.)
 19. Baptism commemorates the burial and resurrection of Jesus. (Romans 6:3-5.)
 20. The New Testament is totally silent regarding any change of the Sabbath day or any sacredness attached to the first day of the week.

Shall we not turn from all merely human traditions and gladly follow the divine command, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy"?