

## Chapter 1

Which Day of the Week Did Christ Sanctify, Bless, and Keep?.

If it were possible, I should like to transport you back in the history of the world for about nineteen centuries, and drop you down in the midst of the little village of Nazareth, hidden among the rugged mountains of Galilee in Palestine. If you should wind down one of the narrow streets of the town, you would come upon a little carpenter shop; and, peeping in at the low window, you would be privileged to behold a noble youth whose whole energy was bent on plying the carpenter's humble trade. The refined lineaments of the face, the high and noble brow and dignified bearing of the young craftsman would immediately impress you that you were in the presence of no ordinary day laborer. And, in fact, you would soon perceive in this faithful tradesman none other than He who left a throne for a carpenter shop in order to raise man from a life of sin and suffering to a throne of glory. "He had been the Commander of heaven; now... He learned a trade, and with His own hands worked in the carpenter's shop with Joseph."

Day after day you might pass the humble shop and ever find the young craftsman faithfully and conscientiously plying His trade. But should you chance that way on the seventh day of the week, you would find the tools carefully put away, the door shut\* and perfect quietness reigning within. You would wonder, what had led the faithful young craftsman to forsake His bench and shut up His shop.

But if you should follow the crowd that thronged the narrow lanes of the village, you would soon arrive at the beautiful synagogue, or church, of Nazareth; and, looking in, you would catch sight of the young craftsman again, dressed in His best attire, His face radiant with heavenly splendor; for He never failed to lay aside His material labors and present Himself at the house of God on the Sabbath. "And often in the synagogue on the Sabbath day He was called upon to read the lessons from the prophets, and the hearts of the hearers thrilled as a new light shone out from the familiar words of the sacred text."

This great respect and regard that Jesus manifested for the Sabbath during the years of His life as a craftsman we see equally present in His public ministry. For when He returned to His native town some time after the beginning of His public career, it is said of Him: "He came to

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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 4:16. In other words, as He was accustomed to attend the synagogue on the Sabbath when He lived there, so, on His return, He followed this same custom. And as He had been accustomed to observe the Sabbath at Nazareth, so it continued ever to be His custom.

And that this should be so is entirely natural, for He Himself is the owner of the Sabbath. He distinctly claims for Himself this prerogative in Mark 2:28, “Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath,”

The Sabbath belongs to Christ; it is His property. He is the Lord of the Sabbath. And He considers it one of His choicest possessions for, in Matthew 12:8, He says, “The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day.”

That little word even is quite significant. Suppose you were in the company of a very rich man who was showing you his possessions, and he should say, “I own that twenty-story office building; that beautiful mansion on the hill is mine; and even that big ocean liner in the bay belongs to me.” The word even in such a case would imply that it was a wonderful thing to the rich man’s mind that he could say he owned that big steamer. And so Jesus says, “I have all power in heaven and earth; I possess all things; and I am Lord even of the Sabbath day.”

“Listen, preacher,” said a man to me, “you are making a great deal of Christ’s being Lord of the Sabbath; but read the twenty-seventh verse of Mark 2, and you will see that the Sabbath was made for man; hence man can do what he pleases with it.”

I replied, “You are mistaken in that conclusion, for then the scripture would read: ‘The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: therefore man is Lord... of the Sabbath.’ But it does not read that way. It says, ‘The Son of man is Lord... of the Sabbath.’ He is the one to say how it is to be kept.”

Let me give you an illustration: Let us say that there is a tailor in this town who has a boy about six years old. This boy is the center of everything to this father. The father thinks of his boy day and night. So he decides he will make him a beautiful suit of clothes. He sits up nights working on it in an upper chamber. “When it is finished, it has brass buttons, gold braid, and the latest of everything. Finally, with a throb of joy in his heart, he brings the suit down and presents it to his little boy. He expects it will be a joyous occasion, for he has labored hard on the suit, and every stitch put in it has been a stitch of love.

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Suppose the little fellow takes the suit when it is handed to him, and looks at it with a scowl, and says, "I don't want it!" "But," says the father appealingly, "father made this suit for you, my son." But the little fellow again says, "I don't want it!" and throws it on the floor, and stamps all over it.

Now what do you think will follow? Well, most likely there will be a punishment of some sort for the boy. The suit was intended for his joy and pleasure; but, if he misuses it and rebels against the father's program, most likely, in the end, there will be trouble for the boy.

God says to man, "I made the Sabbath for you." But if man takes the Sabbath that God made for him and stamps upon it, what can the outcome be but disaster for the man?

People often ask me where in the New Testament the Sabbath is commanded to be kept. I say the Lord says right here in this scripture that He made the Sabbath for man. If God stands there saying to you, "I made the Sabbath for you; it contains a bit of love in every minute of the day," I ask you what further commandment do you want?

How does Christ happen to be the Lord of the Sabbath! He is the Lord of the Sabbath because He made it. He is responsible for its existence. John 1:10 says: "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not."

This scripture states plainly that Christ made the world. But for fear that you might still be in doubt about it, I shall read you another text, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son:... who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: for by Him [His dear Son] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth." Colossians 1:13-16. Also in the book of Hebrews 1:1, 2, we read, "God... hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds."

The same One who made the world was also the author of the Sabbath. "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." Genesis 2:1-3. It is evident that the One who rested and made the Sabbath was the One who worked and made the world. As Jesus made the world, He it was who rested on the seventh day, and

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blessed and sanctified it. Jesus, therefore, rightly claims to be Lord of the Sabbath, for He made it.

The Sabbath is the rest day of Jesus Christ, and there is no record that He ever had any other rest day. Sometimes people say to me, "Never mind about the Sabbath; preach Christ to us." But the Sabbath is full of Christ. He was the One who made it in the beginning at creation; and, if it had not been for Him, we would not have had the Sabbath at all. He sanctified the Sabbath, and blessed it. So the Sabbath is Christ's own blessed and sanctified day. Every moment of the Sabbath day is filled with the sanctified, blessed presence of Jesus. I don't see how a person can hate the Sabbath, - the child of Christ, as it were, - and still love Jesus.

The Catholic Church says that Sunday is the offspring of the union of the Catholic Church with the Holy Spirit. But the Sabbath is the offspring of Christ. You see Christ, the Son of the Infinite Father, made the Sabbath. No one is responsible for its existence but Christ. It is His own child.

Suppose you should come into the house of a neighbor, who had at one time saved your life. You say, "I owe everything to you. You have been good to me. You have saved my life. I can never repay the debt of gratitude I owe you." Then in course of the conversation you ask, "Who was that saucy-looking rascal I met in the yard as I was entering your place? I hate the very ground he walks on!" And the neighbor should hastily reply, "Oh, that is my son; did he try to do you any harm? He is my darling, the apple of my eye." Wouldn't you feel embarrassed at your statement against that boy, founded on nothing but prejudice? Well, how embarrassed people will feel who have called the Sabbath "a yoke of bondage," "that old Jewish day," etc., when Jesus says to them, "Why, the Sabbath is My own blessed child." All their hatred against the Sabbath is derived from prejudice; for no one can show that the Sabbath has ever done any harm, but has always been a very great blessing everywhere it has been observed.

### For Whom Made?

As Jesus Christ is the Lord of the Sabbath, He, better than anyone else, is in a position to state for whom the Sabbath was made.

Jesus says that the Sabbath was made for man. When the Sabbath was made, there was only one man in the world, namely, Adam. So the Sabbath must have been made for him. And Adam stood as the Representative of the human race.

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Now I want to ask you this question: Was Adam a Jew? Let us see how many in this audience believe that Adam was a Jew. Well, there is just one little boy that raised his hand. So all in this great congregation are persuaded that Adam was not a Jew. Well then, I want to ask another question. If the Sabbath was made for man, and Adam was the only man alive at the time it was made, and Adam was not a Jew, was the Sabbath made for the Jews?

My friends, there were no Jews until twenty-five hundred years after creation.

I wonder if there is anybody here tonight who believes that the Sabbath was made for the Jews.

I am going to give you an illustration: Suppose God had asked Gabriel at creation, "Gabriel, whom did We make this Sabbath for?" and Gabriel answered, "Why, Lord, You made the Sabbath for the Jews." "But," said the Lord, "there are no Jews." "Well," replied Gabriel, "they will be along some day." And then the Lord had sat down for twenty-five hundred years waiting for a Jew to appear so that the Sabbath might finally be kept. Do you believe that is the way it happened? Not for a minute.

Do you believe that God did not inform man in the beginning about the Sabbath day, which He had sanctified and blessed? And that finally He dug it out of the mire when it had been profaned and abused for a space of over two thousand five hundred years, and gave it to the Jews? No, a thousand times no! God gave the Sabbath to man, Adam, who was the son of God, when it was fresh with the perfume of the sinless, blessed state upon it; just as it came forth bright and shining from the hand of Christ.

### Not A Question Of Covenants

The Sabbath was made and given to man before sin ever entered the world. The Sabbath had no thought of Jew or Gentile attached to it. No racial distinctions were dreamed of at that time. It was centuries after the fall before national lines arose.

The Sabbath was not made a part of the old covenant or of the new, for covenants were not needed in the perfect state before sin entered. The Sabbath was never intended to be a shadow of the death of Christ and the cross, for then we should have had a shadow of death cast across the bright light of Eden before death ever existed.

If sin had never entered into the world, this perfect man and his descendants would have kept God's perfect law forever. They would

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have observed the Sabbath made for them. Thus we see clearly that the Sabbath does not depend upon the old or the new covenant for its stability, since, before any covenant was necessary, the Sabbath was already in existence.

The Sabbath has nothing especially in common with the Jew; for, before racial divisions were thought of, the Sabbath was observed in Eden, in the state of perfect bliss, and when the earth shall return to its Edenic splendor at the return of Christ and the setting up of His everlasting kingdom, the Sabbath will hold its rightful place, and be observed by all the redeemed host. "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that... from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the Lord." Isaiah 66:22, 23.

Thus the word declares that all flesh will come and worship before the Lord on the Sabbath day in the earth made new. No matter what day you observe now, dear friends, if you ever get to heaven, you will surely keep the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. There will be no divided heaven, half keeping the Sabbath and half keeping Sunday ; but all will keep the day that Jesus sanctified and blessed at creation. All will keep the day that the King of kings claims as His own. And I am of the opinion, that if you ever keep the Sabbath over yonder, it will be well to start keeping it now, or you may never have the chance to keep it there.

Some people tell me,—"Brother Everson, I observe Sabbath every day; I have no need of a special Sabbath day." I tell them, "If in Edenic splendor when a perfect nature spoke of a perfect God and God communed with man face to face, it was necessary to observe the Sabbath ever to keep God before the mind as the Creator of all things, how much more necessary became that institution after the fall, when God's personal presence was withdrawn from the earth and a sin-cursed nature could speak only imperfectly of the glory of its Creator?"

"The Sabbath, therefore, after the fall, if possible, assumed a still greater importance in leading sinful man to ever be mindful of his origin."

If man had always observed the Sabbath, he would not have gone astray, following after strange gods, for from week to week the Sabbath would have reminded him that the true God made the heavens and the earth.

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### The Ten Commandments

People often ask me, “If the Ten Commandments are so important, why were they not given by God before the days of Mi Sinai?”

The Ten Commandments existed from the beginning, but were not written out until God wrote them upon tables of stone at Mt. Sinai. In fact, nothing had been written before Mt. Sinai was reached, neither the Ten Commandments nor the Bible. It was not necessary to have the oracles of God written until sometime after the fall of man. For with Adam and his immediate descendants attaining an age of nearly a thousand years, the oracles of God were kept intact without writing. To the great Adam, with his illustrious mind still conserving much of its original brilliancy, the inhabitants of the earth could come for centuries after the fall and receive divine instruction as Adam had learned it direct from God.

But when sin had made such severe onslaughts on mankind that the years of his life became few, God had His revelations put into writing, that they might not be lost to mankind. During hundreds of years of slavery in Egypt the children of Israel had almost lost track of God and His revelations. For that reason one of the first things that took place after their liberation from Egyptian bondage was the writing out of the divine oracles. The books of the Bible were entrusted to Moses to be put into written form. But the law of the Ten Commandments was of such great importance that its writing was committed to no mortal man, but God Himself wrote it with His own finger and proclaimed it to the gathered multitude with His own voice. The law is the only part of the divine record that had this preeminence given to it. And this is certainly a strong proof of the exalted position that the law occupies in the mind of God.

### The Law Before Sinai

To argue that because the Ten Commandments were not written until Mt. Sinai they did not exist before that time would be as unfair as to conclude that the knowledge of God was unknown before the days of Moses because there was no Bible before Mt. Sinai, as Moses wrote the first books of the Bible. The law of God is eternal, and its existence is plainly indicated long before Mt. Sinai was ever reached.

Centuries before the days of Moses, Abraham kept the law of God, as we read in Genesis 26:5: “Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.”

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Likewise Joseph, when he was tempted by Potiphar's wife, exclaimed, "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" Genesis 39:9. Joseph certainly had knowledge of that one of the Ten Commandments which says, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." Not only did he know of the commandment, but he recognized that its violation meant sin. And Paul says, "Where no law is, there is no transgression." Eomans4:15.

Many people rail against the Old Testament as unworthy of being given any consideration, as they feel we are far advanced beyond its crude teachings.

But are we really further advanced than was Joseph, who, though a mere lad, far away from home and friends, remained loyal to God? Tempted every day by a rich and voluptuous woman, who was able to confer great favors upon him, he resisted her every advance, and stood as firm as a rock for God. Can we find any more wonderful example of Christian virtue and strength to-day? Oh that we had thousands of Josephs to stem the tide in our large cities, where millions are sinking in the mire of sin and disgrace!

There is no question, dear friends, but that Joseph knew God's law and kept it much better than we do to-day.

I do not think it is necessary to multiply evidence to prove that the law existed from the beginning, for of that I believe we are already convinced.

But lest a doubt on this point remains in the mind of anyone, especially on the Sabbath commandment, I shall give an additional proof on this point. A month before the children of Israel received the law at Mt. Sinai they had a knowledge of the Sabbath commandment; for, in the following words, the Lord reproves the people because they transgressed that commandment: "How long refuse ye to keep My commandments and My laws?" Exodus 16:28. This was on the occasion when the Lord began to give the Israelites manna, or heavenly bread, to eat. He told them that for six days they would find this manna on the ground, whence they could gather it for food; but on the seventh day there would fall no manna, as that was the Sabbath. The manna had to be eaten the very day it was gathered, for, if it were kept over until the following day, it spoiled. But by a special miracle God provided a double portion of manna on the sixth day of the week, and that which was kept over until the following day remained sweet, so that the people might have food on the Sabbath day without going out



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to gather it on the rest day. On the Sabbath day not a grain of manna fell from heaven.

It was not Moses who regulated the giving of this heavenly bread; it was God Himself. And for forty years God worked three miracles every week in order that His people might be able to keep holy His Sabbath day. God Himself saw to it in all those forty years that bread was provided in a double measure on Friday each week so that the Israelites might have food for the Sabbath, and not be obliged to profane the Sabbath day to get it.

The same God lives to-day. He is our Father, and is just as able to provide us with food to-day without our being obliged to go out and work for it on the Sabbath day as He was then. If He could provide bread for two million people fresh from slavery, who were wandering through a desolate wilderness for forty years, we surely can trust Him to take care of us, situated as favorably as we are.

As the giving of the manna depended wholly upon God, it ought to be settled once and for all that God recognizes a definite day as the Sabbath. For forty years God showed that He remembered the Sabbath day by giving a double portion of food on Friday and withholding it on the Sabbath.

### The Sabbath Law

We have thus seen evidences of the existence of the Sabbath before the proclamation of the law on Mt. Sinai. And, in fact, if we examine the Sabbath commandment, which is embedded in the midst of the law, we find that it is but the written form of the record of the Sabbath as it was known from the beginning. It reads:

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, 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.” Exodus 20:8-11.

The commandment begins with the word “remember,” showing immediately that it is calling attention to something already known; for we cannot remember something of which we have never heard. Then a large part of the text of the commandment itself is so nearly identical with the words found in Genesis 2:1-3 that we immediately see that the

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former is but the crystallization of the thought contained in the latter. The seventh day as God's rest day is brought out very prominently in both the record of Genesis and the law of Exodus. And the closing words on this subject in both cases are almost identical, "Wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it."

### Seventh Day Sanctified

To hallow, or sanctify, anything means to set it apart to a holy use. By sanctifying the Sabbath, therefore, God in the beginning set it apart for a holy use. We have already learned that the Sabbath was made for man, therefore it was set apart in the beginning for a holy use for man, or mankind.

Not only did God set apart the Sabbath for man as a holy day, but He added thereto His special blessing. And as God blessed and hallowed the seventh day, it is evident that it is the only day that man can keep holy. For man of himself cannot make anything holy; he can keep holy only by His grace that which God has already made holy.

As we are commanded in the Ten Commandments to keep holy the Sabbath day, and as the seventh day is the only day God made holy, it is evident that the seventh day is the only day that meets the requirements of God's law.

When we keep in mind the fact that God blessed the Sabbath day, it becomes more evident that that day is different from the other days of the week.

Some people insist that one day is as good as another, and all days are alike. But I read in the Bible that God blessed the seventh day; and that puts it in a class by itself.

If I should hold up my Bible and my notebook and say, This Book in my right hand is the Bible and the one in my left hand is my notebook, but there is no difference between them, they are both alike, you would not agree with that statement at all. Now would you? No, you know that one is the blessed and holy Book of God while the other is simply a common book.

When you have before you the day God sanctified and blessed and a day God never blessed, and you insist they are both alike, you make the blessing of God of no effect. You say, in other words, that the blessing of God amounts to nothing, for the day He blessed and the day He did not bless are both alike.

When Jacob was returning to his old home, he heard that his brother Esau was coming to meet him with four hundred men. He

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remembered his brother's threat to kill him, and he was sore afraid. He felt he was not prepared to die. So he sent his wives, children, servants, and cattle on ahead, and he remained behind alone, that he might fight it out with God.

### The Worth of God's Blessing

He prayed all night and wrestled with the Angel; and, as the morning was dawning in the eastern sky, the Angel said, "Let Me go, for the day breaketh." But Jacob tightened his hold on the Angel, and cried, "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me." Genesis 32:26. The blessing meant the difference between life and death to Jacob. With this thought in mind, dear friends, may we be mightily impressed with the words, "And God blessed the Sabbath day."

This blessing that comes to us in the Sabbath day is a blessing intended for all. It is not a blessing from which the Jews alone may profit. The Sabbath has a universal reason for its existence. It is founded on creation. The fourth commandment gives as the reason for the observance of the Sabbath the fact that God created the heavens and the earth. And He gave the Sabbath as a memorial of His creative work.

I wish to ask you a question. Did God create the Jews only or did He create us all? We are all agreed, I see, that God created us all. Then I wish to ask you another question. Do you know any reason why the Jews, more than anyone else, should remember God as the Creator? If you can think of any reason why the Jews, more than other men, should remember God as Creator, stand right up and tell it. I have not found a person yet who could give any reason why the Jews, more than other people, should remember God as Creator. It is evident, therefore, dear friends, that the Sabbath is founded upon a universal reason, - a reason so broad as to take in every created being, Jew or Gentile, male or female.

The great importance that God attached to the law at Sinai, writing it with His own finger and proclaiming it with His own voice, ever follows the law through the Holy Scriptures. David, the man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22), sings its praises in the most exalted strains. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Psalm 19:7. And of the redeemed soul he says, "His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night." Psalm 1:2. "Great peace have they which love Thy law: and nothing shall offend them." Psalm 119:165.

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Solomon, summing up the results of his vast wisdom, says, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Ecclesiastes 12:13. God, through Isaiah, pleads thus with His people in the following beautiful words: "O that thou hadst hearkened to My commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." Isaiah 48:18.

### Jesus and the Law

The exalted place that the law occupied in the life of Jesus when He was among men was such that we might say that He was the law in living form. It had already been prophesied of Him centuries before His appearance in the world that the law would be the fountain of His life: "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart." Psalm 40:7, 8. Jesus Himself said, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Matthew 12:34. As the law was within the heart of Jesus, we must therefore conclude that His actions were in harmony with the law. And in this we are not mistaken, for He Himself confesses, "I have kept My Father's commandments." John 15:10.

It was prophesied of Him, "He will magnify the law, and make it honorable." Isaiah 42:21. And who can read the beautiful Sermon on the Mount without being impressed by the thought that Jesus magnified the law? He made each one of its precepts stand out in bold relief so that they came to signify a hundredfold more than they had been construed to mean. Murder and adultery, which many had confined to the overt acts, Jesus showed extended to the intents and motives of the heart.

When we catch the spirit of the exalted reverence and high respect that Jesus had for the law, it will be impossible to entertain even for a moment that preposterous thought held by the Pharisees of His time and their brethren of to-day, that Christ came to nullify the law. Against these Pharisaical battlements of every age Christ hurled these all-powerful and eternal words: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." Matthew 5:17.

Note the significance of the words, "Think not." Banish even the thought from your minds that I have the slightest intention of destroying the law, is the intent of the expression. The law is more stable than the heavens and the earth themselves; for "till heaven and

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earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” Matthew 5:18. Then, lest anyone still remains in doubt of the law’s immutability, He plainly states the consequences of disregarding the claims of the law: “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,” or, in other words, he shall be shut out from the courts of glory. But to those who obey the law and lead others to do the same is reserved a great reward: “Whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” Verse 19.

The miracles that Christ wrought on the Sabbath in behalf of the suffering were in perfect keeping with His exalted teachings concerning the law; for, when accused of disregarding the Sabbath commandment, He answered, “Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days.” Matthew 12:12. He showed that it is lawful, or in accordance with the law, to do well on the Sabbath. He plainly states, therefore, that He is not at variance, but in harmony, with the law. And as He is the Giver of the law and the Sabbath and had come to teach men the law and to correct their false conceptions concerning it, His own statement that His actions were in harmony with the law ought to have more weight than those of His accusers. But even to-day men persist in believing what the Pharisees said rather than what the Saviour Himself taught on this point.

### The Teaching of the Apostles

The apostles who associated most closely with the Lord never received the impression from what He said or did that He had any intention of abrogating the law or setting aside the Sabbath. For when the Lord’s earthly ministry was ended and His body lay in the silent tomb, the mourning disciples and the holy women “rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment.” Luke 23:56. Indeed, in such sacred regard did they hold the Sabbath day that even the embalming of the Saviour must not occupy their attention during its holy hours.

But immediately at the close of the sacred day, very early on the morning of the first day of the week, the women returned to the work that had been interrupted by the coming in of the Sabbath. Very evidently they had not the slightest intimation of any proposed change in the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week.

We might add right here that when we speak of the Sabbath, or the seventh day, we do not refer to Sunday, for Sunday is not the seventh

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day; it is the first day of the week. We all know that Christ rose on Sunday; and the Bible record says that His resurrection took place on the first day of the week. (Mark 16:9.) Hence it is evident that Sunday is the first day of the week, and that the seventh day is Saturday.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, who had been associated with her Son in home relationship for nearly thirty years and who closely followed the teachings of His public ministry and had every opportunity of knowing His practices, never received any intimation of a new order of things that contemplated setting aside the Sabbath. She, together with the other women, kept the Sabbath day holy while her divine Son and Lord rested during its sacred hours in the tomb. (Luke 23:55.)

### Not a Matter of Calendars

We can deduce from Luke 23:56, where it says that they “rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment,” that in Christ’s time there was no question whatever about the day that corresponded to the day of the fourth commandment. It states plainly that “the Sabbath day according to the commandment” was the day that immediately preceded the day of the resurrection of Christ. Now all the world is agreed that Christ rose on Sunday, or on the day that the Bible calls the first day of the week. Then it is not such a difficult task even in our day to find which is “the Sabbath day according to the commandment.” For the day that immediately preceded the day of Christ’s resurrection is clearly specified as the Sabbath. There is no need, therefore, of getting confused about lost time, lost days, and changed calendars. Each one can settle the matter for himself without any profound reasoning.

However, some insist that with the resurrection of Christ was ushered in a new order of things whereby the Sabbath was transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week because of Christ’s resurrection on the first day.

It must be admitted, however, from the evidences already adduced that Christ Himself made no mention of such a change in His teachings before His death. And after His resurrection He gave no instruction whatsoever touching the Sabbath question; therefore we must conclude that all the teachings of Christ are on the side of the perpetuity of the seventh-day Sabbath. As Christ Himself clearly gives us no reason for observing any other day than the seventh, let us now pass on and examine the evidence furnished us by the apostles.

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### The Apostles and the Sabbath

Did the apostles, as some assert, observe the day of Christ's resurrection as a day of rest? As we have already noticed, they kept holy the day before Christ's resurrection, "according to the commandment." As the commandment contemplates keeping the Sabbath day holy after six days of labor, surely the apostles could not have had the intention of keeping two consecutive days holy.

And that we are not wrong in drawing this conclusion is fully warranted by the facts in the case. The disciples did not believe in the resurrection of Christ until late in the day on which He arose. And, in fact, Thomas did not believe in the Lord's resurrection till eight days after the event had taken place. Evidently, therefore, the disciples could not have observed the day of the resurrection as the Sabbath.

To be sure, it does say in John 20:19 that the disciples were together on the day of the Lord's resurrection: "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." But this was not a meeting held to celebrate Sunday as the Sabbath in honor of the resurrection, for the disciples did not believe as yet in His resurrection as an accomplished fact. For, speaking of this same appearance of Christ in the midst of His disciples in Mark 16:14, it says, "Afterward He appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen Him after He was risen." We see, then, that this was not a meeting in favor of Sunday sacredness; but the disciples "sat at meat," or were partaking of their evening meal, still in doubt about His resurrection. When Jesus appeared in their midst, He upbraided them because of their unbelief and hardness of heart in refusing to believe in His resurrection even after they had received the testimony of others who had seen Him. There is not the slightest reason for using this scripture to support the claim that the apostles met on Sunday to celebrate the resurrection of Christ. In fact, they were gathered in their common abode.

Another appearance of our Saviour among His disciples is recorded in John 20:26. "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." This appearance of Christ in the midst of the apostles was not on Sunday, but eight days after His first appearance, which would bring it at least on Monday. The object

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of this appearance of our Lord is clearly stated. It was to establish the faith of doubting Thomas in His resurrection.

Lest anyone present still remains in doubt about the day of the week on which Christ appeared to Thomas, I shall count it out for you. It says that it was eight days from the time of His first appearance. Starting with Sunday night, let us count eight days, and see where we come out. From Sunday night to Monday night is one day. From Monday night to Tuesday night would be two days; and from Tuesday night to Wednesday night would be three days. From Wednesday night to Thursday night gives us exactly four days; and from Thursday night to Friday night is five days; and from Friday night to Saturday night is six days. Then from Saturday night to Sunday night would be seven days; and, finally, from Sunday night to Monday night makes just eight days. It is very evident, therefore, that Christ's second appearance to His disciples was on Monday. It could not have been earlier than Monday.

The third time that the Lord appeared to His disciples was on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, after they had toiled all night fishing, without any fruit for their labor. (John 21:1-14.) Very evidently on this occasion there was no intention on the part of Christ or His apostles to celebrate a rest day. It is clear, therefore, that Jesus, in His glorified state, did not make a practice of meeting with His disciples on Sunday in honor of the resurrection, as some affirm. In fact, according to the Gospels, He met with His disciples on Sunday only once, and that was on the very day He rose from the dead. The reason for His meeting with them on that day is quite evident. He did not wish to let a day pass before coming among them to establish their faith in His resurrection; and so He appeared to them on the very day that He arose from the dead, or Sunday. Beyond this one instance when, as we have seen, the apostles were assembled, not to celebrate the day of the resurrection, of which they were still in doubt, but to partake of their evening meal, we have no record of Christ and His disciples ever meeting together on Sunday.

Whenever you hear a person say that Christ always met with His disciples on Sunday after His resurrection from the dead, keep in mind that it was only once that He met with them on the first day of the week; the word "always" in the statement is far from the truth.

Having found that the apostles themselves furnish no ground for sustaining Sunday sacredness, let us look for a moment at the example of Paul and the early church. The first day of the week is mentioned



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only twice in the Acts and the successive books of the New Testament. So, with the examination of these two texts, we shall have exhausted the material touching directly upon the question.

In 1 Corinthians 16:2 it says: "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." Some wish to read into this text a meeting of the early church at which a collection was taken up for the saints at Jerusalem. But the scripture plainly states that each member of the church should make his calculations, and then lay aside a certain sum of money for the poor as the Lord had prospered him. These calculations he surely did not make at church. The facts of the case are that, as the early Christians kept the Sabbath and promptly on Friday evening at sunset closed the week's business, they allowed all earthly cares to rest over the Sabbath day. But on Sunday, before resuming their business, they made up their accounts and calculations of the prosperity that had attended their affairs for the past week. And for that reason Paul mentions that day as propitious for setting aside a certain sum for the poor saints of Jerusalem.

This practice on the part of the early Christians of laying aside their work promptly at the setting of the sun on Friday evening is well illustrated in the case of the holy women who assisted in the burial of our Lord. When the evening shades of the Sabbath began to fall, they immediately stopped their work and left it until Sunday, when they took it up at the point at which it had been left at sunset on Friday evening. We see, therefore, that this text in Corinthians instead of favoring Sunday sacredness is directly contrary to it.

There is one more text in which the first day of the week is mentioned. It is found in Acts 20:7: "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 he continued his speech until midnight." This is the only religious service of which we have any record that was ever held in Bible times on Sunday. It will be well, therefore, to examine the scriptures carefully to see whether the meeting was held on the first day of the week because of any regard for the day as a holy day or simply by chance.

Some attach a great deal of importance to this service because it says the disciples came together to break bread. But it must be remembered that the breaking of bread on the part of the early church was not confined to any particular day or occasion, for in Acts 2:46 we read, "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and

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breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.”

The meeting of which we have record in Acts 20:6-12 was evidently held in the evening, for it says, “There were many lights in the upper chamber,” and “he [Paul] continued his speech until midnight.”

It is evident that this was not the regular weekly meeting of the church on Sunday, as some affirm, but a special service, held for a special reason. Moreover, the meeting was not held on Sunday evening, as some are accustomed to affirm, but on Saturday night. For, according to Bible reckoning, the day begins at sunset and ends at sunset. “From even unto even, shall ye celebrate your Sabbath.” Leviticus 23:32. In other words, the dark part of the day precedes the light part. So, in case of the first day of the week, the night would come first, then the day, as it says in Genesis 1:5, “The evening and the morning were the first day.”

Then the meeting of which we read in Acts 20: 6-12 must have been held on Saturday night in order to bring it within the pale of the first day of the week, according to Bible reckoning.

This is seen still more clearly by referring to the day when Christ died. As they took Him down from the cross and buried Him, “the Sabbath drew on.” Luke 23:54. The Sabbath drew on because the day was nearly over and the sun was sinking in the western heavens. As the Sabbath began with the setting of the sun that Friday evening, it must have closed with the setting of the sun on Saturday evening. And where the Sabbath ended, the first day, or Sunday, began. Consequently, the first day began with the setting of the sun on Saturday night and ended with the setting of the sun on Sunday night. In order that a night meeting be held, therefore, on the first day of the week, it must have been held on what we call Saturday night.

As Paul remained with the church at Troas seven days, he, no doubt, “as his manner was” (Acts 17:2), held the regular service with the church on the seventh day, or Sabbath. And then on Saturday evening he held a special meeting in order to give the church the full benefit of his presence, as he had to leave the next day. He would not depart on the Sabbath day; and, as he could not travel in the night, he took occasion to preach to the church all night, and then early Sunday morning at daybreak he started off on his journey. He evidently regarded the first day of the week as the first working day, for he made a journey of about nineteen miles on that day after leaving the church at Troas. Surely if Paul had regarded the first day of the week as a holy

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day, he would not have set off early in the morning of that day, but would have stayed and enjoyed the day with the church at Troas.

This text, therefore, also furnishes a strong evidence against, rather than in favor of, Sunday sacredness.

### The True Lord's Day

There is still one other scripture that is frequently advanced by Sunday observers as a text in favor of Sunday keeping, although the first day of the week is not mentioned in it. In Revelation 1:10 we read the following words from the pen of the apostle John, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." It is insisted that the expression "Lord's day" refers to Sunday. But there is nothing to prove that the apostle ever meant to apply this expression to the first day of the week. In his Gospel, which he probably wrote two years later than the Revelation, he never refers to the first day of the week by any such title as the Lord's day, but calls it simply the first day of the week. Now if this title had been regularly applied to it, surely John would have made use of it in his later writings. But he always speaks of Sunday under the title of the first day of the week, and applies the name Sabbath to the seventh day.

And, in fact, all Holy Writ is agreed in speaking of the seventh day, or the Sabbath, as the Lord's day. In Isaiah 58:13 the Lord speaks of the Sabbath, as "My holy day." As the word "My" in the text refers to the Lord, then the Sabbath must be the Lord's day. And in Mark 2:28 it says, "The Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath;" therefore the Sabbath is the Lord's day.

With the disposal of this text in Revelation 1:10, we have exhausted the scriptures that in any way make mention of Sunday, or are held to refer to Sunday; and we have seen that all concur in placing the day on a level with the other five days of labor. On the contrary, the Sabbath, from the beginning of creation and all down through Bible times, has been exalted as God's holy day. Christ's evidence in favor of the day we have already noticed to be of the strongest order. The apostles also have fully concurred in the Master's deep respect for the day. And while the apostle Paul never gives us the slightest hint of the sacredness of Sunday, he does render his homage to the Sabbath in a marked way, as we can see from the following evidence:

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In Acts 13:14 we have the record of Paul's attending religious service on the Sabbath. "But when they [Paul and his company] departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and sat down." Then the record goes on to say that on this occasion Paul preached to the assembled congregation. And when Paul had finished preaching, "the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath." Verse 42. And in verse 44 we read, "And the next Sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God." Here is an instance of Paul's holding another religious service on the Sabbath day. There evidently was no thought of attaching any sacredness to Sunday at that time, either on the part of the Jews or of the Gentiles. For if Sunday had been a day set apart for public worship, surely the Gentiles would have invited Paul to repeat his discourse to them the day following, or Sunday, instead of letting an entire week pass in order to reach another Sabbath day.

Paul himself never intimated the possibility of holding this service on Sunday, for the simple reason that he was a Sabbath keeper. This latter thought is clearly shown in Acts 17:2: "And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures." It was not by chance that Paul held these meetings on the Sabbath; but that was his manner, or practice. In practice, then, as we have said, Paul was a Sabbath keeper.

Some people wish to infer that the reason Paul went to the synagogue and preached on the Sabbath was because it afforded a better opportunity to meet the Jews on that day. But when he was at "Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia," he went out of the city on the Sabbath day, "by a riverside, where prayer was wont to be made;" and "sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither." Acts 16:12,13.

Paul had been in Philippi several days. What he did during that time the Bible does not state. But when the Sabbath day came, he put aside his everyday affairs and sought out a place where he could pray and read God's word. In this quiet spot by the river, on ground already hallowed as a place of prayer, Paul kept God's sanctified and blessed Sabbath day. He read and explained the Bible "unto the women which resorted thither."

Furthermore we have the record of Paul's preaching the gospel consecutively on the Sabbath for a long period at Corinth. In Acts

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18:1-3 we read: "After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; and found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them. And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers. And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks." Here we have Paul's life quite well delineated. He worked during the six days of labor, making tents with his own hands. But on the Sabbath he laid aside his material occupation, and presented himself at the synagogue, where he taught the words of God. He never failed to keep the Sabbath; therefore the record says: "He reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks." Verse 4. "And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them." Verse 11. We have here a record of many Sabbaths on which Paul preached to the people.

I have had people tell me that the apostles preached all the time, and therefore there was no difference to them between one day and another.

But here we have Paul working every day making tents. That would not be considered a right occupation for the Sabbath, would it? He worked on Sunday as well as on the other working days. But he never worked on the Sabbath. He shut up his shop every Sabbath day, and preached the gospel. "He reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, persuading the Jews and the Greeks."

As G. Campbell Morgan, the eminent preacher, says, speaking of Paul's sojourn in Corinth, "He contented himself for a period with preaching only on the Sabbath day in the synagogue to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, while he wrought with his own hands during the week." - "Acts of the Apostles," page 431.

When we present the numerous occasions on which Paul really preached the gospel on the Sabbath, and put them in contrast with the one instance in which he met with the church on the first day of the week, we see that the Pauline evidence is all on the side of the seventh-day Sabbath; for even the record of this one instance at Troas in which Paul met with the church on the first day of the week is anything but favorable to the argument of Sunday sacredness, as has already been shown.

We have not presented an exhaustive study of this most important question; but I believe you will agree with me from even this hasty

presentation of the matter that the Bible presents one solid phalanx of testimony in favor of the Sabbath as God's holy day for all time.

### The Custom of the Church

But some, finding all Biblical ground removed from under their feet, begin to urge in favor of Sunday sacredness the example of the church and Christendom in general in keeping Sunday for centuries, as a final potent argument in their favor. In reply, we might say that if anything can be argued from divine example, surely Sabbath observers can make out a very strong case; for Christ, the apostles, the prophets, and all the holy men of Bible times have, as a unit, agreed in keeping holy the Sabbath day. From creation to the last record of Revelation there is not a dissenting note either in word or example in regard to the observance of the seventh day. In fact, the thought of forsaking the seventh day for any other as a rest day was not even as much as hinted at or made a point of controversy anywhere by anyone in all the Bible record. The united testimony, therefore, of God's people for thousands of years ought to argue something in favor of the perpetuity of the seventh-day Sabbath - the Sabbath of creation week.

The example of the Christian church in observing Sunday for centuries, says the Sunday keeper, ought, then, to count as a mighty argument in favor of Sunday. But the weakness of this argument is immediately apparent when we remember that no such unity of action ever characterized Sunday observance during the Christian era. In the first place, we must eliminate Christ and His apostles from the number of those who have kept Sunday; then, also, the apostolic church must be removed from the ranks of the number that figure in the unity of Sunday observance; and there has never been a time during the Christian dispensation when the Sabbath has not been observed by a greater or fewer number of sincere Christians.

Of course, we are ready to admit that the Catholic Church has presented an almost solid unity of example in favor of the first day of the week from the time that Sunday observance was instituted under her authority to the present day. But what of it? Who would be willing to offer the practices of a Hildebrand, an Alexander Borgia and company as over against the example of David, Isaiah, Daniel, Jesus Christ, Peter, Paul, John, and all the holy men of Bible times?

When I was presenting this subject to an audience in a suburb of Chicago, there was present one of the leading millionaires of this country. As I was finishing my lecture, he spoke up and asked, "Do

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you believe that you are more intelligent and better informed than all our great theologians and preachers who keep Sunday!”

I answered him, “I would not for a minute put up my brains and intelligence against the mighty mentality and profound study of the great men who have kept Sunday. But it does not need such great learning to understand this Sabbath question. It reads so clearly in the Bible that anybody can see it who is willing to take a square look at it. When you have a clear case, all you have to do is to tell it in a frank way, and men see it. But when you have a crooked case, you need a Philadelphia lawyer to make it look all right.

“Now the reason we know that we have the truth on this Sabbath question, notwithstanding all the great preachers and the theologians, is because we take it just as the Bible reads.

“A friend of mine was sitting in his gospel tent, studying his subject for the evening service, when a schoolgirl stepped inside the tent to see what it looked like. She asked the preacher the question, ‘Why do you keep Saturday for the Sabbath?’ He read her the fourth commandment. When he got through reading, she exclaimed, ‘Oh, I see you follow it just as it reads!’”

At this point the millionaire asked another question: “Do you think that your little insignificant group of Sabbath keepers can be right and the great mass of the Christian world wrong?”

I said, “Perhaps you do not know, my friend, how many millions are on this Sabbath side of the question. Let me tell you what a great, mighty company we really are.

“I shall line them up for you. On the Sabbath side we have Noah, Enoch, Abraham, Moses, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Job, Ezekiel, Daniel, John the Baptist, Peter, James, John and the rest of the twelve apostles, Mary the mother of Christ, Paul, and the whole apostolic church, and, in the midst of them all, towering above this great company, stands Jesus Christ Himself on the Sabbath side.

“On the other hand, on the Sunday side, we have the popes and prelates (who are responsible for the observance of Sunday), many splendid men and able preachers who had it handed down to them but who never saw the light on the Sabbath question, and millions of laymen, many of whom kept it with perfect sincerity.”

As I stand here at the forks of the road wondering on which side I shall take my stand, I suddenly catch a glimpse of Jesus standing there in the midst of the Sabbath keepers and beckoning me to come; and I do not hesitate for another moment. I hasten to the place where Jesus

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stands. The fact that He is there is enough for me. I want to stand with Him.

Now, dear friends, I am sure you also want to be found standing on the side of Jesus.

How many here tonight will make up their minds to follow Jesus all the way, and will accept Jesus' own day as their Sabbath from this night forth? Let all stand who are willing to make this decision. Thank God for this great multitude who are standing on their feet, thus signifying their intention to keep holy God's blessed Sabbath day.

Let us pray: Our heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the presence of Thy Holy Spirit, who has touched the hearts of this dear people and given them courage to decide in favor of the truth on this important question. Lord, bless them abundantly in this stand that they have taken for Christ tonight. Help them, dear Lord, to remain firm unto the end. There will be moments when they will be sorely tried, but, Lord, help them to remember that Jesus, their best Friend, will always be right at their side to comfort them and strengthen them. Help them to understand that they can never fail so long as they put their trust in Jesus, who has all power in heaven and in earth. Lord, may they realize, as they are beginning to walk in this great light, that Jesus will take them by the hand and lead them step by step, that as their day is, so will their strength be. Above everything else, my heavenly Father, may they all be there, saved, before the great white throne when Jesus shall smile upon His own in the summer land of rest; for His name's sake. Amen.