



When and How
was the Sabbath Changed

from

Saturday

to Sunday?

By Ralph Larson

This is a question which is in the minds of a great many people today. Everyone knows, of course, that the original Sabbath of the commandment, which Christ wrote with His own finger on the tables of stone, was the seventh day of the week, the day we call Saturday. Astronomers tell us that they have absolute knowledge that the weekly cycle has not been changed, so our Saturday is still the seventh day of the week.

But today most Christians worship on Sunday, the first day of the week. Why? How did this come about? Who made the change and for what reasons? These are the questions everyone is asking, and we will try to give you an answer.

A Beautiful Prophecy

First of all, let us look at Revelation 12 where we find a beautiful picture in prophecy. The apostle John was given a vision, and he tells us about it in Revelation 12:1–5.

“And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man-child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to His throne.”

Here in this vision we have three pro-

phetic symbols presented to our wondering eyes: a woman, a child and a dragon. Each of these has a specific meaning in the prophecy. What are they, and what do they represent? First, whom does the dragon represent? We will find the answer to that in Revelation 12:9, “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.”

So that is easy, is it not? The dragon represents the devil. But who is the woman? Fortunately, this is easy to understand too; so easy, that you find practically all students of the Bible agreeing on it. Just about any Protestant commentary that you pick up will tell you that the woman represents

the true church of Christ, and if you have a Catholic Bible you will find that same information in the footnote under this chapter. We will show you some of the scriptures which make this point clear.

Revelation 19:7, 8: “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.”

You see—in these Scriptures the true church is pictured as the bride of Christ. Is that not a beautiful thought? The same thought was in the mind of the apostle Paul when he wrote to the church in Corinth: “For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.” 2 Corinthians 11:2.

The true church of God had to go into hiding, out in the wild places of the earth, the wilderness, for one thousand two hundred and sixty days...

Fast Reader Column

Astronomers tell us that they have absolute knowledge that the weekly cycle has not been changed, so we know that our Saturday is still the seventh day of the week. Why then, do most Christians worship on the first day of the week?

—

In Scripture, the true church is pictured as the bride of Christ. Paul says that this church has been espoused, or given in marriage, to one husband, Who is Christ. Throughout history, Satan, the dragon, has been determined to destroy Christ. Because he failed at doing that, he then turned his fury upon the bride of Christ. His evil plan was so successful that the true church of God had to go into hiding for 1,260 years. (See Revelation 12:6.)

The word espouse means to give in marriage, so Paul writes to the church, "I have given you in marriage to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." He carries this charming comparison still further in Ephesians 5:22–32: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the Saviour of the body. Therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing."

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."

Notice his concluding words—"I speak concerning Christ and the church." So, we all will agree with the Bible scholars of many faiths that this beautiful woman of Revelation 12 is a fitting picture of the true church of Christ, His bride, which He will take to Himself on that glorious day when He comes again.

The Coming King

But one more question—if the woman is the true church, and the dragon is the devil, who is the child? What have we been told about this child in Revelation 12:1–5? First, that it was a man-child; second, that the devil tried to destroy Him as soon as He was born; third, that He was caught up to God and to His throne; and fourth, that He is going to rule all nations with a rod of iron. Who could this be?

Of course, who could it be but Jesus? Remember the Christmas story? Remember how Herod, the king, had all the little boy babies in Bethlehem killed, in an attempt to destroy the baby Jesus soon after He was born? And what child does the Bible tell us about being caught up to God and His throne? Only Jesus. Read about it in Ephesians 1:20, 21: "Which He wrought

Therefore, putting this prophecy into our language, we would correctly read it like this: "And the devil was angry with the true church, and went to make war with the last part of her children, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus."

in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."

And what child, born upon this earth, is going to rule all nations with a rod of iron? Only Jesus. This was a familiar picture of the Messiah that everyone understood, for David had made this prophecy, "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I

shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Psalms 2:7–9.

Now compare this ancient prophecy with the similar one which John saw in his vision of future events and wrote down in Revelation 19:11–16: "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written, that no man knew, but He Himself. And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

This could only be Jesus. One of His many names in the Scriptures is The Word of God, as we read in John 1:1, 14: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: . . . 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."

The Bible Interprets Itself

So now we understand what the prophecy is all about. Remember now, we have made no interpretation of these things ourselves; we have let the Bible make its own interpretation to us. We do not try to interpret the Scriptures; we accept the Bible's own interpretation. So now we know that the beautiful woman is the true church, the child is Christ, and the dragon is the devil.

Now, what happened to the woman in John's prophecy? "And the woman fled into

the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days." Revelation 12:6.

Persecution

The true church of God had to go into hiding, out in the wild places of the earth, the wilderness, for one thousand two hundred and sixty days, it says. (Threescore equals sixty.) Why? Because the dragon, the devil, was angry with her. He had failed to kill Christ, so now he turns his fury upon the church of Christ, in terrible persecution. How long was the persecution? It says one thousand two hundred and sixty days, but we have a rule in these symbolic prophecies of the Bible that one day in the prophecy stands for one year in actual time. So, the actual time of the persecution of the true church would be one thousand two hundred and sixty years. You will find this rule applied in the Bible in Numbers 14:34 and in Ezekiel 4:6, "I have appointed thee each day for a year."

Not My Idea

Now let me make one thing clear. This is not a rule that I have invented, nor is it my interpretation. It is the Bible's own rule of interpretation, and it was recognized and followed by students of Bible prophecy hundreds, yes, thousands of years before I was born. As a matter of fact, the Jews themselves understood and used it in that way, so do not get the idea that I am telling you something that I invented. This is a Bible interpretation that has been recognized and followed by Bible scholars for ages. One day in symbolic prophecy means one year in actual time, as the prophecy is being fulfilled.

So we see the sad picture that the beautiful woman, the true church of Christ, was to undergo terrible persecution for more than a thousand years. It sounds like the Dark Ages that we read about in our history books, does it not? The thought is repeated in verses 13 and 14 of Revelation 12: "And when the dragon saw that he was cast into the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a

great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent."

Now let us read the conclusion of this marvelous prophecy about the true church—a verse that comes right down to the present time, where you and I are alive, and shows us that the true church was definitely going to survive the persecution and would not be entirely destroyed. It is the last verse of the chapter. "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Revelation 12:17.

Let us bring this out of the symbols of the prophecy into modern language. It will be easy because we have learned from the Bible what each of these symbols mean. Who is the dragon? The devil. And who is the woman? The true church. Now it talks about the remnant of her seed, or children. What is a remnant? Have you ever heard of a remnant sale? What does the word remnant mean? It means the remainder—the part that is left, the last part. Is a remnant large or small? Small, of course.

In Modern Language

Therefore, putting this prophecy into our language, we would correctly read it like this: "And the devil was angry with the true church, and went to make war with the last part of her children, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus."

That tells us two wonderful facts, First, the true church would not be entirely destroyed by the persecution of the 1260 years, but there would be a small part, a remnant, which would survive; second, you will be able to recognize that small remnant, because they keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus.

Well, you may say, "That is wonderful, that is thrilling, but what does that have to do with the change of the Sabbath?" Everything, dear friend, everything! May I remind you again that this remnant of the true church will be recognized by their

Fast Reader Column

The conclusion to this prophecy takes us right to the present time, where you and I live. "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Revelation 12:17. In modern day language this would read, "And the devil was angry with the true church, and went to make war with the last part of her children, which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus."

—

God's church would not be entirely destroyed—there would be a small remnant that would survive, and they are recognized by the fact that they keep the commandments of God, which include the Sabbath commandment.

keeping the commandments of God? As far as the Sabbath is concerned, that can mean one, and only one thing—that they keep the Sabbath of the commandment. That is obvious, is it not?

Can you keep the commandments of God without keeping the Sabbath of the commandment? No, you cannot.

One more question—what day is the Sabbath of the commandment? What did the commandment say? “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt

History Fulfills Prophecy

John’s beautiful prophecy tells us that the commandment-keeping, Sabbath-keeping church of Christ would be persecuted terribly through the Dark Ages, and would have to hide in the mountains and in the wilderness, but that there would be a remnant left in the last days—still a commandment-keeping, Sabbath-keeping people.

We will show you how history tells the amazing story of how that prophecy was

think of when we think of a great man and what he should do, but Jesus did bring a light to this dark world, and how that light spread is a thrilling story.

Just before He left this earth, He told His disciples what He wanted them to do with the light—take it over all the earth. (See Acts 1:8.) It must have staggered them, when they heard Him say that. What an assignment for 12 men who were not rich or learned! In simple faith they went forth to do what Jesus said. Let us



“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.”... This is the day we call Saturday, as you can see by your calendar. Astronomers tell us they can tell by the stars that it is still the same Sabbath day that used to be observed.

thou labour and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord Thy God.” Exodus 20:8–10. This is the day we call Saturday, as you can see by your calendar. Astronomers tell us they can tell by the stars that it is still the same Sabbath day that used to be observed.

Just one more question: Is a remnant of cloth the same as the original cloth or different? What do you say? Can you get a black remnant from a white bolt? No, it must be the same; it cannot be different. So now, speaking of churches, can you get a commandment-keeping remnant from a church that does not keep the commandments? No, certainly not. The remnant must be the same. Can you get a Sabbath keeping remnant of a church that does not keep the Sabbath? No! Therefore, this Sabbath remnant will have to be the last part of an earlier Sabbath-keeping church—the church that kept the Sabbath through the ages.

fulfilled to the very last detail. Jesus told John just how it would happen, and history proves that Jesus was right. It happened just the way He said it would.

Light of the World

We turn now to the story that we find in the pages of history. Envision a map of the world or, if you have an atlas, turn to a picture of the world, and envision it lying in darkness. John tells us how Jesus, the Light of the world, came to bring light into that darkness. (See John 1:9.) Locate the tiny land where Jesus lived, and envision that small land suddenly lightened with His presence. It may look very small in the dark world, but it is not. It is remarkable what that one little Light has done. Jesus never traveled over a hundred miles from the place of His birth during His ministry; He never wrote a book, never held an office, and never attended a university. He never did any of the things we so often

trace how the lights came on in the dark earth.

From the land where Jesus lived, they took the light to all the world. Thomas, the former doubter, became so full of faith that he spread the light through the east. We can follow his path through Antioch, across Arabia, Syria, Persia, to the far away Malibar coast of India, before his work was done. Some historians even believe that he reached China—and everywhere he went, churches sprang up.

The light went to Africa. We are not sure which disciple went that way, but evidence points to Andrew, and churches sprang up and lights came on in that darkened land.

Paul

To the north and west went the apostle Paul. We know more about his travels than about any of the others. Following his trail across Asia Minor, we can envision lights

along the way for the churches that he started. Across the sea into Greece, over into Italy, Rome and beyond. Romans 15:24 and 28 tells us how he planned to journey into Spain. Some scholars even think Paul made it to the British Isles—others think it was one of his converts. But we do know that the light went there, for Tertullian, who wrote about the year 200, includes the British Isles in his list of places where the gospel had gone.

The light in Ireland, Scotland and England grew to the point where it became bright enough to reflect back upon the continent of Europe again. Under the leadership of great men of God like Patrick, Columba, Columbanus, Aidan and others, schools were started in these lands for training gospel workers. Rulers of the northern nations of Europe sent their sons to these schools to be educated. The Scriptures were copied by hand at these centers, and their graduates went back into Europe with the light.

So far the picture looks very bright. Lights were coming on all over that part of the world. But remember, the prophecy said persecution would come, and it did!

Sabbath Keeping Churches

There is one great fact that you should know about these churches that were started by the apostles themselves and their early followers. They were commandment-keeping churches who observed the seventh day, or Saturday, as their Sabbath, in harmony with the commandment Christ wrote into the tables of stone. So you do not think that I speak for myself, I will share the actual statements of the historians on this matter.

First, what about the churches in far off India where Thomas went? Let the historians speak:

Samuel Purchas, noted geographer and compiler says: "They kept Saturday holy." *Pilgrimages*, Part 2, Book 8, chapter 6, 1260, London, 1625.

Claudius Buchanan says: "They have preserved the Bible in its purity; and their doctrines are, as far as the author knows, the doctrines of the Bible. Besides, they maintained the solemn observance of

Christian worship throughout the empire on the seventh day; and they have as many spires pointing to heaven among the Hindus as we ourselves." *Christian Researches in Asia*, 143, Philadelphia, 1813.

Throughout the World— an Eye Witness:

Now hear the testimony of an eye witness who had traveled over the greater part of Christendom, Socrates, the Greek historian, who wrote in the year 391ad:

"For although almost all churches throughout the world celebrate the mysteries (The Lord's Supper) on the Sabbath of every week, yet the Christians of Alexandria and Rome, on account of some ancient tradition, refuse to do this. The Egyptians in the neighborhood of Alexandria and the inhabitants of Thebais, hold their religious meetings on the Sabbath." *Ecclesiastical History*, Book 5, chapter 22, 289, London, 1892. The footnote, which accompanies the foregoing quotation explains the use of the word "Sabbath." It says: "That is, upon the Saturday. It should be observed, that Sunday is never called 'the Sabbath' (to sabbaton) by the ancient Fathers and historians."

Two facts are apparent in this statement:

- 1 Sunday observance began in Rome and Alexandria while the rest of the world observed Sabbath in harmony with the commandment of God.
- 2 Sunday observance was based on tradition, not a commandment of God.

Italy

As late as the year 791, Christians still kept the true Sabbath in Italy. Canon 13 of the council of Friaul, states: "Further, when speaking of that Sabbath which the Jews observe—the last day of the week—and which also our peasants observe, He said only Sabbath..." *Mansi* 13, 851. Quoted in *History of the Sabbath*, Andrews, 539.

Northern Italy

"First therefore they called them Waldenses and because they observed no other day of rest but the Sabbath days,

Fast Reader Column

Throughout history, we can trace the footsteps of the apostles as they carried the light of the gospel to foreign lands, leaving small groups of commandment-keeping people, hiding in the mountains and in the wilderness, keeping the Sabbath light burning.

—

Thomas took the gospel to Antioch, Arabia, Syria, Persia and to the far away Malibar coast of India. Through Andrew, there is evidence that the light went to Africa. Paul preached across Asia Minor, Greece, Italy, Rome and beyond. Some scholars even think Paul made it to the British Isles, Ireland, Scotland and England.

—

Wherever the Apostles went, Sabbath-keeping churches were raised. Socrates testified that as he traveled throughout the Christian world, he found that in the year 391 the churches of Christendom were observing the seventh day Sabbath except in two places, Rome and Alexandria.



England

In the 17th Century, several ministers were persecuted for defending the Bible Sabbath. John Trask was put in prison; his wife remained in prison 15 years. John James was hanged for defending the Sabbath, and his head placed on a pole near the meeting house as a warning to others.

they called them insabbathas, as much as to say, as they observed no Sabbath.” John P. Perris, *Luther’s Forerunners*, 7–8, London, 1624.

“Robinson gives an account of some of the Waldenses of the Alps, who were called...Insabbatati. ‘One says they were so named from the Hebrew word Sabbath, because they kept the Saturday for the Lord’s day. Another says they were so called because they rejected all the festivals.’” *General History of the Baptist Denomination*, vol. 2, 413.

France

Louis XII, King of France, ordered an investigation of the lives of those Waldenses living in his country. It was reported to him that they “kept the Sabbath day, observed the ordinance of baptism; according to the primitive church, instructed their children in the articles of the Christian faith and the commandments of God.” William Jones, *History of the Christian Church*, vol. 2, 71–72.

How and When was the Sabbath Changed?

Spain

From a decree of King Alphonso (published about 1194): “I command you that...heretics, to wit, Waldenses, Insabbathi (sabbathkeepers) and those who call them-

selves the poor of Lyons and all other heretics should be expelled away from the face of God...and ordered to depart from our kingdom.” Mariana, *Praefatio in Lucan Tudensem*, vol. 25, 190.

England

In the 17th Century, several ministers were persecuted for defending the Bible Sabbath. John Trask was put in prison; his wife remained in prison 15 years. John James was hanged for defending the Sabbath, and his head placed on a pole near the meeting house as a warning to others. Dr. Thomas Banfield, a former speaker in one of Cromwell’s parliaments, wrote two books advocating the Sabbath truth, and likewise went to prison. Edward Stennet, a minister, wrote a book entitled, “The Seventh Day is the Sabbath of the Lord.” And from prison he wrote a long and pathetic letter to Sabbathkeepers in the Rhode Island colony (1688). See Christian Edwardson’s *Facts of Faith*, 144.

Scotland

“They held that Saturday was properly the Sabbath on which they abstained from work.” Skene, *Celtic Scotland*, vol. 2, 349.

“They worked on Sunday, but kept Saturday in a sabbatical manner...These things Margaret abolished.” *A History of Scotland from the Roman Occupation*, vol. 1, 96.

Ireland

“The Celts used a Latin Bible unlike the Vulgate, and kept Saturday as a day of rest, with special religious services on Sunday.” Flick, *The Rise of the Medieval Church*, 237.

“It seems to have been customary in the Celtic churches of early times, in Ireland as well as Scotland, to keep Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath, as a day of rest from labor. They obeyed the fourth commandment literally upon the seventh day of the week.” Moffat, *The Church in Scotland*, 140.

Moravia-Bohemia

“I find from a passage in Erasmus that at the early period of the Reformation of which he wrote, there were Sabbatarians in Bohemia, who not only kept the seventh day, but were said to be...scrupulous in resting on it.” Cox *Literature on the Sabbath Question*, 201–202.

The great missionary leader, Count Zinzendorf, wrote in 1738: “I have employed the Sabbath for rest for many years already, and our Sunday for the proclamation of the gospel—that I have done without design and in simplicity of heart.” *Dugingsche Sammlung*, 224.

And we might add the testimony of more historians but surely this is enough to show you that wherever the apostles went—east, west, north, or south—commandment keeping churches sprang up, churches who observed the true Bible Sabbath.

How did a change come about? This is a sad story.

You will remember that the historian Socrates has already testified that as he traveled throughout the Christian world, he found that in the year 391 the churches of Christendom were observing the seventh-day Sabbath except in two places, Rome and Alexandria.

The change actually began in Rome. Rome was the center of a vast system of pagan religion in those days, which was worship of the sun. The sun worshippers had large temples, priests, and ceremonies and a vast system of religious rites and practices. They went to their temples to worship on the first day of each week, which was dedicated to the sun god and therefore called Sunday. You can get this information by looking up the word "Sunday" in any large dictionary.

A New Idea

It was here that the change began. A new system of thought had arisen in the Christian Church of Rome, based on a plan for combining the two religions into one. This plan was carried out, forming a new religion, half pagan and half Christian. It was formed by bringing into the Christian church the rites and ceremonies, the holy day, yes, even the philosophy of the pagans. But do not take my word for it. Hear the testimony of no less an authority than Cardinal Newman. Speaking of the Roman Church, he says, "Confiding then in the power of Christianity to resist the infection of evil, and to transmute the very instruments and appendages of demon-worship to an evangelical use...the rulers of the Church from early times were prepared, should the occasion arise, to adopt, or imitate, or sanction the existing rites and customs of the populace, as well as the philosophy of the educated class.

"The same reason, the need of holy days for the multitude, is assigned by Origen, St. Gregory's master, to explain the establishment of the Lord's day..."

"We are told in various ways of Eusebius, that Constantine, in order to recommend the new religion to the heathen, transferred into it the outward orna-

ments to which they had been accustomed in their own...incense, lamps and candles, holy water, asylums, holy days and seasons...the ring in marriage, turning to the east, images...are all of pagan origin, and sanctified by their adoption into the Church." *Development of Christian Doctrine*, 371-373, London, 1878.

A similar statement appeared in the *Catholic World*, March, 1894, 809, "The Church took the pagan philosophy and made it the buckler of faith against the heathen...She took the pagan Sunday, and made it the Christian Sunday."

Constantine

So now you can see *where* the change started and *how* it started. It was greatly helped by the attitude of the Emperor Constantine, who favored the combining of the two religions, and after professing Christianity himself, offered twenty pieces of gold and a white garment to all who would join the new church. Naturally, the pagans responded well to this most attractive offer, and joined the new religion by thousands. Constantine further helped the idea along by making the first Sunday law to appear in the pages of history in the year 321.

Spread by Force

Naturally, the other churches of the world were reluctant to accept this pagan custom into the Christian faith, but ways were found to force them to accept it. We won't dwell at length on this sad story of the great religious persecutions of the Dark Ages but only state that some historians believe that 50 million Christian people were put to death because they would not accept these customs, and other historians put the estimate as high as 150 million.

The light of Sabbath-keeping Christianity was extinguished in Scotland in 1069; in Ireland in 1172; that of the ancient Albigenes in 1229; in India in 1560, and in the mountains of central Europe in 1686.

The lights on our map of the world were slowly going out. Would any be left? Yes, prophecy said there would be a remnant. In 1668, Edward Stennet, a Sabbath-keeping minister of England wrote to some Sabbath-keeping Christians

Fast Reader Column

As the center of pagan sun worship, the change from the Sabbath to Sunday actually began in Rome. A plan to combine the two religions of Christianity with Paganism brought forth a new child, half pagan and half Christian. It was formed by bringing into the Christian church the rites and ceremonies, the holy days and the philosophies of the pagans.

—
The *Catholic World*, March 1894, 809 states, "The Church took the pagan philosophy and made it the buckler of faith against the heathen...She took the pagan Sunday, and made it the Christian Sunday."

—
The Emperor Constantine favored combining the two religions and offered twenty pieces of gold and a white garment to all who would join the new church. The pagans responded well to this offer, and joined the church by the thousands. In the year 321 Constantine passed the first Sunday law.

The change actually began in Rome. Rome was the center of a vast system of pagan religion in those days, which was worship of the sun. The sun worshippers had large temples, priests, and ceremonies and a vast system of religious rites and practices. They went to their temples to worship on the first day of each week, which was dedicated to the sun god and therefore called Sunday.



in Rhode Island as follows, "Here we are in England, about nine or ten churches that keep the Sabbath, besides many scattered disciples, who have been eminently preserved in this tottering day when many, once eminent churches, have been shattered in pieces." *Facts of Faith*, Edward Stennet, 146.

Truly, just a remnant, but by the grace of God, this remnant was able to find refuge in the land of freedom (United States of America), and from here the light of the true Sabbath is spreading again all over the world.

Another Evidence

Now let me show you another striking evidence that this is true. Thoughtful and scholarly men of many faiths admit it. Their statements below show clearly that whatever reasons they had for Sunday observance, they were not a Scriptural command.

Toronto Clergymen

A story in the *Toronto Daily Star*, Wednesday, October 26, 1949, bears the following heading:

"Clergy say Tradition, not Bible ordinance, Declared Sunday Holy." The first paragraph of the story says, 'Sunday is kept holy by Christians, not because there is any Scriptural injunction but because there are religious traditions associ-

ated with that day among Christians,' Protestant and Catholic spokesmen said today. They were commenting on a statement of the most Reverend Phillip Carrington, Anglican Archbishop of Quebec, that there is no commandment which states Sunday must be kept holy. 'Tradition,' he said, 'had made it a day of worship.'"

Jewish Rabbi

The second paragraph of the above story says, "A Rabbi recalled that the first Christians were Jews and celebrated the Sabbath on the last day of the week and it was not until the reign of the Emperor Constantine that the day was changed by Christians."

Church Historian

Wilhelm August Johann Neander, the great German theologian and historian of Heidelberg, whose *History of the Christian Religion and Church* is of such value and merit as to have gained for him the title, 'Prince of church historians' says, "The festival of Sunday, like all other festivals, was always only a human ordinance, and it was far from the intentions of the apostles to establish a divine command in this respect, far from them, and from the early apostolic church, to transfer the laws of the Sabbath to Sunday."

(Rose's translation from the first Ger-

man edition, 186.)

Phillip Schaff, another learned church historian, admits that there is no command in the New Testament for Sunday observance.

Presbyterian

"The observance of the seventh day Sabbath did not cease till it was abolished after the empire became Christian." *Tract No. 188*, Presbyterian Board of Publication.

Episcopal

Canon Eyton of the Church of England, author of the book *The Ten Commandments*, says: "There is no word, no hint, in the New Testament about abstaining from work on Sunday. The observance of Ash Wednesday or of Lent stands on the same footing as the observance of Sunday. Into the rest of Sunday, no divine law enters."

Morer Eyton, in his *Dialogues on the Lord's Day*, 189, writes, "The primitive Christians had a great veneration for the Sabbath and spent the day in devotion and sermons. And it is not to be doubted but they derived this practice from the apostles themselves."

Professor Edward Brerewood of Gresham College, London, in *A Learned Treatise on the Sabbath*, 71, says, "If the New Testament silence on any subject proves that the matter is unimportant, then the Christian emphasis on the observance of Sunday is really a mistake. Nowhere does the Book tell us to observe Sunday. Nowhere does it say that Saturday Sabbath-keeping is wrong."

Baptist

At a New York Minister's Conference, held November 13, 1893, Dr. Edward T. Hiscox, author of the *Baptist Manual*, read a paper on the transference of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day. Mention of this paper was made in the November 16, 1893, issue of the *New York Examiner*, a Baptist paper, which describes the intense interest manifested by the ministers present and the discussion which followed. From a copy of this address, furnished by Dr. Hiscox himself, we call attention to these striking and earnest statements:

"There was and is a commandment to keep holy the Sabbath day, but that Sabbath day was not Sunday. It will be said, however, and with some show of triumph, that the Sabbath was transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week, with all its duties, privileges and sanctions.

"Earnestly desiring information on this subject, which I have studied for many years, I ask: 'Where can the record of this transaction be found? Not in the New Testament—absolutely not. There is no scriptural evidence of the change of the Sabbath institution from the seventh to the first day of the week.

"I wish to say that this Sabbath question, in this aspect of it, is the gravest and most perplexing question connected with Christian institutions which at present claims attention from Christian people; and the only reason that it is not a more disturbing element in Christian thought and in religious discussions is because the Christian world has settled down content on the conviction that somehow a transference has taken place at the beginning of Christian history.

"To some it seems unaccountable that Jesus, during three years' intercourse with His disciples, often conversing with them upon the Sabbath question, discussing it in some of its various aspects, freeing it from its false glosses, never alluded to a transference of the day. Also, that during 40 days of his resurrection life, no such thing was intimated. Nor, so far as we know, did the Spirit, which was given to bring to their remembrance all things whatsoever that He has said unto them, deal with this question. Nor yet did the inspired apostles, in preaching the gospel, founding churches, counseling and instructing those founded, discuss or approach this subject.

"Of course, I quite well know that Sunday did come into use early in Christian history as a religious day; as we learn from the Christian Fathers and other sources. But what a pity that it comes branded with the mark of paganism, and christened with the name of the sun god, when adopted and sanctioned by the papal apostasy, and bequeathed as a sacred legacy to Protes-

Fast Reader Column

There was and is a commandment to keep the Sabbath day holy. "Sunday is founded, not on Scripture, but on tradition, and is distinctly a Catholic institution. As there is no Scripture for the transfer of the day of rest from the last to the first day of the week. Protestants ought to keep their Sabbath on Saturday and thus leave Catholics in full possession of Sunday." *Catholic Record*, September 17, 1891.

—
You might ask what difference it makes? Jesus answers that question for us. "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?" Matthew 15:3. "Thus have ye made the commandments of God of none effect by your tradition." Matthew 15:6. "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matthew 15:9.

You say—“That is very interesting—I am glad to know that—but after all, what difference does it make?...”

I will let the Lord Jesus Christ answer that question for you.... “*But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*” Matthew 15:9.



tantism!”
Catholic

In his widely known book, *Faith of Our Fathers*, 89, Cardinal Gibbon writes:

“You may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we never sanctify.”

“Sunday is founded, not on Scripture, but on tradition, and is distinctly a Catholic institution. As there is no Scripture for the transfer of the day of rest from the last to the first day of the week, Protestants ought to keep their Sabbath on Saturday and thus leave Catholics in full possession of Sunday.”—*Catholic Record*, September 17, 1891.

“Reason and common sense demand the acceptance of one or another of these alternatives. Either Protestantism and the keeping of Saturday, or Catholicity and the keeping of Sunday. Compromise is impos-

sible.” *Catholic Mirror*, December 23, 1893.

“Peter R. Tracer, in charge of the Question Box feature in *Extension* magazine, wrote in a letter of April 1, 1929: “Dear Sir: Regarding the change from the observance of the Jewish Sabbath to the Christian Sunday, I wish to draw your attention to the facts: That Protestants, who accept the Bible as the only rule of faith and religion, should by all means go back to the observance of the Sabbath.... We also say, that of all Protestants, the Seventh-day Adventists are the only group that reason correctly and are consistent with their teachings.”

Dr. R. W. Dale, in his *Ten Commandments*, 127-129, says: “It is quite clear that however rigidly or devoutly we may spend Sunday, we are not keeping the Sabbath.... The Sabbath was founded on a specific; divine command. We can plead no such command for the obligation to observe Sunday.... There is not a single

sentence in the New Testament to suggest that we incur any penalty by violating the supposed sanctity of Sunday.”

Many more might be added, friends, but surely this is enough. Surely now it is clear to all that the observance of Sunday is not based on Scripture but on human tradition, the commandments of men.

What's the Difference?

You say—“That is very interesting—I am glad to know that—but after all, what difference does it make? Does it really make any difference?”

I will let the Lord Jesus Christ answer that question for you. Did you notice, friend, the frequent reference to tradition, or human tradition, as we have examined this evidence? You did? Very well, please hold that in mind as we read the words of Jesus: “...Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?” Matthew 15:3. “...Thus have ye made the

commandments of God of none effect by your tradition.” Matthew 15:6. “*But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*” Matthew 15:9.

A Sobering Thought

Friend of mine, does the awful significance of that statement reach your heart? Think of these words: “They do worship me.”

Not pagans, not unbelievers, but people who worship—yes—who worship Jesus Christ! Yet He says it is in vain—useless—wasted—worthless—they might as well not do it. Why? Because they teach for doctrines the commandments of men.

It is hard to grasp the idea that a man could worship Jesus Christ in vain, is it not? When I see a man praying in the name of Christ, my heart goes out to him—I just cannot help it. But notice what Jesus said:

Even Miracle Workers

“Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them; I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity.” Matthew 7:22, 23.

Why does He say He never knew them? Return to Matthew 15:9: “...*In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*”

A Brighter Picture

But let us not close with such an unpleasant thought. Let us remember that the prophecy said there would be a remnant left—the true worshippers of God would not be fully destroyed from the earth—there would be a small remnant left. And how shall we recognize this remnant? The Bible tells us how we can recognize them. They are those who “...keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Revelation 12:17.

What a thrill it is to be able to report to you that there is a commandment-keeping, Sabbath-keeping people left on the earth! They are a people with whom the devil is furiously angry, as the prophecy

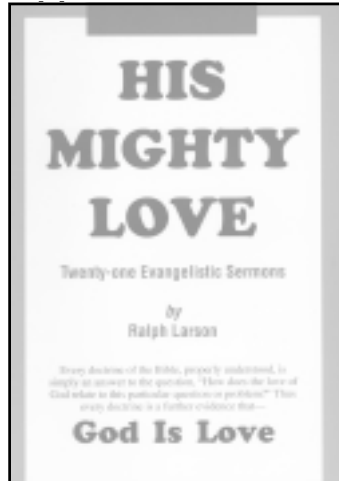
says, but they are marching forward just the same!

From America, the land of freedom, the light is spreading again all over the world, and people all over the world are recognizing and joining the commandment-keeping remnant church.

How much better to be among this divinely foretold people, who reject all traditions of men and obey the commandments of God, than to be among those who tremble at the words of Jesus; “In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” Matthew 15:9. Contrast them with the triumphant picture found in Revelation 22:14: “Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” **LM**

Dear Friend, with which group do you stand?

Article taken from *His Mighty Love* by



Available From Steps to Life
Just call 1-800-843-8788 to order
\$7.99
item# 306-0011

Fast Reader Column

So, you see, it does make a difference. Let it not be said of us, “Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? And in Thy name have cast out devils? And in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess to them; I never knew you; depart from Me, ye that work iniquity.” Matthew 7:22, 23.

—

If we do all these things in His name, but we dishonor His commandments and choose, rather, to honor man’s tradition, we are lost.