

Objections

When Jesus came to the earth to redeem the human race He sought the cooperation of His Church. But the leaders, the pastors, and the elders objected to His Presence. The Bible states, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." (John 1:11) That is not only a strange objection, but a very wicked one. They no doubt thought they were protecting their church. He obviously was not in agreement with their traditions, customs, commentaries and creeds. In fact He said, "In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matthew 15:9)

So, we ask, what in particular did the objectors find so terrible that the only solution was to murder the troublemaker on the cross of Calvary? They, of course, did not all have the same creed; they were divided and held different doctrines. There were Herodians, Pharisees, Sadducees, Scribes and Rulers. But they all agreed about one thing – get rid of Jesus. Why? Do the Scriptures reveal in plain words the reasons for their unanimous desire to be rid of Him?

The life of Jesus was the pure life of truth; therefore, it was a life of power and authority. He did not merely believe in truth; He was the Truth. The religionists had the forms, but no power. The people recognized this and turned to Jesus. The leaders were losing their hold on the people and feared for their position. They had to find some way to deceive the people into thinking Jesus was an imposter. They watched Him closely to trap Him. In John the fifth chapter we read that they focused on two things:

1. He healed on the Sabbath
2. He claimed to be the Son of God and made Himself equal to God.

John 5:9, 16 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the Sabbath.....And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the Sabbath day.

John 5:18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

So, they did not like the way Jesus kept the Sabbath; and they did not like Jesus making himself the true Son of God. Notice, these are the issues His enemies raised so they could kill Him. Their objections were carried on relentlessly until the truth, that is, the Savior, was hung on the cross of Calvary.

We stand amazed at the blindness of the ancient Church, both leaders and people, that they so misunderstood the Sacred Scriptures as to completely deny the message contained therein. They

wanted a Messiah, but only their version. They wanted deliverance from the Romans, not from sin. They wanted an earthly king, not the King of glory for eternity. In short, they had so changed the religion of God that they robbed God of service and became agents of confusion.

As we survey this New Testament record the question arises, is it possible the Christian Church has misunderstood the same two issues and is in danger of the same failure as the Jews? It is a sobering question; the destiny of the Church is in the answer.

We know, of course, that the plan of God to have a holy people redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb cannot fail. There will be some. The question is will those traveling the road of the majority be included; are many living in a false security based on ignorance of the genuine message of the Scriptures? Have we followed the arm of flesh instead of studying the Bible for ourselves? Do we have the witness of God Himself in our hearts? Do we know we hear the voice of the Good Shepherd? Let us test the question.

The Jewish leaders had a problem with the way Jesus kept the Sabbath. That is the first expression of their objections. Well, we say as Christians, that is no concern of ours; we do not keep the Sabbath at all. Does our denial of the Sabbath escape the question of how Jesus kept the Sabbath? Is it possible that Christian indifference to the claims of God's rest is an echo of the failed Jewish Church? They did not want to be taught by Jesus how to keep God's Holy Day. How unthinkable that those who profess to serve God today should demonstrate the same refusal of His example.

In our day the many denominations disagree on various doctrines, yet they all agree that Jesus is not our example of how to keep the Sabbath, he was a Jew and we are Christians. We keep the Lord's Day. All of Christianity seems to agree on the point. Think about it for a moment. Is there anything familiar here? Do you see? The logic is twisted. Did Jesus know anything about the Sabbath?

"I am the way, the truth, and the life." (John 14:6) Jesus is the Truth therefore, He can do only the truth. It is an invention of objectors that Jesus obeyed His Father's Commandments because He was a Jew. "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments." (John 15:10) It is a little thought of fact that Jesus said, "salvation is of the Jews." (John 4:22) And Paul instructs us, "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." (Galatians 3:7) It becomes a disturbing realization that the effort to do away with "Jewish" things involves much more than we were told. A latent anti-Semitism carries dire consequences to those who claim to believe the Bible.

It should become apparent to the candid mind that something has happened to take the edge off of some very plain Scriptures. If the "Christian" Church of today does not resemble the Christian Church of Christ and the Apostles, perhaps, it is time to slow down and find out why?

God has not left us in the dark; His word and history show us how “Christianity” began to drift and began to follow the customs of men. The Bible even predicted the changes and informs us what the changes mean.

But, let us return to the reasons the ones who had turned from the truth used to crucify our Lord. They did not like how He kept the Sabbath, and they did not like Him claiming to be the Son of God. We will take these objections in that sequence. In order to understand why the Lord Jesus kept the Sabbath the way He did we should first become intelligent about what the word of God says about the Sabbath. It should first be noticed that the word Sabbath is not a translated word. It is a Hebrew word brought across and means “rest.” If we keep in mind this proper meaning, that may help us retain a Biblical understanding. The word rest occurs early in the Word of God:

Genesis 2:1-3 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

Whatever God did it took six days to do it, because on the seventh day God ended his work. God created in six days and rested (Sabbathed) on the seventh day. Keep in mind the Hebrew word for rest is Sabbath. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it (set it apart for a holy use) because on the seventh day he had rested (sabbathed). So, the day God rested was the seventh day. The seventh day is a distinct day from the other six days in the fact that God ceased from His work on the seventh day to show He was done.

From this account we are reminded that the seventh day comes after the sixth day. There is a sequence that begins with the number one. It is impossible to insert a seventh day anywhere else but after the number six. The sequence began on a certain day and ended on a certain day in its proper order. The week (7 days) comes into existence in the first seven days of creation and continues to our time (For those who object, we will demonstrate its continuance later)

Now, why did God rest; was He tired? No. He saw that everything He had made was very good. He could not have done better. And yet, all was not well in the universe. This creation was in the midst of a problem brought on by the highest angel in heaven, Lucifer. He had challenged God’s authority. Even while God and His Son were creating the earth and mankind Lucifer’s threat was hanging over the universe. An awful possibility lay ahead. Adam and Eve were made with freedom of choice and peace and happiness hung in the balance. Under those circumstances how could God rest?

The Father and His Son rested in spite of the possibility of sin ruining planet earth because Calvary was in their hearts. They had already agreed that a wrong choice by man which meant death would be met by the Son Himself coming to die in his place. Every emergency had been foreseen and provided for. There could be no surprises; so, God could rest in spite of tragic possibilities.

Can that rest be ours? Yes, we may have the rest of God in spite of all circumstances in full confidence that God is able to take care of any problem. Is He able to give us rest? Listen to the prophet Jeremiah, "Ah Lord God! Behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by Thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee." (Jer 32:17) There is nothing too hard for a loving Creator.

So, sinless man began his life with rest. His first 24 hour day was spent in rest with His Creator. God explained to him how He made a perfect world for his birthday gift. He made the world and the Sun and the moon and the stars. The trees, the flowers, the singing birds, were for man's enjoyment and happiness. And more, God would have personal fellowship with them every Sabbath week by week from then on. All the beauties and wonders of nature have a message – God cares. He even gave us a special day of fellowship with Him

These few facts are the basis of the fourth Commandment which is in the heart of the Ten Commandments:

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

God declares the seventh day of Genesis 2 to be the same seventh day of Exodus 20. The language is definite and gives a certain assurance that the succession of weeks continues from creation to Moses. This succession carries to the time of Christ by His sanction of the New Testament seventh day; and the Jews maintain a perfect uniformity in its observance to the present day. Again, these simple facts show to the reasonable mind the number seven applies to the last day of the week. There is nothing in the history of the seventh day that allows its meaning to be changed into any other day. It remains the seventh day of the week in its order. We note the objection that some teach that any day can be the seventh this important thought – What need would there be for a change of the Sabbath Commandment if any day is the seventh part of the week. In other words, if any day may be termed the seventh day then it is no different from any other day; therefore the term would be meaningless.

For those who say there is the old Sabbath and a new Sabbath we answer that there is neither. There is only one Sabbath in Holy Scripture - God calls it "My Holy day." (Isaiah 58:13) So then, there is only one day in all eternity that after six consecutive days God rested – His Holy rest day is forever the seventh day of the creation week.

Before leaving Genesis 2 let us recall that Adam was the only man at creation. When Jesus said, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27) we should recognize that Adam as the only man represented the human race. The Sabbath was made for mankind centuries before there ever was a Jew. It should also be clear that God rested in paradise before sin entered through the wrong choice of Adam and Eve. The blessing of the Sabbath was made for mankind before sin and therefore is part of the moral universe of God in its innocence. Man will also be blessed by the seventh day Sabbath throughout eternity after the eradication of sin. (Isaiah 66:23)

Having looked a little more carefully at Genesis 2 we may realize that Jesus, indeed, viewed the Sabbath in a different light than the leadership of the Jews. They no longer believed the writings of Moses and misconstrued the Scriptures to their own hurt. The Jewish Church became corrupt and did not know when heaven drew near. Jesus told them the reason for their blindness:

John 5:46-47 "For had you believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?"

Jesus knew the words of Moses were correct. Peter tells us, "Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify. When it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." (1 Peter 1:10-11)

Moses with the Spirit of Christ in him wrote the truth. He points out that the Creator is alone worthy of worship. According to the Ten Commandments the great memorial of the Creator is the Sabbath. All intelligent creatures are to remember God is the Creator on the day He set aside for that purpose. What will we answer if Jesus says to us in the Christian Church, "But if ye believe not the writings of Moses, how shall ye believe my words?"

By now we might suspect that we may be no closer to understanding the Sabbath keeping of Jesus than were the Jews. The Creator in our age is a vague concept cast out of the world's educational systems. Many today measure the Bible by the pronouncements of science so-called. Theologians hold multitudes captive with the traditions of philosophy of which we will have more to say. The Sabbath that Jesus kept is as foreign to Churches as it was to the Pharisees, Sadducees, and rulers; and this in spite of the additional light of the New Testament. God's rest day at creation can never become obsolete any more than a person's birth date can. The nature of

anniversaries is that they repeat continually at the precise date upon which they happened. What would we think of a leader who suggested we could keep any day as the anniversary of July 4th?

God says, "Remember" the Sabbath. When men arise and tell us, "Forget it," maybe we should be just a little startled and think about who we should trust. Is the hand that was nailed to the cross the hand of my Friend? Is that Solitary life the One we love? Have we surrendered all to Him? Do you begin to see what the special day at the end of the week is all about? It is the Creator's call, "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28) Think of it – the rest of God. "My peace I give unto you." (John 14:27)

Objections 2

As we pass the little carpenter shop on the seventh day of the week we notice it is closed. Jesus and his family are at worship. Jesus takes up the scroll and begins to read aloud. What is He doing? He is still keeping the appointment He made at the creation of the world. Luke tells us, "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read." (Luke 4:16) We do not need to wonder where He will be on Sabbath – it is God's Holy day and He never fails to honor it. Did Jesus know how to keep the Sabbath?

The leaders called Him a Sabbath breaker because He did not keep their traditions. Some people today still think that Jesus came to take away the Sabbath so He purposely broke it. That is the same mistake the religious leaders of His day made. What did Jesus know about the Sabbath after all?

John 1:1-3 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.

Hebrews 1:1-2 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 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.

Colossians 1:15-16 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him.

Ephesians 3:9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.

The clear witness of the Apostles is that God created all things by Jesus Christ. Whatever Jesus does is righteousness and truth. He made the earth in six days and blessed the seventh day. He is the Lord of the Sabbath and knows how to keep it. (Mark 2:28) The Jews insulted the Creator of the Sabbath to His face saying that He did not know how to keep it. Today objectors say He not only does not know how to keep it, but add the day has been changed.

Since Jesus blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, what reason could there be for a change? Was there something imperfect that required fixing? Are not all His works perfect? At this point it is difficult to keep the objections straight. One says, all days are alike; another says, one day in seven; and another says, the Sabbath was changed to the first day of the week. Further, the Sabbath is no longer the memorial of creation, but now we honor the resurrection instead. This confusion becomes worse as we shall see.

“We do not keep the Sabbath at all, we keep the Lord’s Day.” Did we really say that? Does that mean that there are two different days and we can tell the difference? Is the distinction real and identifiable? We see the Bible Sabbath is the seventh day; but the Lord’s Day is claimed by the objectors to be the first day of the week. The seventh day and the first day are two separate days. If the Lord has a day He calls His, we should certainly love it. We have already noted that there is no Jewish Sabbath. There is only the Lord’s Holy Day - the Sabbath; and it was made for man, that is, all mankind.

Now, we are faced with a perplexing problem, has God two Holy days? Clearly, there is a conflict developing. No one can deny that God commanded man to remember the Sabbath. If He has another holy day where is the command to keep it? Is the first day of the week the new Holy day? Is there a penalty for not keeping the first day of the week? Such Scriptures are not to be found. Moreover, where has the blessing of God’s rest day been annulled?

Let us recall that the term “lord’s Day” was written by a Jew. Revelation 1:10, “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day” was written by John the beloved, a Jew. We will have a difficult time being rid of this Jewish thing. The book of Revelation is a book of quotations from the Old Testament. It is a bringing together of the thoughts of the Prophets – all Jews. Especially are the books of Daniel and the Revelation brought together for the end time. Christians in the last days are instructed by God through His servants the Prophets. The written Word is the authority of the Church. “The Bible and the Bible only” is the mantra of God’s people. The Spirit of God never contradicts the written Word.

Whatever the Lord’s Day is in Revelation 1:10, it cannot contradict the rest of the Bible. The Prophets are subject to the prophets. (1 Corinthians 14:32) We have seen that from the first week of the world God’s people worshipped the Creator on the seventh day of the week.

Strange infatuation that men will believe everybody but God. The Commandment does not say choose any day you want to be the Seventh. Pick a seventh part of time is language nowhere found in Scripture. If that were so what would prevent ministers from choosing any day other than the first day? Why not pick the day of the crucifixion? Contradiction is the plight of objections that deny the Word of God. We also will become aware that any finely crafted argument to destroy the Sabbath as a particular day also destroys any particular day of the week including the first day.

Since Jesus said He was the Lord of the Sabbath, let us examine Revelation 1:10 more closely. The phrase “Lord’s Day (emera kuriake) is found only in this verse. It is to found nowhere else in Scripture. Which day is meant is not defined in the verse. So, we will need to study other Scriptures to determine what John meant. It is evident that John expected everyone to know

what day he meant, as he makes no comment or explanation. The question that needs to be answered just here is, at the time John wrote, what day was known by all as God's Holy day?

It is not a difficult question to answer. From the beginning of the world there has been only one day God has claimed as His rest day. In all the Bible there is only one day God ever commanded to be kept holy. It is the day He Himself rested. Any objector can end this discussion by simply producing a single text from the Word of God which commands a different day than the seventh day Sabbath be kept as God's holy day. Any who have ever tried have found there is no such text.

But the fact is simply that God does not change. He is totally predictable. All creation is reliable because of fixed laws. Trees will not suddenly start growing upside down. We need not worry about gravity going away. Earth will not spin out of orbit into space. Lemon trees will not start bearing bananas. God Himself says, "For I am the Lord. I change not." (Mal 3:6) We can depend on Him. "Forever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven." (Psalm 119:89)

That leaves us in a peculiar position. If the Bible is silent about keeping any other day than the Sabbath holy, why is it that almost the entire Christian world keeps a different day for which there is no sanction by God? To violate an explicit command to keep a tradition of man seems very much like the problem the Jews had. What, after all, drives men to find reasons for disobeying a plain command of God? The Lord's day is the day God is Lord of. That day is the seventh day Sabbath. So, John was following the example of His Lord in keeping the Sabbath, the Lord's day as was His custom.

Someone says, "We honor the Lord by making the day of His resurrection the day for worship." Pope John Paul II in the second sentence of his Apostolic Letter, *Dies Domini* says, "In fact, in the weekly reckoning of time Sunday recalls the day of Christ's Resurrection." Rome has been using the resurrection argument for centuries.

Let us recall what Jesus says about His friends, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. (John 15:14) "If you love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15) "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? (Luke 6:46) How must the Lord of Glory feel when His creation tells Him they will meet with Him when it is convenient instead of when He appoints? Should we choose to arrive when we decide it is convenient and He is not there for our appointment – should we be surprised? If He tells us He will meet us on a certain day, and we arrive a day later – there will be no meeting at all. He waits for us in vain. Worship is only meaningful when the One worshipped and the worshiper meet at the same place at the same time.

What a strange thing that anyone can think he does honor to the Lord by showing disloyalty and rebellion in disobedience to His command. Lest we mistake the importance of obedience let us be reminded: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of

heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 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 7:21-23)

Casting out devils. That is pretty impressive. What is their deficiency? They did not do the will of the Father. “Depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” Here we see not doing the will of God, what He commands, and doing many wonderful works which we have decided to do instead are two sides of the same coin. The word iniquity means sin. What is sin? “Sin is transgression of the law.” (1 John 3:4) Sin is choosing to live outside of the law of God, or lawlessness. In order to avoid the consequences of these Scriptures something must be done about the Law. Ah, do away with it. Like magic the Sabbath commandment is also gone.

This maneuver works fine until someone asks, “Is it alright for a Christian to steal?” What about murder? Lying? These queries call for another slick move. The theologians are ready. Jesus, they say, brought back nine of the Commandments in the New Testament and left out the Sabbath. That seems to have quieted the majority of the denominations. But, let us look at Scripture that answers these objections.

Luke 23:52 – 24:1 “This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. And took it down, and wrapped it in linen and laid it in a sepulcher that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on. And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulcher, and how his body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment. Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulcher.”

There is a great consensus that Jesus was crucified on the day we call Friday, and that He resurrected on the day we call Sunday. The Hebrews called Friday the day of preparation, the sixth day. They called Sunday the first day of the week. Read the account in Luke again and notice that the day between Friday (day six) and the Sunday (first day) is the Sabbath (7th day). Jesus was crucified on the sixth day, rested on the seventh day, and rose on the first day of the week. The sequence is definite and the Sabbath is identified as the day between Friday and Sunday – the day we call Saturday. This event was after the cross, and written many years later by Luke. None of Christ’s followers knew anything about a change of the Sabbath.

Now, the whole Christian world concedes that Jesus rose on Sunday the first day of the week, but who first called Sunday the Lord’s Day? It was not John. A brief look at the historic record is necessary at this point. In the fourth century after Christ Constantine was the Emperor of Rome. “As a heathen, Constantine was the worshiper of Apollo or the sun, a fact that sheds much light upon

his edict enjoining men to observe the venerable day of the sun. Thus Gibbon testifies:-'The devotion of Constantine was more peculiarly directed to the genius of the sun, the Apollo of Greek and Roman mythology; and he was pleased to be represented with the symbols of the god of light and poetry. . .'"

Constantine made the world's first Sunday Law in A.D. 321. ". . .carried away by the current of opinion, he declared himself a convert to the church. Christianity, then, or what he was pleased to call by that name, became the law of the land, and the edict of A.D. 321, being unrevoked, was enforced as a Christian ordinance."

Nicephorus asserts that Constantine, who considered himself quite as much the head of the church as was the pope, "directed that the day which the Jews considered the first day of the week, and which the Greeks dedicated to the sun, should be called the Lord's day."

"Sylvester was the bishop of Rome while Constantine was emperor. How faithfully he acted his part in transforming the festival of the sun into a Christian institution is seen in that, by his apostolic authority, he changed the name of the day, giving it the imposing title of LORD'S DAY."

Bishop Eusibius, a close friend of Constantine wrote, "And all things whatsoever that it was duty to do on the Sabbath, these we have transferred to the Lord's day, as more appropriately belonging to it, because it has a precedence and is first in rank, and more honorable than the Jewish Sabbath." This statement was quoted by Pope John Paul II in Dies Domini; his Apostolic Letter on the change of the Sabbath to Sunday. He mentions the fourth century.

Does the word Sun day make a little more sense now? The sun was worshipped on the first day of the week for centuries before Christianity. This very brief history will be expanded with citations in a future study. But, with this small glimpse it can be seen at once that the silence of the Bible about Sunday sacredness is taken up by Secular power and Bishops of Rome.

What is it that makes something holy? How could time be made holy? Moses was out with the sheep one day when he came upon a burning bush. It was ablaze but was not being consumed. What kind of bush was this? As he approached for a better look a voice told him to take off his shoes; he was on holy ground. What made the ground holy? It was the presence of God. Without the Presence of God it was just a piece of ground. What makes a person holy? It is the presence of God. What makes the Sabbath holy? It is the presence of God. God has made an appointment for His people to meet with Him. If they come on any other day the appointment is missed. And although His Spirit is always with us He has only blessed and sanctified one day of the week.

When the Jewish worshippers refused to acknowledge the Son of God and receive the gospel the time came for God to withdraw from their stubbornness. "Behold, your house is left unto you

desolate” (Matthew 23:18) The temple in Jerusalem no longer had the presence of God and was no longer holy. It was just a house, a building like any other.

So, there is no confusion in the Word of God about which day the Sabbath is, or what its purpose is. There is not a single word in Scripture that tells us God changed His mind and took the blessing of the Sabbath away from man. Neither is there a hint that He replaced it. The memorial of creation and the Creator stands as long as there is an earth. “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” (Matthew 5:17-18) These plain words stand as a monument against every attempt to do away with the law of God. Let the one who tries first prove that heaven and earth have passed away.

But, one word seems to have attracted the eye of the objectors – the word fulfil. While ignoring the rest of the statement, the word fulfil is made to contradict all of Scripture. The objection is this: the word fulfil must mean finished, therefore, the requirement is done away. However, the Bible meaning is fill full; that is to do completely what is required. This is seen in Matthew 3:15, just two chapters earlier. At the baptism of Jesus, He said, “....it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.” Does anyone suppose there is to be no more righteousness after the baptism?

We now come face to face with reality. Christianity from an early date began to be corrupted by an unconverted clergy and membership. The Sonship of Christ and the Sabbath were the subjects of the Council of Nice called by Emperor Constantine in A.D. 325. Ministers are taught that it was the first Christian Council. But it was not. It was convened by a pagan Roman Emperor and the Bishops that attended were forced to follow the Emperor’s agenda or be exiled. Today, the churches teach the uninspired orthodoxy of the Council of Nicaea.

The objections the Jews raised in John 5 have come down to us in our day. The enemy of God has seen to it that confusion reigns in the churches. It behooves every Christian to study the Word of God under the guidance of the Spirit of God Himself. Indifference to false doctrine will not do. Error never sanctifies.

Objections 3

“We are not under law, we are under grace.” This amazing sentence is made to mean that either one or the other only can survive. In other words, law and grace cannot coexist. By taking this view the Christian is supposedly absolved of any concern for obedience. Obviously, if there is no law, there is no sin. But we ask, if there is no sin, then what need is there for a Savior? The unfortunate scenario comes out like this: Lost sinners who violate the Law of God need a Savior because of disobedience. The Christian however, has been delivered from the law and is now free from the law and obedience. Grace, somehow, relieves any duty that the sinner still has.

Do you see? Grace is turned into an escape from the only standard of righteousness - the law of God. Righteousness is right doing. But, the objector continues, doing is works! Once more we are faced with human reasoning without a shred of Bible evidence. The only way faith can be expressed is by doing something. “Faith without works is dead.” Notice how James says it, “. . . shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.” (James 2:18) No one can see your faith until you do something.

The invention of reasons to avoid the Sabbath spread out until a whole system of erroneous concepts makes void the Word of God. Instead of simply obeying God the objector has to resort even to making obedience an undesirable Jewish thing. The converted mind and heart of Christian loyalty and love is turned into an ugly effort to supplant the perfect work of Jesus. The real, unseen culprit is the effort to be saved in sin; whereas, the Gospel of Christ is salvation from sin. The empowering life of Christ is given to enable the believer to obey the law. The obedient one is not under the law (under its curse) but lives in the freedom of grace unto obedience which is a free gift through the merits of Christ.

Hidden behind sophistry and theology is a grand design to do away with the law of God. The smokescreen is the Sabbath. Since there is no Scripture that teaches God’s government can exist without law, unbiblical rationales come forth. For example: the Sabbath cannot be kept on a round earth. This objection strikes at the intelligence of the Creator who obviously did not know that He was commanding something that could not be done. The objector might think for a moment: his argument applies equally to the first day of the week.

Then follows an equally pretentious argument: time has been lost. We do not know when the seventh day really occurs. We ask, if no one knows when the seventh day is, how does anyone know when the first day comes around? What destroys one destroys the other. But let us look at this strange argument for a moment. We all have had fleeting times when we were not sure exactly what day or what date it really is. We probably did not panic and think that time had been lost forever. We simply asked someone, or looked at a calendar. But the lost time people tell us that the entire world has lost track of the seventh day. How does that happen? In your house,

suppose that everyone did not know what day it was. Can it be that everyone on your block also lost track at the same time? Let us suppose such a strange event occurred, how about the whole city? Everyone has lost track of the day. Well let us go to the State level; and then the Country. Let us take in the entire planet. Everyone on earth does not know what day it is. All the computers, businesses, airlines, hospitals, schools, armies, etc. have all lost track. Can any sane person imagine such a thing? No one knows when the seventh day really is, but everyone knows that Sunday is right. How far-fetched does an objection have to be to destroy the fourth Commandment of God?

When Israel was gathered at Mt. Sinai Moses was instructed to remind them about obedience and life. The wages of sin was death. They said, "All that God says we will do." The problem was that humans have no capacity to give spiritual obedience until they are born from above. Jesus is the only source of obedience through faith. They tried and failure was the inevitable result. God wanted them to be His peculiar people so He did something He had never done before and has never repeated. He and His Son came in person to the mountain. The mountain was altogether covered in fire and smoke, a trumpet blew louder and louder, there was thunder and lightning. And to cap it off there was a great earthquake. The mountain was the pulpit and God was the speaker. The Subject was the Law of God.

No other people have ever had this relationship with God. No Gentile has ever been exposed to God so directly. And yet theologians look upon Israel as inferior and ignorant of the true God. The Sabbath that Adam and Eve knew was repeated in majestic power on a day never to be forgotten. At least not by anyone present. We who read the account enter in through faith and realize that God was doing something immensely important on that day. His law was spoken by Himself for eternity.

Every holy person in the Bible knew that God was their Creator. They kept His memorial of creation and never spoke against it. Jesus kept the Sabbath holy and never mentioned the first day of the week. To God the first day of creation week was a work day. To every member of God's church in the Bible the first day of the week was a work day. On Mt Sinai God said six days thou shalt labor. That means every day was a work day except the seventh day. Sabbath is a day of rest, a 24 hour appointment with God.

The objections begin melting away under the plain declarations of Scripture. Sooner or later it becomes clear that genuine objections do not exist; there are only human devisings.

When It is objected that the Sabbath was not brought back in the New Testament, we ask, where did it go? It was still in force at the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. The sun was going down on Friday and the Sabbath would soon begin. "And that day was the preparation and the sabbath drew on. And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and

beheld the sepulcher, and how his body was laid. And they returned and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment.” (Luke 23:54-56) After the death of Jesus His followers were still keeping the Sabbath.

Jesus warned His followers about the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. He was looking forty years into the future. “But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day.” (Matthew 24:20) If they prayed just one time a week for forty years that would be two thousand eighty prayers about the Sabbath. In A.D. 70 they were ready. Not one Christian died in the siege.

The Sabbath is mentioned fifty eight times in the New Testament. It is never called a work day. There is no dispute between the Jews and the Christians over the Sabbath day. They all worshiped on the same day. In A.D. 45 Paul called it the “Sabbath day.” (Acts 13:27) His manner was to reason with Jews and Greeks on the Sabbath. (Acts 17:2; 18:4) Acts 18:11 tells us, “And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.” “And on the Sabbath we went out of the city by a riverside where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.” Acts. 16:13.

We see that before and after the cross there is no change of the Sabbath and the first day of the week remains a common working day. That a day of the week is not the memorial of the resurrection is clear from reading Romans 6:3-5 “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.” Baptism is the commemoration of the burial and resurrection of Jesus. Further, the Lord’s supper was celebrated on Thursday evening; and the disciples sometimes did it every day. (Luke 22; Acts 2:42-46)

The only religious meeting held on the first day of the week in the entire Bible was a night meeting (Acts 20:7) Paul had been with the brethren for seven days and was going to depart by ship in the morning on his way to Jerusalem. Paul was a Sabbath keeper and was no doubt teaching and preaching on his last day before the first day of the week came. A new day in the Bible began at sunset. That means that the dark part came first. So if Paul was preaching on the Sabbath as was his custom, then when the sun went down it was now the first day (dark part). He continued to preach until midnight when a young man named Eutychus, fell asleep and fell down from the third loft. Paul went down and raised him from the dead. At the break of day went to a ship and resumed his journey. It was now the light part of the first day and was treated like a common day for travel. There is no Sunday sacredness in this story. If we take this event to prove the Sabbath

has been replaced by the first day then we ask, “do the churches come together for worship at midnight?”

We should recall that the Sabbath is mentioned fifty eight times in the New Testament. The first day of the week is mentioned only eight times. Six of these times is about one single day – the day of the resurrection. The remaining two references are Acts 20:7 and 1 Corinthians, 16:2. (Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:2, 9; Luke 24:1; John 20:1, 19) We have seen there is no mention of a change of the Sabbath in Acts 20. So, if there is a Scripture in the Bible that shows a change in the Sabbath it falls upon 1 Corinthians 16 to prove it.

"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store." 1 Corinthians 16: 2. This text says that every one should "lay by him in store." The new Swedish and new Norwegian Bibles read, at "home by himself." Weymouth's reads: "Let each of you put on one side and store up at his home." Ballantine's translation reads: "Let each of you lay up at home." And the Syriac has it: "Let every one of you lay aside and preserve at home." So the text proves the opposite of what is often claimed for it.

The apostle Paul was instructing the believers to take time on the first working day (Sunday) to lay aside at home from the wages received during the preceding week, such an amount as they could afford to give for the relief of their poor brethren at Jerusalem. If we always remembered on Sunday to take something from our previous week's earnings and lay it up at home, we would find a larger ready offering at hand, when the call comes, than if we wait, and give what we happen to have on hand. The fact that they should sit down and figure up their accounts to see how "God hath prospered" them, and give accordingly, would indicate that the day was not considered a holy day. Then, too, Sunday is never given a sacred title in the New Testament.

There are no more texts in the New Testament that mention the first day of the week – Sunday. The seventh day Sabbath stands as the holy day of God. There is no other Lord's Day in the Bible. It is often the case that when it becomes apparent the Bible will not support Sunday sacredness the objections become mere human reasoning. For example: the seventh day cannot be kept on a round earth. The days at the North Pole are shorter than at the equator. Are we to suppose that the first day of the week is exempt from this argument? People living anywhere on the earth take the day when it comes to them. The weekly cycle is kept on the entire planet. Twenty fours is carefully tracked regardless of the visibility of the sun. Those who keep Sunday seem able to determine the day each week on the same round world.

When the objections fall one by one something more than reason is called upon. In despair of a single Bible verse for Sunday sacredness, and without any valid reason being brought forth, eventually the objector is reduced to this: "What difference does it make?" In other words, who cares? This at last reveals the true case. The Christian world has been reduced to a majority of

members who are totally indifferent to the voice of God in His Holy Word. The commands of God are relegated to mere suggestions, and the Majesty of Heaven is made the minister of sin. "The Law has been done away with," echoes through the land.

If the government of God does not have law, why should man? Could that reasoning be the cause of jails full of lawless men? Are ministers who preach no law aiding in the downfall of mankind? Corruption among the leaders of the world is hardly newsworthy. It is common fare. Get rich at any cost is the fruit of modern philosophy - survival of the fittest. The Christian ethic of helping the weak ones is shattered by the unrelenting quest for self-gratification and getting of things.

Who can rest? Listen. "Here are they who keep the commandments of God, and have the faith of Jesus." (Rev 14:12) Christian, do you see? In the Revelation God is showing His people the true faith of Jesus in the last generation. The people who are expecting to see Jesus Come in the Second Advent are Commandment keepers! They are resting with God and His Son and the Holy Angels on God's rest day.

Law and grace are not enemies. Law is the standard of righteousness. Righteousness is right doing. Grace is unmerited favor for those who have not done right. The perfect righteousness (right doing) of Jesus covers the person who is sorry for wrong doing and seeks forgiveness as a gift. Misunderstanding about law and grace stems from this question: is the forgiven person now free to violate the law because he is forgiven? We let Paul answer, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" (Romans 6:1-2)

The answer to being free from the power of sin is not to do away with the law; but to die to sin. The law is eternal, as righteousness is eternal. Grace enables the Christian to reckon themselves to be dead to sin but alive unto God. In other words, choosing not to sin they now live in obedience to the law which is God's command of love to His creation. They are no longer under condemnation of the law (as transgressors), but pardoned with the Spirit of God in them as adopted children. When a child is taken as a member of the family it is as an obedient, loyal child. Rebellion is put away and love and self-control become a joy. Happiness results from mutual respect and self-forgetfulness.

When Israel lost the vision of being the children of God they rebelled against the law of God. The intense sorrow they knew because of the things that befell them is found in the Book of Lamentations. We read this in chapter 2:9, "...the law is no more; her prophets also find no vision from the LORD." Clearly, when the law was gone from them, God no longer spoke to them by the prophets. When a people no longer have a vision from God they perish. Could that be why Jesus said, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8)

He obviously meant true faith; the faith of Jesus, true Bible based faith. Does that require a restoration in our time? In Isaiah chapter 58, people are described who restore: "And they who shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundation for many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in." (verse 12) Today the breach is being repaired. The Law of God is being brought back to its proper place among the children of God. The issue that confronts the Christian world unavoidably is the Sabbath. Notice verses 13-14 of Isaiah 58:

"If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it."

The Apostle Paul speaks plainly, "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet,. . . For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good."

Without the law we do not know what sin is; but sin deceives not the law. The law demands justice and we face death. We see the problem, it is sin. The law ever remains holy, just and good. So speaks the Apostle Paul. In Hebrews 4:9-10 we read, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."

Let us cease from our natural works and by faith enter into the spiritual rest of God. We may enter into true Sabbath rest.