



THE
LORD'S DAY

THE COMPLETE EVIDENCE
FOR SUNDAY-KEEPING

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Contents

1. The Complete Evidence for Sunday-keeping.....	1
1. <i>Christ's Resurrection</i>	3
2. <i>The Disciples' Assembly</i>	3
3. <i>The Outpouring of the Holy Ghost</i>	4
4. <i>Paul Preached on the First Day</i>	4
5. <i>Laying Away Money on the First Day</i>	5
6. <i>John was in Vision on the Lord's Day</i>	6
<i>Summary</i>	6
2. Reasons for Not Observing Saturday.....	9
3. The Early Church Customs.....	17
4. Which Lord?.....	21
5. Which Day?.....	29
6. The Example of Jesus Christ.....	35
7. In the New Testament.....	39
8. The First Day of the Week.....	45

1. The Complete Evidence for Sunday-keeping

Signs of the Times, March 22, 1883

IT IS often the case when our ministers present the truth of the Sabbath question in a place where it has not before been preached, that they are met with this rejoinder from those who cannot but admit that their argument is sound,

“That is *your* side of the question; now we want to hear our ministers present *their* side, and perhaps your position will not appear so strong; we want to hear both sides of the question.”

The desire to hear both sides of any subject is commendable, and our ministers usually gratify this desire by giving all the Sunday arguments themselves. But this often does not satisfy. The people want to hear the Sunday case presented by its own friends, so that they can feel assured that it is done in the best possible manner.

We have in our hands that which will certainly satisfy these anxious ones. It is nothing less than “the fullest authority” for Sunday-keeping. This means both that it is all the authority there is, and all that is needed. We advise all who have to meet the objection stated above, to carry this summary of the Sunday case with them, as it will be of value. Then they can give “the other side” as stated by one of its strongest supporters.

The statement is found in the *Dictionary of the Bible*, by Philip Schaff, D.D., LL.D., Professor in the *Union Theological Seminary*, New York, and one of the members of the *International Revision Committee*. So it is no novice whose testimony we are giving, but one eminently qualified to present the case fairly. Here it is:

The Christian Church keeps the first day of the week, which celebrates the close of the spiritual creation just as the last day celebrated the close of the physical creation. We have the fullest warrant for this change.

1. Upon the first day of the week Christ arose from the dead.
2. We find the disciples, before the ascension, assembled on that day, and Jesus appeared to them. *John 20:26*.
3. According to tradition, which is confirmed by every probability, the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost was on Sunday.
4. Paul preached at Troas on the first day of the week—evidently, among those Christians, the day of religious service. *Acts 20:7*.
5. Paul tells the Corinthians every one is to lay by him in store upon the first day of the week as he is prospered. *1 Corinthians 16:2*.
6. It was upon the Lord's day—and by this name he calls it—that John on Patmos saw through the opened door into Heaven. *Revelation 1:10*.

We agree with the author that this is “the fullest warrant” for the change, inasmuch as it is all that can be produced; but we think even many observers of the Sunday, when they think seriously of the matter, will decide that the “warrant” is not full enough to warrant anyone in putting confidence in it as the command of God. “Warrant” is defined by Webster as follows:

That which warrants or authorizes; a commission giving authority to justify the doing of anything; an act, instrument, or obligation, by which one person authorizes another to do something which he has not otherwise a right to do.

But it would puzzle the most acute lawyer to discover in the above simple statements anything having the nature of a commission, or act authorizing anybody to keep Sunday. If we may venture to criticize so great a man, we will examine the items of his statement one by one.

1. Christ's Resurrection

“Upon the first day of the week Christ arose from the dead.”

True, and we may also add that He was crucified on Friday. Both are interesting items of information, and that is all. His resurrection on the first day no more makes it the Sabbath than His crucifixion on the sixth day makes that day one. To make it a “warrant” for Sunday-keeping, a statement, or commandment to that effect is needed, from one having authority to issue commands. The changed commandment would necessarily read something like this:

“Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shall you labor and do all your work, having first rested on the first day, for the first day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work...For Christ rose from the dead on the first day; wherefore the Lord blessed the first day and hallowed it.”

It would not do to say, as the commandment does, that He blessed the *Sabbath day*, for since the first day had never been rested upon, it was not a Sabbath. But, no such commandment exists; not even a reference to it.

And by the way, is it not singular that none of the apostles refer to the day of Christ's resurrection? They speak of His resurrection, and of the hope that we have through it; but they had not learned that the time of the event was of any significance whatever. That was reserved for men of more modern times.

2. The Disciples' Assembly

“We find the disciples, before His ascension, assembled on that day, and Jesus appeared to them.”

Admitted; but where is the “warrant”? We may add that they were also assembled on Thursday, the day of His ascension, and Jesus met with them and blessed them. Did that

make the fifth day the Sabbath? It does, if all that was required to make a Sabbath was for Jesus to meet with His disciples. There is precisely as much warrant in the Bible for keeping Thursday as there is for keeping Sunday.

3. The Outpouring of the Holy Ghost

“According to tradition, the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost was on Sunday.”

And so our “warrant” depends on tradition after all. This would hardly be accepted as evidence in court. Moreover the tradition is not unquestioned, for many eminent commentators claim that Pentecost came that year on Monday; others claim that it was Sabbath.

And most of all, it is of no earthly consequence on what day it came, since the day is not mentioned, and no intimation is given that it was henceforth to be a Sabbath. In order to furnish even an inferential evidence that it was to be a Sabbath, our friends must prove:

1. that the day was Sunday;
2. that the Holy Ghost always was manifest upon Sunday;
3. that it never came upon any other day; and
4. that the outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon a company of people sanctifies the day on which it occurs.

But none of these things can be proven, and if they could, the important thing—a commandment—would be lacking.

4. Paul Preached on the First Day

“Paul preached at Troas on the first day of the week.”

True; and we also find that the inspired apostles, fresh from the baptism of the Holy Ghost on Pentecost, continued...

Acts 2

⁴⁶ ...daily with one accord in the temple,

–and that the Lord added souls to the church “daily.” Verse 47. What an array of sabbaths there are for which we have “the fullest warrant.”

But the Doctor says that this day was “evidently among those Christians the day of religious service.” That means that the fact that the church at Troas kept Sunday is...

“...evident, easily to be seen, plainly manifest, obvious, clear to the understanding.”

But such is not the case, since there is no evidence that they had ever met together on the first day before, or ever did again. Nevertheless, Paul preached on a Sunday once, and if that doesn’t make it the Sabbath, what would? Sure enough.

Since Paul’s action is to decide the case, let us examine it further. In *Acts* 13 we are told that Paul preached at Antioch on the Sabbath day; that he also preached on “the next Sabbath day.” We also read that at Thessalonica:

Acts 17

² Paul, *as his manner was*, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures.

Also that at Corinth:

Acts 18

⁴ He reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath day, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.

Is it not singular that our friends forget to mention these instances when they cite Paul’s single sermon on the first day of the week as authority for the sanctification of that day? But we pass on, for we find no “warrant” here.

5. Laying Away Money on the First Day

“Paul tells the Corinthians that every one is to lay by him in store upon the first day of the week, as he is prospered.”

This “laying by in store”, was to be done at home, i.e., each

individual was to look over his accounts and deposit, in a drawer set apart for that purpose, a portion of the earnings of the preceding week.¹ So it seems that even business transactions make the day sacred. Or, perhaps the day is sacred to the transaction of business. At any rate we look in vain at this simple statement for any command to keep Sunday.

6. John was in Vision on the Lord's Day

“It was upon the Lord's day that John on Patmos saw through the open door into Heaven.”

Well, and what day of the week was that?

“Oh, we have decided that it was Sunday. To be sure it was never before called the Lord's day, and the seventh day was so called; but that makes no difference. We are bound to keep Sunday, and want some warrant for it, so we call it the Lord's day. What! you want proof that John applied the title Lord's day to Sunday? Didn't we do it? What further proof do you want?”

Such, in substance, is the Sunday argument from *Revelation* 1:10.

Summary

We have analyzed our learned author's statement, and find no “warrant” at all. In the whole of it there is nothing which can be construed into a commission, or an act giving authority. If it had been previously declared to be wrong to keep Sunday as a Sabbath (as it really is in the fourth commandment), no one could gather from this summary anything that would justify him in so doing; but that, according to Webster, is what is required in order to constitute a “warrant.”

Such is the foundation on which the Sunday rests. Our only apology for taking up so much space with this matter is that it is confessedly all the argument which our Sunday friends

¹ See Barnes, Scott, and others.

have, according to the best authority in the United States.

As we pause, it seems like a waste of time to review such “arguments,” yet they are gravely put forth by a man who is doubtless not excelled in learning by any man in the country, and they are firmly relied on by thousands of intelligent and well-meaning persons. What is it that has so blinded the minds of the people? Dr. Schaff concludes his summary of evidence thus:

“The first day of the week is therefore the Christian Sabbath, the day of rest and worship.”

So he rests his case fully upon the evidence presented. He continues,

“And God has further confirmed the change by giving it His blessing, as He blessed the sabbath of creation week.”

Where did he learn this? Where is it stated of the first day, as it is of the seventh, that God blessed it and hallowed it? Nowhere. Elihu, the friend of Job, said,

Job 32

⁹ Great men are not always wise;

—and we are reluctantly forced to add the statement that great men are not always honest.

We do not take pleasure in speaking of the weakness or fault of any one, but we do take pleasure in being able to show that the Sunday sabbath rests on simple assertions, and that the only one of these assertions which would in any way affect the nature of the day, is wholly false. It is in this way that the commandment of God has been made of none effect.

We refer our readers to *Ezekiel 22:26-31*, quoting only verse 28, and leave them to make the application for themselves:

Ezekiel 22

²⁸ And her prophets have daubed them with untempered

mortar, seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, saying,
Thus says the Lord God, when the Lord has not spoken.

May the Lord give the people a willingness to look for
themselves, and see what the Lord really has spoken.

2. Reasons for Not Observing Saturday

Signs of the Times, May 1, 1884

A MEMBER of one of our missionary societies has been in correspondence with his friends in the East concerning the Sabbath question. In reply to one of his letters, he received a long letter from his former pastor, a Disciple minister, in which the latter tried to reclaim the wandering member of his flock, by showing the absurdities of Sabbath observance.

From this letter we were allowed to make a few extracts, embodying the principal part of the argument, which we herewith give for the benefit of all inquirers after truth. The letter indicated a sincere desire on the part of the writer to win the brother from supposed error, and we are therefore warranted in supposing that the best argument was given that could be found. We quote:

“The Sabbath,” it is not claimed is a term ever applied in the New Testament, or for many years after [the time when it was written], to the first day of the week. Hence it is not claimed by me or my brethren that “the Sabbath” of the Sinaitic law was changed. Talking about changing the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day is very much like the talk about changing circumcision to baptism.

This is not a bad statement to start with. Now knowing that the first day of the week is nowhere in the New Testament called “the Sabbath,” that term being applied exclusively to the seventh day of the week, we call to mind these words of Christ:

Matthew 24

²⁰ But pray you that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day.

Christ was speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem, which occurred about forty years later. And what was to be the prayer of the disciples during these years? That they might

not be obliged to violate the sanctity of the seventh-day Sabbath, and even to secure their own lives.

If now the New Testament writers uniformly call the seventh day the Sabbath, “according to the commandment,” where shall we look for authority for first-day observance? Is not the one teaching such observance going contrary to the New Testament? and will he not thus, be under the anathema of Paul in *Galatians* 1:8?

Indeed it is absurd to talk of changing the Sabbath of the Lord’s appointment; but the papacy has thought himself able to do so (*Daniel* 7:25), and millions cheerfully acknowledge his claim. Again:

Statute law may and does change, but principles never. The basis of all the law and the prophets is given by our Lord as love to God and man....Man has no authority to change either, but with the change of dispensation, God has given different commands as expressive of submission to Him.

We ask, “What is that which contains the record of the change of dispensation?” The answer will be, “The New Testament.” But our brother has admitted, as just quoted, that there was no change in “the Sabbath of the Mosaic law,” and that, in the New Testament, the term “Sabbath” is not applied to any other day than the seventh.

Statute law may change, but we are not absolved from allegiance to it until that change takes place. But the New Testament contains no record of a change; on the contrary, Christ said:

Luke 16

¹⁷ It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

Now since...

1 John 5

³ This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments,

—how can we have love to Him if we violate one of them? No one can violate any portion of the law, and not violate the principle upon which it is based. Again we quote:

It is very easy to see that there is moral obligation to love, adore, and obey the Lord; and it is easy to understand that man's physical, intellectual, and moral good calls for a cessation from worldly occupations for a time, that the mind may be given to contemplation and worship; but that the observance of the seventh day of the week is of necessary moral obligation is a different matter. It was made obligatory by appointment. There was, no doubt, good reasons for such command, two at least of which are given in Scripture.

1. The creation.
2. The deliverance from Egypt.

The above seems to us to be an exceedingly cool piece of criticism upon the Creator. Our friend is willing to allow that the Lord had reasons for appointing the seventh day as the Sabbath, but does not think we are morally bound to keep it. Let us see. To start with, there are two points upon which we are agreed:

1. That the seventh-day Sabbath is of divine appointment.
2. That the New Testament always recognizes the seventh day, and no other, as the Sabbath.

But our friend says that the Sabbath commandment is not of moral obligation. How does he know that? By what standard are we to judge of moral obligation? Is the human mind capable of deciding? Hardly.

How does he know that to commit adultery is an immoral act? Not from his own consciousness, for thousands of men, as highly gifted by nature as he, have believed such an act to be consistent with the highest virtue, and even necessary in order to attain the highest good. Indeed it was openly advocated in practice by many of the ancient philosophers.

The young were taught to lie if it seemed to be their advantage to do so. The sentiments may be found in the writings of classical authors:

“When telling a lie will be profitable, let it be told.”

“There is nothing decorous in truth, but when it is profitable.”

These are the teachings of those who were esteemed virtuous, and who had no idea but that they were doing all that was required of them. Now how does our brother happen to be so much wiser than those philosophers, and that he knows such things to be sinful? Because the Lord has said,

Exodus 20

¹⁴ You shall not commit adultery,

and,

¹⁶ You shall not bear false witness.

It is in just the same way that we know that it is a sin to violate the Sabbath. It is based on the unalterable facts of creation; and the commandment is placed with the other moral precepts.

It may be said that moral principles are eternal, but that there was a time when even the reason for the Sabbath commandment did not exist. Very well; and there was also a time when no reason for the seventh commandment existed. Before man was created there was no necessity for such a commandment, and yet no one questions the fact that it is of moral obligation. But let it be remembered that the earth was created before man was, and that therefore the reason for the fourth commandment antedates that for the seventh.

It is difficult to fitly characterize the idea that the seventh-day Sabbath is not of necessary moral obligation because “it was made obligatory by appointment.” That is, we are under no moral obligation to keep it, because the only authority for

its observance is the word of God! But let us imagine a man with this idea brought before the bar of God at the last day. The Judge, who is also the law-maker, asks,

Why did you not keep the Sabbath? Did you not know that I had commanded its observance?

The reply comes,

Yes, Lord, I knew that, and publicly taught it, but I could find no reason for keeping the Sabbath, except the fact that You had made a commandment for its observance. I had no doubt but that You had a good reason for giving such a commandment; but since it rested solely on your authority, I did not feel under any obligation to keep it.

Certainly the best that could be done would be to punish the man for contempt. We have no desire to be harsh; and we do not believe that our brother feels any contempt for God's authority; yet the above is just what his position amounts to. It is equivalent to saying that God is not the First Cause, but that there is a something called "moral principle" that is superior to Him.

There is indeed "no doubt" but that God had "good reason" for setting apart the seventh day, as a reading of the fourth commandment will show. Here it is:

Exodus 20

⁹ Six days shall you labor and do all your work;

¹⁰ But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work...

¹¹ For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore [for which reason] the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

This is the reason which the Lord gives for appointing the seventh day as the Sabbath. And we ask, Does not the same reason still exist? Is it not still a fact that the Lord created

heaven and earth in six days? Is it not as true now as it ever was that He rested upon, blessed, and sanctified [set apart] the seventh day? Certainly. Then if the reason for the observance of the seventh day still exists, is it not claimed that the Lord would be unreasonable, that is, acting contrary to reason, if He did not still require that it should be kept? Who will dare charge the Lord with folly?

As to the deliverance from Egypt we will simply state that Moses cites that to remind the Israelites of their special obligation to God. Simple gratitude demanded that they should obey the commandment of God. But the reason for the institution of the Sabbath is given in the fourth commandment, which was spoken many years before. To us this reason seems so cogent that we dare not enter into controversy with the Lord on the subject.

Again, our friend says:

The apostles never commanded the observance of the Sabbath.

We agree, and go a step farther and say that it would have made no difference if they had. The apostles were not law-givers; they had no authority to issue commands.

James 4

¹² There is one Law-giver, who is able to save and to destroy.

And this Law-giver had issued a command for the observance of the Sabbath, thousands of years before the apostles were born, thus making it unnecessary for them to do so, even if they had been inclined to take matters into their own hands. The apostle Paul, speaking in behalf of his brethren in the ministry, said:

2 Corinthians 5

²⁰ Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though Christ did beseech you by us; for we pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God.

As Christ's ambassadors they followed His injunction to teach only what He had commanded them. *Matthew 28:20*. They, as well as we, owe allegiance to a sovereign power. It was left for the pope of Rome to usurp authority, and to issue laws of his own.

The above quotations are the chief reasons given in the letter for not observing the seventh day. It is but fitting that we should hear what the writer has to say for Sunday, which he terms the "Lord's day." Unfortunately his time expired before he could give his authority for that. What he says for it is contained in the following paragraph:

Our reasons for observing the Lord's day I have not time to give. I suggest, however, that the New Testament is not so much a book of precepts as of general principles. Even in those ordinances that are usually considered positive in their character, there is but little of the legislative or ritualistic.

It is enough. Why should he desire to say more? The New Testament is not a book of precepts, and therefore he keeps Sunday. Briefly summed up, his position is this:

We need not keep the seventh day, because it is simply commanded by the Lord; and we ought to keep the first day, because there is no command for it whatever!

Further comment is unnecessary. Reader, are you willing to rest your case upon so sandy a foundation as that?

Ecclesiastes 12

¹³ Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter. Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

¹⁴ For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

3. The Early Church Customs

Signs of the Times, November 13, 1884

THE disciples at Troas, with Paul, did on one occasion assemble on the first day of the week to break bread; and Justin Martyr said, in his first apology to the Roman Senate, that:

“On the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gathered together to one place,” etc.

From these evidences, some arrive at the conclusion that when the apostle John said,

Revelation 1

¹⁰ I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day,

—he intended by the term “the Lord’s day” to designate the first day of the week. This is a fair statement of the Sunday Lord’s-day position, which we designed to candidly examine. The term “Lord’s day” is used by the apostle, and people have a right to demand that teachers of the Bible tell whether he referred to the seventh or the first day.

The statement of Justin Martyr will be considered first. The reader will notice that even he does not say that the first day of the week was termed the Lord’s day, but uses the expression, “on the day called Sunday.” If that day had been regarded as sacred, some other title would have been bestowed.

This, however, is of little consequence. The argument is that John speaks of the Lord’s day, and the fact that Christians of Justin Martyr’s time assemble on Sunday, proves that Sunday is the day which John had in mind. The reason why he spoke of it as “the day called Sunday” was, as is stated by the *Advance*, because it was called by the Romans “the day of the sun.”

This argument for Sunday as the Lord’s day would be a

good one, and indeed conclusive, if it could be shown that the practices of Christians in the early centuries were always in harmony with the Scriptures. In order to make the argument of any account whatever, it must be shown that their customs were necessarily correct. But how shall we know whether or not their practices were correct? Only by comparing them with the Bible, for that alone contains the rule of righteousness.

Our Sunday friends, in their appeals to the practice of the early church, make the mistake of determining by the actions of men what the Bible teaches, when, instead of that, they ought to appeal to the Bible, to determine the correctness of those actions.

We will give a few quotations to show how little we can depend on the practices of Christians, even in the first centuries as exponents of a true Christian doctrine. First we quote the words of Paul. To the elders of the church at Ephesus, he said:

Acts 20

²⁸ Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He has purchased with His own blood.

²⁹ For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

³⁰ Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

Not only did he predict that there would be heresies taught in the church after his departing, but writing to the Thessalonians, he said:

2 Thessalonians 2

⁷ For the mystery of iniquity does already work.

Church history, written by first-day authors, bears witness to the truth of Paul's words. Mosheim, writing concerning the second century, says:

A large part, therefore, of the Christian observances and institutions, even in this century, had the aspect of pagan mysteries.²

Again he says:

There is good reason to suppose that the Christian bishops purposely multiplied sacred rites for the sake of rendering the Jews and pagans more friendly to them.³

In a footnote to the above passage, Mosheim says further:

It will not be unsuitable to transcribe here a very apposite passage which I met with in Gregory Nyssa's *Life of Gregory Thaumaturgus*:

“When Gregory perceived that the ignorant and simple multitude persisted in their idolatry, on account of the sensitive pleasures and delights it afforded, he allowed them, in celebrating the memory of the martyrs, to indulge themselves, and give a loose to pleasure (i.e., as the thing itself and both what precedes and follows a place beyond all controversy, he allowed them in the sepulchers of the martyrs, on their feast days, to dance, to use sports, to indulge conviviality, and to do all things that the worshipers of idols were accustomed to do in their temples on their festival days), hoping that in process of time they would spontaneously come over to a more becoming and more correct manner of life.”

Such was the policy of the leaders of the church in the second century, this century in which Justin Martyr lived. Let anyone read the last quotation, and then read a description of the abominations practiced at even festivals, and he will hardly be willing to adopt any custom whatever on the example of such Christians.

Sunday was so-called by the Romans, because it was dedicated to the worship of the sun. Its Latin name was *Dies Solis*, “day of the sun”. Now if the bishops of the church, in their de-

² Book I, Part II, chap. IV, sec. 5.

³ Book I, Cent. II, Part II, chap. IV, sec. 2.

sire for “converts” from among the heathen, allowed them to observe their festivals with the most abominable orgies, is it to be considered a strange thing if they allowed them to retain the very day of one of their festivals? If they did not scruple to multiply rites and ceremonies to suit the superstitions of the ignorant crowd, certainly they would not hesitate to accept one that was already in use.

Thus far we have simply shown that we are not to be influenced in favor of any custom because it was practiced by the early Christians. Their course determines nothing for us. We will therefore leave them, and in our next article will allow the Bible to determine which day of the week is the Lord’s day.

4. Which Lord?

Signs of the Times, November 20, 1884

Revelation 1

¹⁰ I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.

STRANGE as the statement may appear, an examination of this text involves an answer to the question, "Who is the Lord?" Indeed, it may be said that this question covers a large portion of the ground at issue.

The fact is not due to any difficulty in the text itself, but solely to the position taken by those who have appropriated the term "Lord's day" to the first day of the week. They have made the settlement of the question as to what day is meant by the expression "Lord's day" depend on something which is not, or ought not to be in dispute at all. This fact will be more clearly seen by the following, from an article entitled *The Lord's Day*, which was sent to us sometime ago for review:

To learn what day is the Lord's day, it is necessary to know who is the Lord. Adventists deny that Jesus is Lord, therefore they are prepared to deny that that day which gives Jesus most honor is the Lord's day.

If the writer of the above knew anything at all about Seventh-day Adventists (for of course they are the Adventists to whom he refers), he well knew that he was penning a falsehood when he wrote it.

It is a good sample, however, of the method of argument (?) by which Sunday has been exalted to, and maintained in, its present position in the professed Christian world. Instead of going directly to the point, and bringing Bible proof that Sunday is the Lord's day, its adherents attempt to turn the mind away from a consideration of the real question at issue.

They erroneously assume that if Christ is Lord, then Sunday

must be the Lord's day; then they assert that Adventists deny the divinity of Christ. The result is that, in the minds of those whom they can induce to believe their statements, a very natural prejudice is aroused against the Adventists; and in proportion as they become prejudiced against Seventh-day Adventists, they increase in devotion to any institution or practice to which Seventh-day Adventists are opposed.

But there is no more reason in the assumption that, because Christ is Lord, therefore Sunday is the Lord's day, than there would be in the assumption that, because Noah built the ark, therefore he must have been the discoverer of America.

And the statement that Seventh-day Adventists deny that Christ is Lord, is nothing less than willful falsehood. Such methods are adopted only by men who are conscious that they have no proof for their theory, yet are determined to sustain it at all hazards. Macaulay says that whenever people have made up their minds without knowing why, "discussion ends in scurrility, the last resource of the disputant who cannot answer, and who will not submit."

The inspired prophet exclaimed:

Ezekiel 13

⁴ O Israel, your prophets [teachers] are like the foxes in the deserts.

The marked characteristic of the fox is craftiness. He will cover up his trail, and resort to various devices to throw the hunters off his track. His characteristic cunning is manifested in deceiving his pursuers as to his relocation, causing them to think that he is in a certain hole when he is far distant.

That the prophet, by this figure, aptly describes the supporters of the Sunday-sabbath, is evident to one who has studied their tactics. Take the case before us, for instance. They accuse us of denying the divinity of Christ in order to divert attention from the real question at issue, and also to conceal the

fact that they themselves in reality deny His divinity. For proof of this last statement we offer the following:

It is readily conceded that the seventh-day Sabbath was appointed by God himself at Sinai; this is not denied by those who will not allow that it was given at creation. Further, they do not claim that God ever appointed any other day.

But they do claim that Sunday should be observed in honor of Christ, and that He sanctioned, if He did not institute, such observance. Thus they make the Father and the Son antagonistic to each other, or, to say the least, they have each one working on a plan of his own, and for his own pleasure. But this is utterly at variance with the truth uttered by Christ:

John 10

³⁰ I and my Father are one.

Unity with the Father is an essential part of the divinity of Christ; and therefore to claim that Christ engaged in a thing that the Father did not, or that He has any interest separate from the Father, is to deny that perfect unity, and, consequently, to deny the divinity of Christ. Since the question of the divinity of Christ is made a prime factor in determining this matter of the Lord's day, the remainder of this article will be devoted to that point.

Christ says, "I and my Father are one." This we must accept as an absolute fact in the sense in which He designed it. He prayed to the Father for His disciples,

John 17

²² ...that they may be one, even as we are one.

The union between the Father and the Son is the same as should exist between brethren in the faith. It is a union of thought and purpose. See *1 Corinthians* 1:10. The will of one is the will of the other. The language of Christ was:

Psalm 40

⁸ I delight to do Your will, O my God; yea, Your law is within my heart.

John 14

¹⁰ Believe you not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwells in me, He does the works.

A closer union than this cannot be imagined. So close is the union that Christ is called God, as in *Isaiah* 9:6, and *Titus* 2:13. In talking with the young man,⁴ He himself plainly showed His right to be called God. The apostle Paul, speaking of Christ, says that:

Colossians 2

⁹ In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

This fact of the unity of the Father and the Son, must of necessity be true at all times, and under all circumstances. Let us see.

Jesus is known as the Saviour, the Redeemer of the world. It is through His blood that we have redemption,⁵ and besides His name there is no salvation in any other.⁶

But if He and the Father are one, the Father must have had an equal share in the work of redemption. And so it is. The plan of salvation was not devised and executed by Christ apart from the Father. It is God's love that is commended to us in the death of Christ.

Romans 5

⁸ But God commended His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

John 3

¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten

⁴ *Matthew* 19:16-17.

⁵ *Colossians* 1:14.

⁶ *Acts* 4:12.

Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

When Christ was on earth He was doing the Father's work, for He said:

John 4

³⁴ My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work.

And in harmony with this idea were His words to Mary:

Luke 2

⁴⁹ Wist you not that I must be about my Father's business?

The message that He bore was from the Father. He himself said:

John 7

¹⁶ My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me.

John 12

⁴⁹ For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, He gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

And so Paul says:

2 Corinthians 5

¹⁹ God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.

Therefore whatever memorials of redemption are observed, must be in honor of God as well as of Christ.

Again, God is best known as the Creator of the world. This, indeed, is that for which He would be remembered, for His creative power is that which distinguishes Him from false gods.⁷ But if Christ and the Father are one, then Christ must have shared equally with the Father in His work of creation. And so He did.

⁷ See *Jeremiah* 10:10-12; *Psalms* 96:5; *2 Corinthians* 8:5-6; *Acts* 14:15.

John 1

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

³ All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made.

Of the One through whose blood we have redemption, Paul says:

Colossians 1

¹⁶ 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;

¹⁷ And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.

And finally, Paul exhibits the unity of Father and Son in both creation and redemption, in these words:

Hebrews 1

¹ God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

² Has in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds.

Thus we learn that it was through Christ that God made the world, and through Christ that God conveyed to lost man His message of mercy. In Christ, God's will is made known and executed, and thus it is that He is called,

Revelation 19

¹³ ...the Word of God.

When we say that all Seventh-day Adventists hold to the truths taught by these scriptures as cardinal points of faith, it will be readily perceived that a denial of the divinity of Christ is not one of their peculiarities. With Peter they believe that God has made this same Jesus who was crucified...

Acts 2

³⁶ ...both Lord and Christ;

–and they also gladly acknowledge the fact,

John 5

²³ That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.

In what way they should honor Him, will be shown in the next chapter.

5. Which Day?

Signs of the Times, November 27, 1884

IN OUR further investigation of this subject, we shall understand that the word “Lord” is applied both to the Father and the Son, and that even though we find it in various places applied specifically to one of them, the act predicated of that one is the act of the other also.

We have seen that there is no working at cross purposes between the two, but that they are “one” in every thought and act. It is sometimes claimed, in connection with *Revelation* 1:10, that in the New Testament Jesus only is called “Lord,” some other title being invariably applied to the Father. One text is sufficient to disprove that claim:

Revelation 11

¹⁵ And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.

Here there can be no question but that “Lord” refers to the Father especially. In one verse in the Old Testament, the word is applied to both Father and Son:

Psalms 110

¹ The Lord said unto my Lord, sit down at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.

But in this case, the Hebrew has a different word for each; but in *Revelation* 11:15 the word for Lord is *Kurios*, the same that is used throughout the New Testament. From *John* 5:23 we learn...

John 5

²³ That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.

Wherever, then, we find an act enjoined by the Father, we

know that the performance of that act honors the Son also, and that the neglecting of it is as much an insult to the Son as to the Father. Disobedience to the Father dishonors Christ. Now turn to *Isaiah* 58 and we shall find one way in which we are to honor God:

Isaiah 58

¹³ If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words;

¹⁴ Then shall you delight yourself in the Lord; and I will cause you to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father: for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it.

In this text the Lord, through His prophet, speaks of “my holy day.” So it is the “Lord’s day” that is under consideration. The text shows that the Lord claims but one day as His own, because it does not say “my holy days,” nor “one of my holy days,” but “my holy day.” From this we also learn that the “Lord’s day” is holy. And still further, we learn that this holy, Lord’s day is the Sabbath:

¹³ If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable, etc.

Now turn to *Exodus* 20, and you will find all these things combined, and in addition will be told exactly what day of the week this holy Sabbath—the Lord’s day—is:

Exodus 20

⁸ Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

⁹ Six days shall you labor, and do all your work:

¹⁰ But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger that is within your gates;

¹¹ 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.

Right here we stop to notice an objection. A *Presbyterian Catechism*, which is before us, claims that the Sabbath is not the seventh day in order from the creation, but may be...

...any other seventh part of our weekly time.

The reason it gives for this claim is this:

In the beginning of the commandment it is not said, "Remember the seventh day," but, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Just so in the end of this command, the words are not, "The Lord blessed the seventh day," but, "The Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it."

The fallacy of this reasoning is very evident, when we remember that...

Exodus 20

¹⁰ The seventh day is the Sabbath.

Since the seventh day is the Sabbath, that is, the seventh day and the Sabbath exactly coincide, and are one and the same thing, a blessing pronounced on the Sabbath day was, of necessity, a blessing on the seventh day. But that there may be no chance for any to imagine that our reasoning is not sound, we quote the direct statement of the sacred record:

Genesis 2

³ And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified [hallowed, see Webster] it; because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.

In the face of this scripture, men may speculate as much as they please, but it will be in vain. It will still remain a fact that:

Exodus 20

¹⁰ The seventh day is the Sabbath.

“But,” it is still objected, “the commandment does not say that the seventh day of the week is the Sabbath, and therefore we are left to decide for ourselves which seventh day we shall keep.”

The inspired record decides this point, too. But first we would ask,

“If the commandment does not enjoin the observance of the seventh day of the week, what seventh day does it enjoin?”

It must be the seventh or last day of a period which consists of just seven days, the first six of which are devoted to labor. But the only period of that kind known is the week. Now turn to an incident recorded in the New Testament. Immediately after the death of Jesus on the cross, Joseph of Arimathaea, begged His body, and took it down and laid it in a sepulcher. The inspired historian tells us:

Luke 23

⁵⁴ That day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on.

He says further:

⁵⁵ The women also, which came with Him to Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulcher, and how His body was laid.

⁵⁶ And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day...

Here we have the record of two successive days,—the preparation day, and the Sabbath of rest, which immediately followed. What next?

Luke 24

¹ Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulcher.

This was...

Mark 16

¹ When the Sabbath was past.

Now if the first day of the week immediately follows the Sabbath day, on what day of the week does the Sabbath come? The seventh, of course, for there are only seven days in a week. The disciples, then, rested on the seventh day of the week. But what does that signify? If you read the fifty-sixth verse entire, you will see.

Luke 23

⁵⁶ And they returned, and prepared spices and appointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment.

We have already seen that they rested on the seventh day of the week; now if this was “according to the commandment,” what is plainer than that the fourth commandment enjoins the observance of the seventh day of the week?

We have learned, then, that the seventh day of the week was the Lord’s day from the beginning, that the Lord sanctified it, or made it holy, and that the followers of the Lord,—those who loved to honor Him,—observed it as such even after the crucifixion.

6. The Example of Jesus Christ

Signs of the Times, December 4, 1884

FROM the Bible we have fully identified the Lord's day. Following is a brief summary of the means by which it is done:

1. The title Lord is applied to both Christ and the Father. Since these two are one, that which belongs to one must be the property of the other also; there can be no division between them.
2. In *Isaiah* 58:13 we learn that the Lord's day is holy, and that it is the Sabbath; and this at once caused us to turn to the fourth commandment, where we found that the seventh day is declared to be the Sabbath.
3. Since the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord,⁸ and the Sabbath is the Lord's holy day,⁹ it necessarily follows that the seventh day is the Lord's day.

Lest any one should think that this is not definite enough, we have it stated that the women who rested on the "Sabbath day, according to the commandment,"¹⁰ did so upon the day before the first day of the week, or in other words, upon the seventh day of the week.

In the naming of the days of the week, the name "Saturday" was given to the seventh day,¹¹ and since the names are now used more frequently than the numerals, it may be more clear if we say that from the Bible we find that the day now called Saturday is the Lord's day. So confident are we of the correctness of our deductions that we defy anybody to show from the Bible that any other day than Saturday is entitled to the designation "Lord's day."

⁸ *Exodus* 20:10.

⁹ *Exodus* 20:10-11; *Isaiah* 58:13.

¹⁰ *Luke* 24:56.

¹¹ See *Webster's Dictionary*, *Cyclopedias*, etc.

Although the fact that the seventh day—Saturday—is the true Lord’s day has been established, we will carry our investigation further, and show that there is no chance for even the supposition that any other day was elevated to the position of Lord’s day.

In the 2nd chapter of *Mark*, we find that on a certain occasion the Pharisees reproved Christ for allowing His disciples to satisfy their hunger on the Sabbath day, by eating the wheat which they plucked as they walked through the field. It will not be disputed that the day here called “the Sabbath day” was the seventh day of the week,—Saturday,—because it was the day which the Pharisees recognized as the Sabbath. Let this be borne in mind while you read the words of Christ:

Mark 2

²⁸ Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.

In the face of this, can anyone deny that the seventh-day Sabbath is the Lord’s day? The fourth commandment plainly declares that it is so, and Christ has added His testimony to the same effect.

It is sometimes claimed that the text last quoted, “The Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath,” shows that, as Lord of the Sabbath, Christ had the authority to do with it as He pleased, even to changing it, or dispensing with it entirely. We will not discuss the question of His right or power; the only question that can affect the case is:

“Did He, as Lord of the Sabbath, violate it, or give any individuals license to do so?”

He did not, as we shall see; then, of course, His being Lord of the Sabbath day, does not alter our relation to it. He was its Lord from the beginning, and we cannot show our allegiance to Him as our Lord, without honoring the day which He especially claims as His own. We will now examine some texts to show how Jesus regarded the Sabbath day.

In *Luke 4* we read as follows concerning an act of Christ which took place very soon after His baptism:

Luke 4

¹⁶ And He came to Nazareth, where He was brought up; and as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

Webster's definition of the word "custom" is this:

Frequent repetition of the same act; way of acting; ordinary manner; habitual practice; usage.

So we learn that it was His habitual practice to observe the seventh-day Sabbath as a day of public worship. This is in perfect harmony with His declaration:

John 15

¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love.

If He kept His Father's commandments, He must have kept the fourth commandment, which enjoins the observance of the seventh day of the week; and so we learn from Christ's own statement, made the very night of His betrayal, that He had always kept the Sabbath.

The following is sometimes quoted as proof that Christ did not regard the Sabbath as sacred:

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.

His own testimony should certainly be taken in preference to that of the Pharisees. They said that He had broken the Sabbath; He said, some time after the events recorded in *John 5*,

John 15

¹⁰ ...I have kept my Father's commandments...

We must believe, then, that He did not break the Sabbath. It is true He went directly contrary to some of the Rabbinical traditions, but that amounts to nothing. Had He followed their traditions, He could not have kept the law, for by their traditions they transgressed the law.¹²

What had Jesus done that the Pharisees accused Him of Sabbath-breaking? He had on the Sabbath day healed a man of an infirmity of thirty-eight years' standing, and had told him to take up to little mat upon which he was lying, and walk.¹³ Now was this a good act? Most certainly it was. Well, Jesus himself declared, on another and similar occasion:

Matthew 12

¹² It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days.

He is the Lord of the Sabbath, and, as such, was competent to declare the law of the Sabbath. The charge that Jesus broke the Sabbath comes now, as it did then, from a narrow and mistaken idea of the Sabbath commandment.

He said that His act was lawful, and so it was, but the fourth commandment forbids only our own, or secular work. Work that is done in the service of God, as was that performed by the priests in the sanctuary, work that does not in any way benefit the worker, but is solely for the glory of God, is not forbidden by the commandment.

Thus the Saviour is vindicated from the charge of Sabbath-breaking. How serious a charge this is, and how blindly wicked are those who make it, will be shown in the next chapter.

¹² *Matthew* 5:3.

¹³ *John* 5:1-9.

7. In the New Testament

Signs of the Times, December 11, 1884

AT THE close of our article last week, we were considering the charge made against Christ, that He violated the Sabbath. Those who make this charge are doubtless not aware of its real import, and we will therefore show them.

The Sabbath commandment is one of the ten precepts of the law of God. It enjoins the observance of the seventh day of the week. Whoever breaks that commandment is guilty of sin:

1 John 3

⁴ ...for sin is the transgression of law.

To say, therefore, that Jesus broke the fourth, or any other of the ten commandments, is equivalent to saying that He was a sinner. It is hardly necessary to quote Peter's assertion that...

1 Peter 2

²² [He] did no sin,

—for we do not know of anyone that would claim in a direct manner that He did; but it is no worse to say openly that Jesus was a sinner, than it is to charge Him with the violation of one of the commandments. Read once more Christ's words:

John 15

¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love.

From this we understand that those who do not keep His commandments cannot abide in His love; and the idea which He conveys is that His abiding in His Father's love was due to the observance of His commandments. It will be said that it is impossible to conceive of such a thing as that Christ should not abide in the Father's love; and the reason is that it is impossible to conceive that Christ should in any degree deviate

from the will of His Father.

John 6

³⁸ For I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me.

The words of Christ, in *Matthew 5:17-18*, while they vindicate Him from the charge of commandment-breaking, establish most firmly our conclusion that the seventh day—Saturday—is still the Lord’s day. Remembering that the fourth commandment of the law enjoins the observance of the seventh day, declaring that it is the Lord’s holy day, we read:

Matthew 5

¹⁷ Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.

¹⁸ 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.

As Christ said on another occasion,

Luke 16

¹⁷ It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than for one tittle of the law to fail.

There is no possibility of mistaking these words. While heaven and earth endure, the law of God cannot be changed to the extent of the mutilation of a single letter. Then the seventh day must be the Lord’s day as long as heaven and earth remain.

Lest some one should cavil at *John 15:10*, and say that we are now to keep the commandments of Christ, and not those of the Father, we repeat that since Christ and the Father are one, their commandments must be the same. Jesus himself answered this objection in advance, not only in *Matthew 5:17-19*, but also in the following:

John 6

³⁸ I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the

will of Him that sent me;

John 7

¹⁶ My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me.

Thus we have again proved that the seventh day is now the Lord's day, and must remain so until the end of the time.

We now turn once more to trace its course through the New Testament. In the 24th chapter of *Matthew* we have an instance of Christ's tender regard for His own sacred day. In telling His disciples of the future destruction of Jerusalem, He warned them that when they should see Jerusalem compassed with armies they should flee from the city, and from all Judea.

Matthew 24

²⁰ But pray that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day.

On this verse Olshausen says:

In interpreting this it must be observed that Jesus regards the law of the Sabbath as divine, and part of the moral law, yet without sanctioning the rigid notions which prevailed among the Jews concerning the Sabbath law as correct.

Here, again, there can be no doubt that the day to which Christ referred was the seventh day of the week—the day which the Jews kept as the Sabbath. So, then, He recognized the fact that the seventh day would be the Sabbath forty years after His ascension.

After the ascension of Christ, when the disciples went about their work of preaching the gospel, we find frequent mention of the Sabbath. Thus Paul and his companions went out of Philippi on the Sabbath to a place of prayer by the riverside, and he spoke to those who assembled there.¹⁴ At Antioch, in Pisidia, they...

¹⁴ *Acts* 16:13.

Acts 13

¹⁴ ...went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and sat down.

After Paul had concluded his discourse, and the Jews had gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles...

Acts 13

⁴² ...besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath.

⁴⁴ And the next Sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.

Again, at Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews,

Acts 17

² Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures.

When Paul arrived in Corinth, he made his home with a Jewish family,

Acts 18

⁴ And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.

This practice was kept up as long as he remained there, a year and six months, at least.¹⁵ These texts show the custom of Paul and his companions, but it is not for that purpose that we quote them. We do not plead “apostolic example” in behalf of Sabbath observance or any other good act.

That is to say, we do not keep the Sabbath because the apostles did. We know that they did keep the Sabbath, for the same reason that they refrained from worshipping idols, and from theft, because they had regard to the law of God, which enjoins the first act, and prohibits the others, and we do the same for the same reason.

¹⁵ Acts 18:11.

Our object in quoting these references to “the Sabbath day,” is to call attention to the use of that term in the New Testament. There can be no question but that in every one of these instances the seventh day is referred to. Now the New Testament, as well as the Old, was written by inspiration of God. That is, the Holy Ghost was really the author of the instruction there given. We find, then, that the Holy Ghost calls the seventh day of the week “the Sabbath day,” just the same as when the Old Testament was written.

The New Testament was written by Christians and for Christians; and whatever name it uses to designate anything, must be the proper term for Christians to use, and the only proper term. Therefore the proper appellation for the seventh day of the week is “Sabbath,” or “Lord’s day,” for both refer to the same thing.

One point more. The New Testament does not recognize any day as the Sabbath, except the seventh day. This may easily be shown. James, in addressing the council at Jerusalem, said:

Acts 15

²¹ For Moses of old time has in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day.

And Paul, in his discourse at Antioch said:

Acts 13

²⁷ For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day...

Paul and James are both speaking of Jewish worshipers. No one questions the fact that it was conducted on the seventh day of the week, and no one would make the claim that it was ever conducted, excepting occasionally an annual festival, on the first day of the week.

Therefore when those inspired apostles said that Moses and

the prophets were read in the Jewish synagogue “every Sabbath day,” they most effectively restricted the use of the term “Sabbath” to the seventh day of the week. If something that is read on every successive seventh day, is read on “every Sabbath,” there is certainly no possibility that any other day of the week can be the Sabbath.

But the Lord says that the Sabbath is His holy day; therefore every seventh day of the week,—every Saturday, if you please,—is a “Lord’s day.” This statement is made without the slightest fear of successful contradiction.

8. The First Day of the Week

Signs of the Times, December 18, 1884

IT WOULD seem that the many Bible proofs that the seventh day of the week is “the Lord’s day” should be sufficient to silence all cavil among those who claim to regard the Bible as the only rule of faith and practice. But some will say,

“You have entirely ignored the claims of the first day of the week; if you examine the record concerning that day, you might find cause to change your mind.”

We do not believe that we should; for when a thing is positively proved to be right, its opposite is, by the same argument, just as surely shown to be wrong. If the seventh day is “the Lord’s day,” then the first day cannot be.

But in order that there may be no dissatisfaction, we will see what the Bible has to say about the first day. With the aid of a concordance we can easily find every text in the New Testament, which contains reference to the first day of the week. The first text is:

Matthew 28

¹ In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulcher.

Simply an incidental mention of the day, so we will go on.

Mark 16

¹ And when the Sabbath was passed Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint Him [Jesus].

² And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulcher at the rising of the sun.

This is but a repetition of what we found in the other text. One point, however, we would call attention to. The Sabbath is

the Lord's day, as we have proved at length.¹⁶ Now the first day of the week did not come until after the Sabbath was passed; therefore these texts, instead of showing the first day to be the Lord's day, prove positively that it is not. But we will look further.

Luke 24

¹ Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they [the women, see *Luke 23:55*] came unto the sepulcher, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.

Here again the evidence is damaging to the claims of Sunday to be the Lord's day. First, we notice that the disciples took the first day of the week to do a work of love for Jesus, which they would not do on the day of His crucifixion, because...

Luke 23

⁵⁴ ...the Sabbath drew on.

Second, we find¹⁷ that that Sabbath day immediately preceded the first day, and that they rested upon it...

⁵⁶ ...according to the commandment.

That says:

Exodus 20

¹⁰ The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord;

—showing that the first day is not the Lord's day. We will try again.

John 20

¹ The first day of the week came Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulcher, and saw the stone taken away from the sepulcher.

Simply a reiteration of the statement that on the first day of

¹⁶ See *Isaiah 58:13*.

¹⁷ *Luke 23:54-56*.

the week certain Christian women set out to perform a piece of work. We must evidently look elsewhere for our Sunday Lord's day.

Mark 16

⁹ Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils.

It would have been strange indeed, if Christ had not shown himself to His disciples as soon as He was risen, in order to comfort them, and to confirm their faith in Him. It would be equally strange if the evangelists, whose great aim was to establish the fact of Christ's resurrection, should not mention the particulars connected with it. In this text, again, we have only a simple statement of an incident that might occur on any day.

John 20

¹⁹ Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and said unto them, Peace be unto you.

The remarks on the preceding text will also apply to this. To the plea that the disciples were at this time celebrating the resurrection of Christ on the day which they had resolved to devote to His honor, we reply:

1. That this was not a religious meeting, but that the disciples were in their own place of abode;¹⁸
2. They were partaking of their evening meal;¹⁹
3. They did not yet believe that Jesus was risen from the dead.

After Mary Magdalene had seen Him,

¹⁸ See *Acts* 1:13-14.

¹⁹ See *Luke* 24:33; *Mark* 16:14.

Mark 16

¹⁰ She went and told them that had been with Him, as they mourned and wept.

¹¹ And they, when they had heard that He was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.

They continued in sorrow and unbelief throughout all that day,²⁰ and did not believe until they saw Him for themselves in their room, in the evening of the day of His resurrection.

John 20

²⁰ Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.

The six instances of the use of the term “the first day of the week” are all concerning the particular day on which Christ rose from the dead. If that day were designed to have any effect upon the practice of the disciples, in regard to the day of rest, these texts must certainly have contained a statement of that fact; but they do not. The evangelists mention the first day of the week in their narrative as a matter of course, and state in the most matter-of-fact manner possible, that the day preceding it is the Sabbath, the Lord’s day. We will continue our search.

Acts 20

⁷ And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

Here is a religious meeting on the first day of the week. Can it be that we have found what we are after? If you say “Aye,” and that the disciples evidently regarded this day as the Lord’s day, then we will venture to inquire,

“By what authority did they so regard it? We have no record of its being exalted to the honor of Lord’s day, and we dare not accept any custom without authority.”

²⁰ *Luke 24:13-17; Mark 12:13.*

As we have read the text again, however, our enthusiasm ebbs, as we find that it gives no intimation that the day on which they came together had any sacredness whatever. It is simply “the first day of the week.” It is true that they came together to perform a religious act—the breaking the bread—but this act was not confined to any particular day, but was done...

Acts 2

⁴⁶ ...every day.

Our Sunday friends are wont to comfort themselves not a little with the thought that the disciples did hold a meeting on the first day of the week; but they seem to forget that they also held meetings, and that, too, among the heathen, on the seventh day of the week.²¹ Thus we have one instance, and only one, of a religious meeting on the first day of the week, and no less than eighty-four meetings²² on the seventh day of the week.

“But,” says a friend, “the fact that the disciples worshiped on Saturday proves nothing for Saturday observance, because they held meetings on every day of the week.”

Exactly so; but if the mere example of the disciples in regularly worshiping on the seventh day, does not prove that day to be the Sabbath, how in the name of reason can a single instance of Sunday worship prove the first day to be the Sabbath?

In considering this text we have not thought it necessary to show that the meeting was on what is known as Saturday night, and that Paul and his companions traveled all the next day, he on foot, and they by sea, although that is the case, and

²¹ See *Acts* 17:42, 44; 17:2; 18:4, 11.

²² This is obtained by totalling the Sabbaths mentioned in the book of *Acts*: *Acts* 13:13-15 mentions 1 Sabbath; *Acts* 13:42-44 mentions 1 Sabbath; *Acts* 16:11-13 mentions 1 Sabbath; *Acts* 17:1-2 mentions 3 Sabbaths; *Acts* 18:1-11 mentions 1 year and six months of Sabbaths, or 78 Sabbaths.

is admitted by many first-day authors. The obvious fact that the day is given no sacred title, and just mentioned, and nothing more, is sufficient to show that we have not yet found what we seek. We will try once more.

1 Corinthians 16

¹ Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches in Galatia, even so do you.

² Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

Well, what have we here? No Lord's day, at any rate. The phrase, "lay by him in store," indicates that the appropriation for the poor was to be done at home. The phrase, "as God has prospered him," shows that the individual was to look over his accounts to see what his gains had been during the previous week, a work suitable only for a secular day. The fact that it was to be done on a specified time—the first day of the week—shows the duty of system in our offerings to the poor. Dr. Barnes, who most sincerely believed in the sacredness of Sunday, said on this text:

Let him designate a certain portion; let him do this by himself, when he is at home, when he can calmly look at the evidence of his prosperity. Let him do it not under the influence of pathetic appeals, or, for the sake of display when he is with others, but let him do it as a matter of principle, and when he is by himself.

Nor ought we to leave unnoticed the method which he recommends of laying aside week by week what is devoted to God (*1 Corinthians 16:2*)—a practice equally remote from the excitement of popular appeals and the mere impulse of instinctive benevolence.²³

And now, what next? There is nothing more. We have examined every text in the New Testament (eight in all), which

²³ Conybeare and Howson.

mention the first day of the week, and with what success the reader has seen. Not the shadow of a hint have we found that would show that Sunday has any sacredness.

We have heard it stated from the pulpit, that *Revelation* 1:10 must refer to the first day of the week, because the term “Lord’s day” is not elsewhere in the Bible applied to the seventh day. As much as to say,

Revelation 1:10 cannot refer to Saturday, because that day is nowhere else in the Bible called the Lord’s day; but it must refer to Sunday, because that day is uniformly called “the first day of the week.”

That is a fair specimen of Sunday logic. It is a simple fact, however, as we have already seen,²⁴ that the seventh day of the week is called the Lord’s day.

And here we leave the matter. We have carefully and candidly considered the subject of the Lord’s day, in the light of the Scriptures. As a very brief summary of the whole matter, and to remind the reader of the necessity of making a correct decision, we beg him to read these three texts:

Exodus 20

⁸ Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

⁹ Six days shall you labor, and do all your work;

¹⁰ But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God.

Isaiah 58

¹³ If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shall honor Him [by keeping the Sabbath as He directs], not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words;

¹⁴ Then shall you delight yourself in the Lord.

²⁴ *Exodus* 20:8-11; *Isaiah* 58:13; *Mark* 2:28, etc.

1 Samuel 2

³⁰ For them that honor me I will honor; and they that despise me [by disobedience] shall be lightly esteemed.

