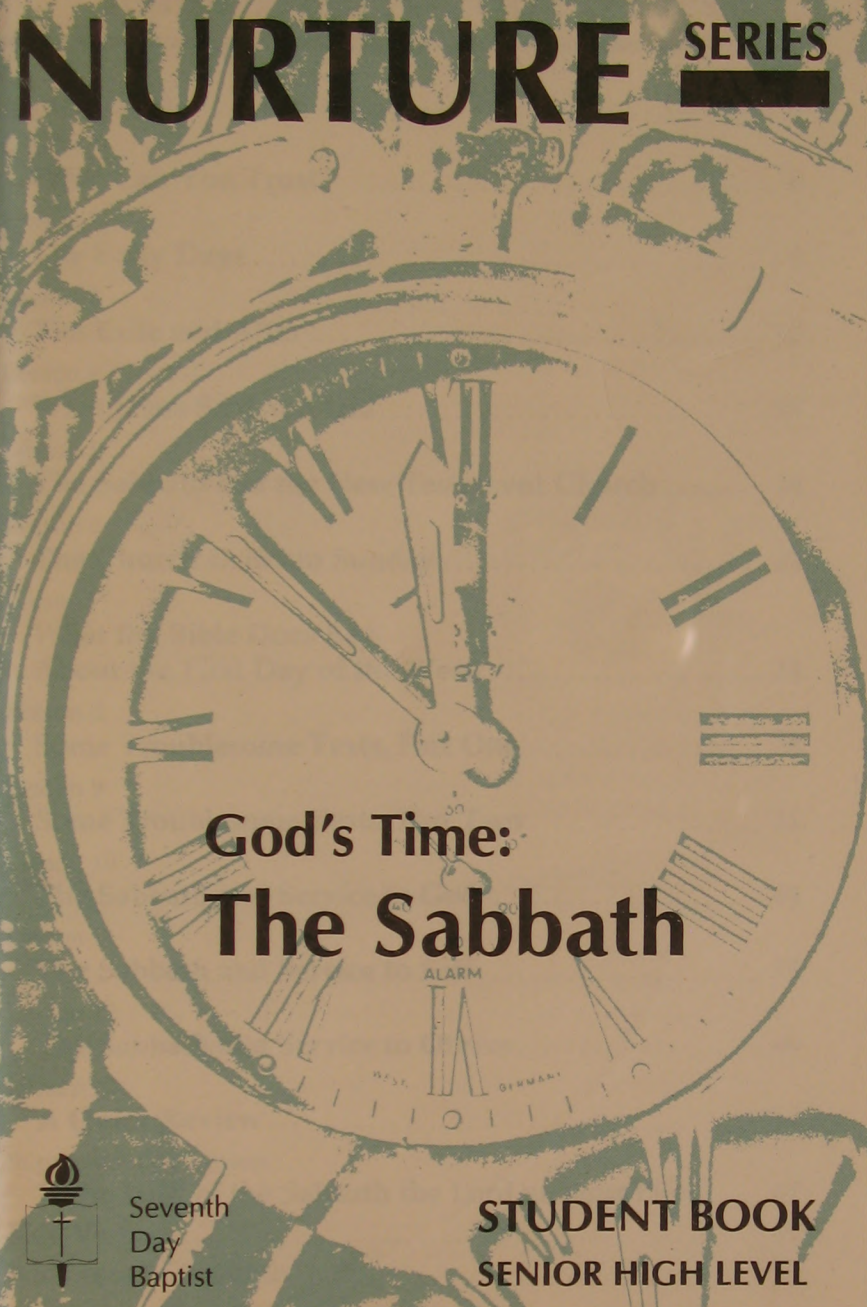


NURTURE SERIES



God's Time: The Sabbath



Seventh
Day
Baptist

STUDENT BOOK
SENIOR HIGH LEVEL

Senior High Nurture Series

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Introduction

The Sabbath! Here we go again! Sometimes it seems as if all we talk about is how different we are because we "go to church on Saturday." Some of you may be involved because you enjoy church and Sabbath School. For others it may be that only the pressure of parents keeps you coming. Yet, for whatever reason, you are here. Even though you may think you have heard it all before, we hope to present you with some facts about the Sabbath and Sunday which will help you understand why some Christian groups have held on to the Sabbath in spite of what the majority has done. We hope these lessons will help each student evaluate ways to make our Sabbath-keeping something valuable and beneficial, not just "different."

Some of you may wonder why we observe the Sabbath. Others may wonder where Sunday observance came from. Some may question if the Sabbath is important enough to cause us to be different and to cut us off from some athletic and social opportunities that others participate in. Still others may want guidance in establishing a life-style that helps others see the value of the Sabbath. When you finish this series of lessons we hope you will have found help in all these areas.

Suggestions to Students

1. Keep a notebook. As you study between sessions you may want to jot down questions you want to discuss. You may discover principles during this study that you will want to apply to other areas of life.
2. Keep your Bible handy. Some lessons rely more heavily on Bible verses than others, but you may want to look up related passages as you study.
3. Compare several translations of the Bible if they are available. When you do this you may get a more complete understanding of what a specific passage means.
4. Remember that personal likes and dislikes are not very good reasons for making important decisions. Mature people base decisions on as complete an understanding of the facts as they can develop.
5. Being different may be difficult at times, but what everybody else is doing or thinking may be wrong.

Why Bother?

You may have seen the commercial for a certain cereal showing a child running out of energy while chasing a dragon. This child forgot to eat his balanced breakfast. The point being pushed is the cereal, but the important point is that a balanced breakfast is necessary for proper stamina.

Imagine you have a nice car. It runs . . . well, sort of. When you keep it tuned up and use the top grade gasoline it does very well. But try using a lower grade of fuel and the “ping” comes back. That low grade gas gums up the carburetor, too. Try changing the timing just a little bit, and it backfires and won’t run smoothly.

What’s wrong? Why can’t you “cut corners?” The car looks good sitting in the drive way regardless of the gasoline you use. But what do you want, something that looks ok or something that runs right when its time to go to school, work, games, dances . . . and maybe even youth group meetings and church?

Maybe you are a little bit like this good looking car. You are put together “just so” (according to the owner’s manual). You operate well when you eat balanced meals, get a few hour’s sleep, keep schoolwork done and chores completed. But for “peak performance” you need to be powered by Christ and have weekly tune-ups . . . that’s right . . . the Sabbath.



**Don't miss
this Sabbath's
free tune up.**

Lesson 1

What Can You Trust?

We live in the age of information. Government, private industry, schools, churches and individuals are all caught up in collecting information. It was reported in the United States recently that only three percent of the information the government collects is ever used or evaluated. Yet everyone keeps on collecting it.

Part of this information explosion takes the form of books. Some new works are very good, but much of what is written now will last no longer than the cheap paper on which it was printed. Another characteristic of our "information society" is that we assume that yesterday's facts are obsolete. We tend to rely on the most recent data available. In some cases that is a good practice.

When we turn to the Bible, it is easy for Christians to appear to be out of step with the rest of the world. The Bible is a very old book. The descriptions of everyday life seem strange to us. Our older English translations were written so long ago that they seem almost like a foreign language! Yet this book has been the ultimate source of information on "spiritual matters" for many generations. How do we apply the Bible to life right now?

Modern technology is a challenge to the values presented in the Bible. Present forms of government seem to be totally foreign to the descriptions of life in the New Testament. Many customs and practices of our first century brothers and sisters appear strange—out of step with life today. We can understand why some reject the Bible entirely. Yet mankind needs absolutes; standards that do not change when opinions change. Otherwise what is right one moment may be wrong the next.

Nearly fifty years ago a group of Christians agreed that the Bible is "the inspired record of God's will for man and that it is the final authority in matters of faith and conduct" (Seventh Day Baptist Statement of Belief). This statement suggests that God entered into the process of producing and preserving what is included in the Bible, and that this book is the "last word" about what we believe and how we behave.

As we consider the Sabbath and how it relates to life now, we will be using the Bible as the "last word" in our study. We will approach what the Bible teaches expecting that its words still apply to life now.

Many different theories of "inspiration" have developed over the years. Some groups teach that the authority of the church is equal to the authority of the Bible in deciding what is right and wrong. Others say they accept only the Bible, but then insist that its teachings be understood as they were interpreted by the founder or an early teacher in their group. Many churches insist that they follow only the Bible, but then continue to practice traditions that may not have the support of Scripture.

It is important for us to understand why we can trust what the Bible teaches. Sometimes Christians seem to say "The Bible is inspired because it

says it is inspired." We need to avoid this kind of "circular reasoning." Another danger to avoid is becoming too personal in explaining the special place the Bible occupies. "I know the Bible is inspired because it inspires me" may be meaningful to some, but other might say the same thing about some poem or a favorite song.

The following points may be helpful in understanding the authority of the Bible, while avoiding circular reasoning and personal value judgments.

1. Where the Bible can be compared with other ancient writings, it proves to be reliable. (Such books as *The New Testament Documents, Are They Reliable?* by F. F. Bruce and *Luke the Historian in Recent Study* by James Martin, deal with this issue.)
2. Since the Bible is reliable about facts we can check, it is reasonable to consider it reliable when it deal with facts not recorded in other sources.
3. This "reliable document" states that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God (John 1:14, 29, 36, 41,49; 4:42; 20:28): and that he provided evidence to support this claim (John 2:1-11; 4:46-54; 5:1-18; 6:5-21; 9:1-7; 11:1-45; 20:30-31).
4. Jesus, as the Son of God, was trustworthy in presenting truth.
5. Jesus used the Old Testament as reliable and considered it as the authority in determining correct belief and proper actions (Matthew 5:17-48; 15:1-9; 23:1-3 Luke 24:25-270).

Conclusion: Since Jesus used the Bible as the authority for correct belief and right actions, the believer can have confidence in using the Bible as his final authority in matters of faith and conduct.

While Christians may honestly disagree about how to interpret certain passages and whether some stories are history or parables, we have in this book the source of reliable spiritual guidance.

Creation, Man, and the Sabbath

If you have attended Sabbath School for most of your life you certainly know the record of creation as found in Genesis 1 and 2. The Sabbath is presented as the final act of Creation with God instructing mankind to enter into his rest on his Sabbath . . . the seventh day. One of mankind's greatest problems is pride. We all tend to want to think of ourselves as "in charge" of our own lives. The Sabbath is a weekly reminder of the fact that we are only a part of God's creation. To observe the Sabbath helps us remember who we are and to whom we belong. Psalm 100:3 says "It is he who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people and the sheep of his pasture."

How good it is to know that God, in his love for us, set aside this reminder of our place in his creation!

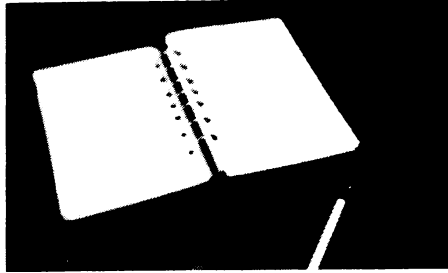
Key verses: Genesis 1:27;
Psalm 100:3

Genesis 2:1-3
2 Timothy 3:16

School—School—S c h o o l! All I ever do is school work. I finally get my geometry done only to face a bunch of dumb formulas for chemistry. Then there's _____ . Practice—Practice—Practice! I never do _____ exactly right. It always seems to need to be done just a little bit better. They are never satisfied! I finally get home and have to face _____ . Am I tired! Can't I ever stop?

Yes.

God did and so can you. Go ahead. Work—Work—Work for six days, then stop and see that it **was** good. Take a break. Get a breather. Ahh! It is refreshing! Try one—You'll like it!



Matchups

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| _____ 1. Absolute | a. Advantageous, helpful, good for; entitling a person to receive for personal use, enjoyment. |
| _____ 2. Authority | b. Last, furthest or farthest; ending a process or series, maximum; conclusive. |
| _____ 3. Beneficial | c. Handed down statements, beliefs, legends, customs from generation to generation. |
| _____ 4. Inspired | d. Law, covenant—especially between God and man. |
| _____ 5. Observe | e. Having form, substance or body. |
| _____ 6. Sabbath | f. Being fully or perfectly indicated. |
| _____ 7. Testament | g. The 7th day of the week, Saturday as the day of rest and religious observance among Jews and in some Christian churches. |
| _____ 8. Theory | h. Aroused, animated or imbued with the spirit to do a certain thing, by or as by supernatural or divine influence. |
| _____ 9. Traditional | i. Coherent group of general propositions used as principles of explanation. |
| _____ 10. Ultimate | j. The power to judge, act or command. |
| | k. To see, perceive, notice, to regard with attention so as to learn something. |

The Early Days

Sometimes people who reject the Sabbath will claim that the original Sabbath was lost before the Children of Israel left Egypt. They will demand that Sabbath-keepers "prove" we have "the original Sabbath of creation." A similar argument suggests that the Sabbath was "lost" by Israel during the Babylonian captivity and that the rabbis simply picked a day later on. Again the demand is made that Sabbath-keepers "prove" they have the right day.

Both these arguments conveniently forget that Christian Sabbath-keepers are following the example of Jesus and that there has been no break in the seven day cycle of the week since his time, a fact that **can** be proven. If the original Sabbath had been lost, Jesus would have made the correction.

Let's look at some of the early events related to the Sabbath and see what we can learn from them. When the Israelites left Egypt God showed them which day to observe. This is a major point in the story of the giving of the manna. Sunday through Thursday the people collected what they needed for that day. Friday they collected twice as much in order to be prepared for the Sabbath. Exodus 16:27 reports that those who went looking for manna on Sabbath found none. This was a method God used to help them know what day was to be used for rest and worship.

In giving the Ten Commandments, God placed Sabbath observance on the same level of importance as honesty (thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness), respect for human life, (thou shalt not kill), respect for parents (honor thy father and mother), and respect for him (thou shalt have no other gods before Me). Some say that as Christians we are "under grace, not under law." Others insist that "the law was nailed to the cross." (We will deal with what was nailed to the cross in lesson 9.) Here is one quote that deals with the issue of law and grace: ". . . the law was given after Israel had, as a body of believers, made a commitment to serve the Lord (Exod. 19:8). Thus the law was given, not as a means of justification, but as a guideline for living after Israel's commitment to serve the Lord." (*Hermeneutics*, Henry Virkler, Baker, Grand Rapids, 1981, p. 139)

Some who wish to avoid the responsibility of observing God's Sabbath will refer to it as "the Jewish Sabbath." Even in the Ten Commandments we can see that God intended the Sabbath for more than one small group of people. Servants and visitors were to observe it with the family: "in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or daughter, your male or female servant or your sojourner who stays with you," Exodus 20:10b. Servants and "resident aliens" were to keep it, too.

Isn't it strange how people insist that the other nine commandments apply to all people, saying that they "continue to be God's rules for right living," but then object to the Sabbath, claiming that Sabbath-keepers are trying to "earn their salvation!"

Unfortunately Israel was never very good at obeying the Commandments. The Old Testament tells of many times when the people followed the

customs of their pagan neighbors. The prophets frequently spoke out against immorality, idolatry and ignoring the Sabbath. Even in Old Testament times the majority failed to understand what a blessing this special day could be.

2 Kings 22 and 23 tells about the rediscovery of a book in the temple during the reign of King Josiah. Apparently this book was Deuteronomy with its many regulations of how they were to keep God's law. Just imagine! Things were so bad that they had even lost the book of the law! Josiah had the book read to the people and renewed many of the requirements in the book. Unfortunately this time of reform did not last much longer than King Josiah did.

The cycles of disobedience led Israel and Judah (the kingdom had split in two) into periods of moral decay and national weakness which resulted in loss of freedom as strong neighbors took control.

Prophets called out for a return to obedience and trust in the Lord, but most were ignored and persecuted. Finally the Babylonian Empire conquered the Chosen People and took many of them away from the Promised Land to new homes in other parts of the Empire. As bad as this was, some of those who were taken away came to a renewed commitment and were determined to pass this commitment on to their children. Since the temple had been destroyed, the idea of the "synagogue" (assembly) became popular. This was a regular meeting for praise of God, reading of Scripture and the application of Scripture to daily life by a "rabbi" (teacher). We can see in these Sabbath synagogue services the same pattern that we follow in our Sabbath worship services as Christians today.

Key verses: Exodus 20:8-11

Hebrews 4:9-11

How many of you have baked a cake, sewn a shirt, built a model or mowed the yard? Most of you have done at least one of these things. I have tried my hand at all of these—some with success, some with confusion and frustration. If you can evaluate how you went about doing these things you will probably discover that you watched someone else do them before your first try. Eventually you read or heard the "rules" and learned to do things in a certain order—including "the job is not done until the mess is cleaned up."

How the project turned out depended on observing the steps involved and applying the skills you learned.

Observing is "seeing in order to learn."

Learning is acquiring a skill or knowledge through study, instruction or experience.

The Sabbath rest doesn't just happen. It is to be **observed**. It is to be **learned**. Look at your worship service. See what it is. What does it teach?

Worship Service Ingredients

Instructions

Outcome:

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The Exile and After

We have already mentioned how the once strong nation of Israel had divided into two smaller, weaker kingdoms. Israel continued to be the name used for the Northern Kingdom while the Southern Kingdom came to be known as Judah. Israel was conquered first. The Assyrians captured the Israelites and scattered them throughout their empire. It was their custom to force conquered people to give up their traditions and accept Assyrian culture. For all practical purposes this was the end of the Northern Kingdom. Most of these Israelites gave up their heritage and were absorbed by the Assyrians. This group is sometimes called the ten lost tribes. Some people try to identify these lost tribes. You may hear someone say that the American Indians, original settlers of England or the Aztecs were really these lost tribes. There is little, if any, historical foundation for such wild claims.



The Divided Kingdom

When Judah was captured they received treatment that was different from that received by Israel. The Babylonians were the conquerors and they had a different kind of policy toward their captives. Although they removed the Jews from the Promised Land, they allowed them to settle in their own communities. Many priests and scribes went into captivity with the people. They took with them scrolls of the law from which to teach. Because they had leaders, communities of their own and copies of their sacred books, the Jews were able to develop deeper commitment to God during their captivity.

Since the temple had been destroyed they developed the synagogue as the center of religious activity.

Groups with different outlooks on the law developed during this time. Two of them play an important part in the New Testament: the Pharisees and the Saducees. Another group took on much greater importance. There had been scribes for many years, but now they became accepted as interpreters of the law rather than just copiers of the law.

These groups became convinced that the only way to prevent another captivity was to make sure that everyone obeyed God's law. They became "legalists," believing that the Jewish nation would survive only through careful observance of the law. Since many of God's commands stated general principles, they began to write explanations of how these principles should be applied. Over a period of years these explanations took on the force of law themselves. It was this replacing of God's law with man's explanations that Jesus objected to during his ministry on earth.

One of the laws which the scribes and other spent much time explaining was the fourth Commandment. They were aware that Sabbath-breaking

had been a big problem throughout their history. Even when they first returned to Jerusalem they found that many ignored the Sabbath. Nehemiah 13:15-22 tells how this leader corrected the problem.

A promise given through Isaiah seems to have had a big impact on the thinking of the scribes, too. Early in the captivity, this elderly prophet gave these words of encouragement: "If because of the sabbath you turn your foot from doing your own pleasure on My holy day, and call the sabbath a delight, the holy day of the Lord honorable, and shall honor it, desisting from your own ways, from seeking your own pleasure, and speaking your own word, then you will take delight in the Lord and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; and I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken" (Isaiah 58:13-14).

This and similar calls to renewed Sabbath observance led to a strong desire to define what keeping the Sabbath meant. If they had simply followed the instructions in Isaiah's promise they would have done well. Instead they concentrated on explaining what was and was not "work, pleasure," etc. Some of their reasoning seems very strange to us, but they were absolutely serious about it. Here are a few examples:

1. A wooden false tooth could be worn on the Sabbath, but not one made of gold. They assumed that the gold tooth was worn for decoration, not usefulness.
2. Writing was forbidden on the Sabbath. Since writing was often done on clay tablets with a pointed stick, they considered it the same as plowing a field or digging a ditch, work that no Jew would do on the Sabbath.
3. Travel was restricted to six-tenths of a mile from home. But the Pharisees defined "home" as a place where a person kept bread. Someone who planned a longer trip on the Sabbath could send a servant out the day before to hide bread every mile or so along the way. This would mean the traveler was never more than a "Sabbath Day's Journey" from "home."
4. A beggar could be given something to eat on the Sabbath only if the item was placed on a window sill. Neither the giver or the receiver was to carry it out of the house, since that would be "bearing a burden."

We can see why Jesus ignored such picky and unreasonable rules during his earthly ministry.

Key Verses: Isaiah 58:12-14

Nehemiah 13:15-22

Terms to understand: Priest, Scribes, Pharisees, scrolls, burden, captivity

Reflections

As I look back to my teenage years, I find the memories of Sabbath pleasant. I would get up to a special breakfast with the family. My part was to scramble the eggs, just so. I had set the table with dishes we used only for the Sabbath on the evening before. There would be a special candle and flower arrangement in the table center. We would eat in the dining room, not in the kitchen as we did the rest of the week. We enjoyed having "someone" in our home most weekends.

Worship and Sabbath were full of time with others, singing specially prepared songs and learning about the customs and teaching of the Bible times.

Following an oven-prepared meal with trimmings fixed on Friday, I could go for walks, bicycle rides, sleep, write letters or visit with friends. I had a "best friend" on the Sabbath. We could talk, play and "just be" with each other. Dad and Mom would have their time to sit, talk, relax with quiet music in the background. People were in and out of our home. My younger brothers were always busy "doing." Sometimes we would "do" together: pictures, games and messes.

I have enjoyed writing stories dating from some of the Sabbath afternoons when the rain was pouring or the snow was too deep for me to waddle through.

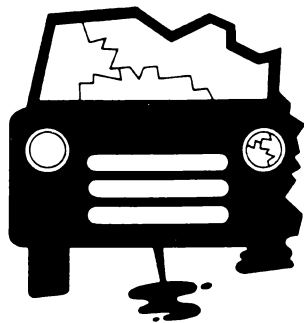
Sabbaths were a joy for me. They gave me the time away from school pressures. I have always had to work hard in school, music and sports. The Sabbath gave me a break from the competition. My mind could relax so my body tensions could also relax. In this relaxed time, I could be quiet and absorb God's source of energy and directions for my life.

Mom and Dad helped keep me on target when it came to the Sabbath as a teenager. Sometimes, though, experience is the best teacher.

One Sabbath, they let me go with a group of youth to an activity. It was in the out-of-doors, Christian kids, clean time, yet I was miserable and out of sorts by the time that Sabbath ended. We had played together, done nothing wrong, yet we were so busy talking about school, parties, movies, that God didn't get a chance to speak to any one of us. We were so busy enjoying each other that we neglected God.

We all need to be kept in alignment. Isaiah gave a very good guideline. Using Isaiah 58:12-14. How do your Sabbath activities measure up?

**Is it time
for a
Sabbath
alignment?**



What Jesus Said and Did

We have already mentioned the controversy that developed between Jesus and the scribes and Pharisees over how the Sabbath should be kept. As we begin this lesson we need to keep two facts in mind. One is Jesus' attitude toward God's law. The other is that his disputes over the Sabbath always related to **how** the Sabbath was kept, never **whether** it should be kept!

Perhaps Jesus' most direct comment on the law comes from the Sermon on the Mount. In Matthew 5:17-20 he states in no uncertain terms that the law is to continue; it is to be obeyed; and that those who teach otherwise will be called "least in the kingdom of heaven." Any honest reader of this passage will be deeply impressed by his words on this subject. This general reference to "the law and the prophets" refers to the bulk of what we think of as the Old Testament.

Not only did Jesus confirm the law in the Sermon on the Mount, he said and did much that related directly to the issue of Sabbath-keeping. In answer to criticism of his style of Sabbath observance, he told the Pharisees: "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. Consequently, the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27-28). We learn several things from this brief passage.

1. Jesus did not say that the Sabbath was made for the Jews or Israel. He said it was made for man, meaning mankind (all people everywhere). The Sabbath is for everybody. It is much more than the "Jewish Sabbath."
2. Jesus' discussion with the Pharisees related to the "how" of Sabbath-keeping. Neither in this case nor in any other did he suggest that the Sabbath was to be discontinued or changed to another day. He objected to their legalistic regulations, not to the Sabbath.
3. In this passage Jesus called himself "Lord of the Sabbath." Sometimes people refer to Sunday as "the Lord's Day," but if any day of the week deserves that title it is the day Jesus declared himself to be Lord of—the seventh-day Sabbath.

Jesus' Custom

As we read through the Gospels we discover that Sabbath observance was a regular part of Jesus' life. Luke 4:16 says:

"And he (Jesus) came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and as was his custom, he entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read." To say something was his custom is to say that it was something he did on a regular basis. (Read these passages too: Mark 1:21; 3:1; 6:2; Luke 4:31; 13:10; 14:1.)

Jesus' Example

The thing that Jesus did differently from the Pharisees related to what some might say was using "common sense." Matthew 12:1-8, Mark 2:23-28 and Luke 6:1-5 all tell about a confrontation with the Pharisees when the disciples plucked a few heads of grain as they walked near a field on a Sabbath. The Pharisees could see no difference between what the disciples did and a farmer going with a sickle and the other equipment needed to harvest the whole field. Their petty legalisms ignored common sense.

Jesus, the Creator

Sometimes people will say: "You keep the Sabbath in honor of creation. We keep the first day of the week in honor of the resurrection." This is an excuse, not a reason. First, the Commandment relates to the seventh-day Sabbath. There is no such command in the Bible for the first day, either in honor of the resurrection or for any other reason.

But the New Testament does include three very interesting passages that relate to creation: John 1:1-3: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. **All things came into being by him, and apart from him nothing came into being that has come into being.**" As we read the rest of the chapter we discover that this "Word" is Jesus Christ. Colossians 1:16-17: "For by him (Jesus) all things were created, both in the earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions, or rulers or authorities —all things have been created by him and for him." Hebrews 1:1,2: "God, after he spoke long ago to the father in the prophets in many portions and many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the world."

As we look at these passages we discover that the New Testament Church viewed Jesus as the One through whom Creation had happened. It follows that they viewed him as the "Christ of Creation" and therefore the Sabbath was viewed as honoring their Lord and Savior, Jesus.

The New Testament teaches that Jesus Christ is the Creator. It pictures him regularly going to the synagogue on the Sabbath. It pictures him challenging the Pharisees over their man-made regulations of how the Sabbath should be kept. It quotes him as saying that the law would continue "until all is accomplished."

There can be no doubt that by word and example Jesus taught his followers to observe the seventh day of the week as Sabbath.

Key Verses: Mark 2:27,28
Luke 4:16
Colossians 1:16, 17

Matthew 5:17-20
John 1:1-3
Hebrews 1:1,2

I have this so called weight problem. Really it is just that my body is good at preparing for future famine, but most people don't seem to see it that way, so . . . I have spent a lot of time dieting and exercising. Studies show that consistency is important. You do not have to jog or exercise everyday—3 or 4 days a week are enough. Short term dieting can be helpful in taking off unwanted pounds, but common sense eating and balanced meals are really best.

I will always have my weight problem to live with—there are no short cuts to a long term solution.

In our spiritual lives there are no real short cuts to a well-rounded life. It takes dedication and a planned program for spiritual fitness.

Modern "Heroes" encourage us to eat certain foods, wear certain clothes, use certain products, do certain things. Why not follow Christ's example and customs, since he is our one true "Hero?"

Jesus always went to an assembly of people on the Sabbath to pray, worship and hear God's word read. He went about doing good on the Sabbath. He was concerned for the needs of people. Sometimes we say "so and so" is "lording" it over us. It is important to remember that Christ's Lordship was one based on giving his whole self for one and all (John 13:1-20). His Lordship was founded on being a servant.

Notice Exodus 20:10a: "But the _____ day is a _____ of the _____ your God," and Mark 2:28b: "For the Son of Man is _____ even of the _____ day."

Jesus warned not to let "minor concerns" interfere with Godly conditioning. Yet he did not "throw out the baby with the bathwater." While eliminating the kind of legalism that the Pharisees practiced, we must hold on to the things of value that they were trying to protect.

Make a list of "aides" for your Sabbath observance. Be careful. You will find a list of suggestions at the end of these lessons.

Be open to change. Always weigh what you do. Christ may want to "pluck some grain" with you. Don't miss out.



The Sabbath and the New Testament Church

Some Sunday-keepers will agree that Jesus and the disciples kept the Sabbath up to the time of the resurrection, but they insist that all this changed at the time of the resurrection. The book of Acts tells about the early days of the church. Let's see what we can learn about the Sabbath in the life of the early believers.

There is one mention of a meeting of a local Christian Church on the "first day of the week." We will look at that even in a later lesson. For now let's just say that there is no indication in Acts 20 that this one "Sunday meeting" in any way represents the normal practice of even this one local church, much less all Christian churches of that time.

The Sabbath is mentioned specifically in the following passages: Acts 13:14, 27, 42-44; 15:21; 16:13; 17:2; 18:4; 20:7. Some scholars discover in the book of Acts references to 84 specific Sabbaths on which Paul met for worship with Gentiles and/or Jews.

Instead of taking a great deal of time with all of these passages, let's concentrate on the ones in Chapter 13 and then look at another passage that tells us a lot about what was happening in the early church by what is not said.

Acts 13:13-52 tells about the ministry of Paul and Barnabas in Pisidia. This was a Gentile city, but there was an active Jewish synagogue there. As often happened some Gentiles were deeply impressed by the teaching and moral standards of the Jews. It was common for some Gentiles to attend the synagogue for Sabbath services. As a visiting rabbi, Paul was invited to speak to the synagogue in Pisidia on the Sabbath. They were impressed with his message of salvation through Jesus Christ. Acts 13:42 says that many of those who had heard him "kept begging that these things might be spoken to them the next Sabbath."

If the Christians were observing the first day of the week this would have been the ideal opportunity for Paul to tell them to come back "the next day." Yet verse 44 reads: "And the next Sabbath nearly the whole city assembled to hear the word of God." Here is a continuing pattern of observing the Sabbath by the early Christians.

What Was *Not* an Issue

Acts 15 tells of a disagreement among early Christians over what Gentiles had to do to become Christians. Obviously the apostles and other early followers were Jewish. They had been brought up knowing the law. Some of these early followers considered Christianity to be for Jews only. A Gentile could become a Christian only after first becoming a Jew. Others, like Paul, believed that Christianity was more than an extension of the Jewish faith. It was an open invitation to anyone to come directly to God through Jesus Christ. Apparently some member of the Jerusalem church started following

Paul around telling Gentile converts that they had to follow all the rules and regulations of the ceremonial law (as they were interpreted by the scribes and Pharisees). When Paul and Barnabas were unable to end the dispute they went back to Jerusalem where the “troublemakers” had come from. The issue was discussed thoroughly by the leaders of the church, and a solution was reached which was approved by the congregation. Gentile converts were to avoid certain things which were particularly offensive to their Jewish Christian brothers and sisters in order to make for easier fellowship. The practices to avoid were: eating food sacrificed to idols, food with blood in it, meat that came from strangled animals (which would contain blood) and fornication.

These practices are not mentioned directly in the Ten Commandments. They are part of God’s special law of Israel. Some Sunday-keepers have argued that since no mention of the Sabbath is made that all Christians had already begun to observe the first day of the week. This is not logical. Jewish Christians who were still concerned about the issues that were discussed at this meeting would hardly be people who had given up the Sabbath!

Acts 15 is silent on the issue of Sabbath observance because it was not an issue. Both Jewish and Gentile Christians viewed the Sabbath as one of the Ten Commandments, part of God’s moral law. They did not dispute its importance for all people.

The Pattern in Acts

The book of Acts displays a consistent pattern on the issue of the Sabbath. The earliest Christians were Jews who had been brought up observing the Sabbath. The earliest Gentile converts were people who had first been influenced by the religion of the Jews and were conditioned to consider the Sabbath as sacred time to be used for public worship, rest and spiritual fellowship. Other early converts came into a Christian community that was made up of Sabbath-keepers.

It is particularly interesting to see the way the Sabbath is presented in Acts when we remember that the author of this book was Luke, a Gentile doctor.

You may have seen metronomes, the clockwork device used by musicians to “keep time” when practicing. The metronome that sits on our piano both “clicks” on each beat and has a bell that can be set to ring at regular intervals. This bell helps keep track of the first beat of each measure. Because it is consistent, the metronome makes it easy to use to keep the right time for the number being practiced. If we were never certain when the bell would ring or when the next click would come, the metronome would be worse than useless.

The consistent pattern of the apostles in the book of Acts included observance of the Sabbath. Since they were consistent, it is easier for us to “keep time,” too.

Begin at the arrow and write the first letter. Go to your right and circle every third letter. Take your circled letters and divide them into words.

▶ A B C N M O D P Y T U V H I J E F G N O P E D
C X Y Z T S R S D E A C F B A C B G I A Q R T
X Z H Z I E B D A C F R S T L M N Y Z A T P O
H S R E F D W X Y H I J O L E L M K E K D C A
B I G H T V W Y Z X A B C S T U S S S E B C M
N O B C A L M N E A C D F G T M S O P Q H I W
E D C A B C R Q S T U V H I J E F G W X Y O P
Q R S I D E F O P X F G H G H I O Q R D P I

Even in a simple exercise like this consistency counts. Suppose an extra letter were added somewhere in the list. Your answer would make no sense. There is an old saying that “your actions speak so loudly that I can’t hear a word you’re saying.” An important part of our actions is consistency.

Evaluate your Sabbath observance using the consistent pattern of “measuring sticks” found in Scripture—not by your peer group or other Sabbath-keepers today.

(Note: the quote is from Acts 13:44)

Lesson 6

The Church Drifts to Sunday

We have seen the consistent pattern of Sabbath-keeping by the Christians in the book of Acts. If the first Christians were Sabbath-keepers, when did the change to Sunday happen? While no one can say with absolute certainty, it appears that the change was a gradual one, starting sometime after 100 A.D. and, since there have always been Sabbath-keeping Christians, was never complete.

Since the change came after 100 A.D., we are dealing with history that happened after the time covered by the New Testament. This is why there will be less use of the Bible in this lesson. We will be returning to the New Testament in the next lesson to see what it says about the first day of the week.

What happened to cause many Christians to accept a change from the seventh to the first day of the week?

The Romans and Religion

The powerful nation during New Testament times was the Roman Empire. It continued to control Europe and the Middle East for several hundred years after the time of Jesus. Rome started as a democracy, but became a dictatorship with an emperor as leader. Some emperors were wise leaders who served well. Others were immoral, selfish or insane.

When the Romans conquered a country, they accepted the religions of that country as legal in the Empire. However, no new religions were allowed for fear they would be the start of groups that would try to overthrow the government. Followers of new religions were severely punished.

When Judea was conquered before the birth of Jesus, the Jewish religion was recognized as legal in the Empire. The first people to believe that Jesus was the world's Savior were Jews. They tended to view their faith in Christ as a part of their Jewish religion. As long as Christianity was viewed as part of "Judaism" it was considered a legal religion and had a little protection under Roman law. But circumstances changed.

The Jews always had difficult relations with conquerors, including the Romans. Because of their belief in one God, the Jews rejected the many gods and goddesses of the Roman system. Since they believed that a descendant of King David would one day be their king they looked at the Roman government as temporary and objectionable. Some Jews (the "Zealots") believed they should force the Romans out of Judea.

In 70 A.D. a large group of Jews revolted and actually took control of the Holy Land for a short time. This revolt was brutally crushed, and both the temple and the city of Jerusalem were destroyed. Many restrictions were placed on the Jews. Another major revolt took place from 132 to 135 A.D.

Following this second rebellion Emperor Hadrian outlawed Judaism and forbade the observance of the Sabbath.

As tension between the Jews and Rome grew, changes were taking place in the Christian church, too. Jewish Christians were no longer in the majority. More and more Gentiles were being converted directly from idol worship. Although we should not question the sincerity of their decision to become Christian, it is a fact that many of these former pagans brought attitudes and customs with them which were at odds with the practice of Jewish Christians. Some even brought strong anti-Jewish feelings with them. This change in the make up of the Church was a primary influence on the introduction and acceptance of Sunday as a substitute for the Sabbath.

Some reasons Gentiles favored replacing the Sabbath were:

1. Gentiles wanted to avoid practices which might make the authorities confuse Christians with Jews since the Jews were out of favor with the government.
2. Many Gentiles did not understand the significance of some Bible teachings. They were not familiar with the Old Testament.
3. They had a pro-Pagan, anti-Jewish attitude as a carry-over from their former way of life.
4. They tended to hold on to Pagan customs and practices, giving them "Christian explanations" or "meanings."

It is no coincidence, then, that the first direct references to Sunday as a day of Christian observance comes from Gentile writers in the middle of the second century. One writing is called the "Epistle of Barnabas." Although it claims to have been written by Paul's companion, it was written about 135 A.D. (the time of Hadrian's persecution of the Jews). The second written mention of Sunday observance is a letter by Justin Martyr, written about 150 A.D.

"Barnabas" claims Sunday to be the "eighth day" and the beginning of a "new creation." Almost as an afterthought he mentions the resurrection as another reason for observing the first day of the week. Justin Martyr advocates the first day of the week as a commemoration of the start of the creation week, rather than observing the Sabbath in honor of its completion. He too mentions the resurrection as a secondary reason. Much later the idea of the resurrection became the main explanation of the shift from the Sabbath.

It appears that Justin and whoever wrote Barnabas were trying to give reasons for rejecting the Sabbath. The real reasons seem to be fear of confusion with the Jews and lack of good understanding of the Old Testament on the part of many Christians of the second century.

Later, in 321 A.D., Emperor Constantine ordered that "the venerable day of the sun" (Sunday) be an official weekly day off in the Roman Empire. Later still various Church councils wrote orders that Sunday was to be observed and that the Sabbath must no longer be kept. Even so, there were many individuals and small groups who continued to keep the Sabbath.

Today there are challenges to our faith in Christ, including Sabbath observance. Public Schools are not allowed to have classroom prayer recited (yet this does not take away the individual's right to pray). In trying to "separate church and state," teaching creation has been challenged. Teachers are expected to remain silent about their personal Christian faith.

Some Bible studies and prayer meetings in private homes have been challenged because of zoning laws.

This is today in a "free society."

We are told to hold fast to our confession (Hebrews 4:14-16); our confidence (Hebrews 3:6); and every good thing (1 Thessalonians 5:21).

There are many people who have held fast to their faith. Corrie Ten Boom comes quickly to mind. Do you know about John James, Jan Lek, Stephen Mumford, Althea Traske, Cornelius Bosch, Tacy Hubbard or James Bailey? These people have held fast to their faith in Christ (including the Sabbath) through difficult experiences.

Many of them are mentioned in S.D.B.'s in Europe and America. Information on others would be available through the Missionary or Historical Societies. Your teacher may want to assign a name to each class member for a brief summary of their lives and witness.



What the Bible Does Say About the First Day of the Week

In Genesis 1 the first day of the week is described as the day on which light was created. Very little else is said about this day until the New Testament where we find eight references. Six of these relate to the specific day on which the empty tomb was discovered. One refers to another specific first day of the week. The final one refers to a suggested use for this day by Paul. Let's begin with the record of the resurrection.

When we consider how important the death and resurrection of Jesus is in the life of the Christian Church, it is surprising how few of the facts can be "pinned down" with absolute certainty. Bible scholars disagree as to what year Jesus died. While the crucifixion happened at the time of the passover, they do not agree on what day of the week he died. There are differences of opinion about the exact time of his resurrection, too.

All this confusion points out the fact that belief in the resurrection is more important than belief in the details about the resurrection. Let's look at the way the Gospel records the time of the discovery of the empty tomb.

Matthew 28:1: "Late on the Sabbath as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week." (Dawn will be discussed later in this lesson.)

Mark 16:2: "Very early on the first day of the week."

Luke 24:1: "On the first day of the week at early dawn."

John 20:1: "On the first day of the week . . . while it was still dark."

The word translated "dawn" in Matthew 28:1 appears only twice in the New Testament. The other use is in Luke 23:54 where it refers to the time of day when the body of Jesus was buried. The word means "to light up," but usually referred to the lighting up of the stars at evening, rather than the rising of the sun. It is hard to understand why some Bible versions translate the Luke passage to clearly indicate a time in the early evening, while attempting to translate the Matthew passage to indicate early morning.

Some scholars suggest there may have been more than one visit to the tomb at different times, starting just before sundown

"Saturday evening" and ending just after dawn Sunday morning. Yet no matter how many visits were made, in all cases the tomb was already empty. The gospels do not record when Jesus rose from the dead. They only record when the empty tomb was discovered by the women. As important as this discovery was, it did not change the pattern of Sabbath keeping as we see recorded in the book of Acts.

There are two other references to this same day. In Luke 24 there is the story of Jesus walking with two men on the road to Emmaus. John 20 tells of Jesus appearing to the disciples who had assembled for fear of the Jews. Neither of these cases seems to support a change in the day God had set aside.

It is very significant that only two other references to the first day of the week can be found in the rest of the New Testament. If a change had taken place earlier than the second century, surely more would have been recorded in Acts and the letters.

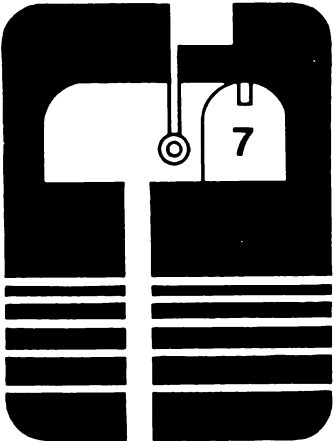
Acts 20:7 reports the account of one first day meeting by Christians. The

Today's English Version translates it this way: "On Saturday evening we gathered for the fellowship meal. Paul spoke to the people and kept on speaking until midnight, since he was going to leave the next day." When the rest of the story is read, it becomes obvious that this was a special *farewell* meeting held because Paul was leaving. This is *not* evidence of a change to Sunday as some try to claim. **This is the only passage in the New Testament that records a "worship service" being held on the first day of the week!**

The only other reference to the first day of the week in the New Testament is found 1 Corinthians 16:2 where Paul instructs the Corinthians to use the day to do their bookkeeping. He tells them to decide how much they can give for the special needs of the Christians in Judea and to keep this money separate **at home** so that the collection could be easily assembled when he arrived. This passage does not talk about a collection during a "Sunday morning service," but a private setting aside of funds for a special purpose.

Sunday keepers who respect the Bible try to use the Acts 20 and 1 Corinthians 16 passages as evidence of a change from the seventh to the first day of the week. Yet a close look at these verses shows one to have no relationship to weekly worship at all and that the other refers to a "special" farewell service that did not represent the usual pattern of Christian worship. Sometimes other New Testament passages are used to support a change in the day. We will be looking at some of them in the next two lessons.

Christians are in general agreement that the resurrection is the single most important event in history. Sometimes Sabbath-keepers are accused



of rejecting the resurrection or placing too little importance on it since we do not "keep Sunday in honor of the resurrection." This kind of accusation is designed to appeal to emotions rather than reason.

We do believe in the resurrection and emphasize it. A careful reading of the New Testament shows us what we should do as a memorial to the resurrection. This is the point of Romans 6:4: "Therefore we have been buried with him through death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life." This passage tells us what Christians are supposed to

do in honor of the resurrection. We are to be baptized by immersion, not change the day of worship!

We were preparing for a trip to the beach to visit friends who rent a cottage near the shore each year. My eight-year-old daughter asked "Do they have the same house this year?" I told her they did, which only partly satisfied her curiosity. "How do you know they have the same house?" she asked. "Because," I answered, "when they invited us they didn't give me any directions. That means they expect us to come to the same place." That answer satisfied her.

As I reflected on the conversation afterward I realized that the same answer applies to the Sabbath as well. God has given us instructions on when to meet him for rest and worship—the Sabbath. If he had “changed his address,” Jesus would have given us new instruction while he was here on earth.

Following your class discussion, try focusing on the special memorial to Christ’s resurrection we do have—baptism. Write a poem, search-a-word, cross-word puzzle, draw a picture or in some other way express the meaning of baptism.

Following your class discussion, try focusing on the special memorial to Christ’s resurrection we do have—baptism. Write a poem, search-a-word, cross-word puzzle, draw a picture or in some other way express the meaning of baptism.

Haiku

**Death
Sin buried
Clean up me
alive**

Acrostic

**B-uried
A-live
P-urified
T-estimony
I-ncluded
S-aved
M-emorial**

Z P U W G V W E T T A W N F U N Q G M U
 P P H J V P N P Q A E F I K D Z B H Y F
 M U R G N I W E N E R D X R Y L P O M B
 B O Q F O B E D I A N C E X N A E N L Y
 O T Y O E J Y W D S B N D A J I L O A S
 L D C J K T G R E G R T N N R C Q R I R
 E D F W S L O X T U J C I N L I T A R H
 G N O E M L U M E E Y A M O X F F B O R
 G B R P L O V E G M F P X A R E S L M W
 K C R E A T I O N L T I Z A K N V E E D
 P P R A Y E R I V U W L L R S E S W M P
 S A B B A T H B J Z U Q V F C B M J T U
 C H B S H S A N C T I F I E D R B I X P
 O J G W T L U F Y O J I V A S I R W T E
 V N Z Z U T H G I L E D X H W I L U X Y
 E R Y M J X K E U A H C O O P H N A C V
 N F D F R J L T F R I L Z S O X O T R Z
 A D O S E V E N T H Y F B Z P G W L J T
 N F B A D L A R W F W A L L X E U G L W
 T G X I G L A E T A R B E L E C D U L Y

Sabbath Search-a-Word

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| 1. Sabbath | 13. Renewing |
| 2. Rest | 14. Mind |
| 3. Beneficial | 15. Spirit |
| 4. Sanctified | 16. Body |
| 5. Holy | 17. Delight |
| 6. Celebrate | 18. Covenant |
| 7. Memorial | 19. Love |
| 8. Creation | 20. Joyful |
| 9. Lord | 21. Prayer |
| 10. Seventh | 22. Honorable |
| 11. Obedience | 23. Life |
| 12. Wholly | 24. Law |

Lesson 8
Some Troublesome Texts, Part One

In the last lesson we reviewed all eight New Testament texts that refer to the first day of the week. We discovered that six of them refer to events on the day that Jesus' tomb was discovered empty. We discovered that the other two passages do not show Christians meeting regularly for worship on the first day of the week. The term itself is a little misleading, since it appears in the Greek as "one after Sabbath." The early Christians continued to number their days from the Sabbath.

There are other New Testament quotations that are sometimes used to support Sunday. It is important for Sabbath-keepers to understand what these passages do mean since they can be confusing.

In John 20:26 some translations say "one week later" Jesus appeared to the disciples again, yet the original says "after eight days." Those who try to make eight days mean a week are attempting to build a case for claiming that all of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances occurred on Sundays. Yet even if all the appearances were on Sundays there is no authority in that fact for a change in the day.

A variation on this same idea is to claim that the Holy Spirit was given to the church on the first day of the week. The record of this event is found in Acts 2. Here we are told how the Spirit came down on the day of Pentecost. Pentecost was a Jewish festival, one of the seven "annual sabbaths" that did not necessarily fall on the weekly Sabbath. The name refers to the fact that it came fifty days after Passover. It was the time at which the spring grain harvest was dedicated to God. The Jews believed that it was the time at which the Ten Commandments were given to Moses. Many Jews from all over the Roman Empire would have been in Jerusalem for this important festival.

The giving of the Spirit on Pentecost enriches the meaning of the festival. This was the beginning of the Christian "harvest" of people. The Spirit was now given to help us keep the Law that had been given earlier.

Also, when the visitors to Jerusalem took the Christian message home with them, they began to prepare the way for the growth of the church in other places.

The issue in Acts 2 relates to the festival at which the Spirit was given, not the day of the week!

Another passage that is sometimes used to support the idea of a change in the day is Revelation 1:10, where John describes what happened to him. He said, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." Many Sunday-keepers argue that this is a reference to Sunday. After reading the passage carefully, see if you can find an indication that this refers to a day of the week.

If we reject the idea that this is a reference to Sunday, what does it mean? There are two possibilities.

Many of the Old Testament prophets spoke of the coming judgment day as "the day of the Lord." Probably John's phrase "the Lord's day" means the same thing. This is reasonable because the book deals with events in "the end time." If this is true, John is saying that the Spirit took him into a vision of the coming Lord's day (day of judgment).

Although Sunday keepers were using this term to refer to Sunday 150 years later. John may well have had an entirely different meaning.

There is one other possible explanation that makes sense. In lesson 4 we discussed the way in which Jesus called himself “Lord of the Sabbath” in Mark 2:28. If Revelation 1:10 refers to any day of the week, it is only reasonable to say that it must refer to the Sabbath. It was the Sabbath that Jesus said he was Lord of!

This passage shows us something important about how we use the Bible. Do we try to make it fit our point of view, or do we try to make our lives fit the pattern of living we find it in?

Also, we need to try to understand what things meant at the time they were written. If we know that “the Lord’s day” was not used to refer to Sunday until long after Revelation was written, then we are less likely to make the mistake of thinking John was talking about Sunday!

Tiddlywinks Review

1. Lay the target on table.
2. Press one penny against the edge of another and “flip” it onto the target.
3. Value of question is selected by the place where the penny lands.
4. Try to answer the question your teacher gives from special teacher’s page.
5. Winner (team or individual) is the one ahead when time is up.

5	10	15	10	5
10	25	50	25	10
15	50	100	50	15
10	25	50	25	10
5	10	15	10	5

Some Troublesome Texts, Part Two

Scattered through Paul's writings are several passages that are used to suggest that the seventh-day Sabbath was changed or eliminated. While some people honestly believe a change from Sabbath to Sunday took place, others insist that the Sabbath was abolished and that the church simply chose Sunday as a convenient meeting day.

Paul was a very important leader in the early church. It is reasonable to think that any change in days should show up in his writings. We have already talked about how Paul continued to observe the Sabbath. The book of Acts teaches this. But there are a few passages that are used to claim Paul abolished the Sabbath.

We need to do our Bible study carefully, not just pick up a verse here and there. To know what a passage means requires an understanding of its "context." We need to have some understanding of why, when and to whom it was written. This lesson leaves little room for this kind of development, but a few facts about Paul will help us understand what is meant:

1. Paul was a Jew, brought up to keep the Ten Commandments including the Sabbath.
2. Paul continued to observe the Law after accepting Christ as Lord and Savior (see Philippians 3:2-7; Acts 21:17-26; 24:13-14).
3. Most of Paul's letters were written to help churches handle problems. Two big issues were how much of the Jewish Law should be **required** of Gentile Christians and how much Pagan practice could be continued by these same converts.
4. Anything contrary to God's Law is sin. In Romans 4:1,2 he set this standard: "What shall we say then, are we to remain in sin that grace might increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?"

Let's look at some of these difficult passages:

Galatians 4:10,11: "You observe days and months and seasons and years. I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain."

Most of the Galatians were former idol worshippers who used to think of doing things to gain their god's favor. Some so-called teachers were saying that faith in Jesus was not enough to save a person unless certain things were done, too. They seem to have mixed Jewish customs and pagan practices together. The pagans, as well as the Jews, had special days and seasons.

One clue to which kind of special days is being mentioned here appears in Colossians 2:9: "But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you **turn back again** to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you wish to be enslaved **all over again**?" The way this is worded seems to indicate a **return** to pagan practices, rather than an acceptance of Jewish customs. "Days, months, seasons, and years" is probably a reference to pagan festivals. It is not a reference to the weekly seventh-day Sabbath at all!

Colossians 2:16, 17: "Therefore let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day—things which are a shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ."

This sounds like a pretty convincing anti-Sabbath passage until we look at it more carefully. Again the issue is "earning" salvation or receiving it as a gift. Belief in Christ brings salvation, but Paul taught consistently that believers should follow God's Law after they have been saved. He told the Colossians that the record of their sins had been nailed to the cross and blotted out. This is what was nailed to the cross, not the Law! (See Colossians 2:13,14.) In the King James Version it speaks of the "handwriting of ordinances" as being nailed to the cross but the word used here refers to a written record of a debt or crime.

"Let no one judge you" refers to not allowing others to pass sentence for the way you keep the Sabbath or the festivals. No one has the right to say "You're going to hell for that."

The issue is **how** to observe, not **whether**. This becomes clear when we realize that the "food and drink" mentioned are actually "eating and drinking" in the Greek. This refers to the special customs and regulations for the various feasts. Paul tells us that the Sabbath (as well as the Jewish feasts) have been freed from the restrictions and regulations that were so important to the Pharisees. This is exactly the same point that Jesus made in Mark 2:27,28. We can be thankful for the freedom we have in the way we keep the Sabbath!

Romans 14:5,6: "One man regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Let each man be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes for the Lord, and he who eats does so for the Lord, for he give thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God."

The issues Paul dealt with in this chapter relate to how Christians should live in a pagan society. One thing he mentioned was eating meat. Most meat available in a city like Rome had been sacrificed to some god or goddess before being offered for sale. Some Christians ate only vegetables, feeling that eating such meat would be participating in a pagan sacrifice. Paul insisted that a difference of opinion on such an issue should not cause divisions among Christians. We do not know for sure what "day" he is talking about in verse 5. Some scholars believe it is a reference to the Sabbath. Others, thinking of the way this chapter deals with problems of living in pagan communities, suggest that it may be a pagan holiday. Certainly we cannot, on the strength of this passage, accept the idea that Paul believed that the Sabbath was just an option for Christians. There is too much in the Bible that teaches otherwise!

A few other passages are used occasionally as excuses for not keeping the Sabbath. Those who use them are trying to find a Bible reason for ignoring one of God's Ten Commandments.

Tic Tac Doe Review

1. Numbers on chart refer to chapters 1 through 9.
2. Use colored markers to keep track of the game.
3. Try to answer the questions your teacher gives from special teacher's page.
4. If a player misses an answer, the opponent may try to answer it.
5. The team or individual giving correct answer will place a marker in the appropriate square.
6. Three in a row wins.

4	9	2
3	5	7
8	1	6

The Sabbath and Service to God

Sooner or later every Sabbath-keeper meets someone who explains his rejection of the Sabbath this way: "You keep the Sabbath, but I honor God every day."

That statement carries with it an implied criticism of Sabbath-keepers. It is a way of saying that we have a lower standard of devotion to God than those who reject the Sabbath. A comment like this one is frustrating to deal with because it is almost always used as an excuse by people who do not want to be confronted with the importance of the Sabbath in the life of the Christian.

Others will raise an argument that goes like this: "The Sabbath used to be important, but now we have the five-day work week and shorter hours. We don't need a day of rest the way our ancestors did." This too may be just an excuse. But those who think this way have missed one of the important qualities of the Sabbath that goes beyond the issue of physical rest. In this lesson we will deal with the Sabbath as a part of our service to God. As we consider this topic we learn some things that apply to the two excuses listed above.

It is true that "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath," but it is important for us to develop a clear understanding of **why** it was made for us. We should avoid using these words of Jesus as an excuse for breaking or ignoring the Sabbath.

The Sabbath provides more than just physical rest. It is a time for worship, too. God designed the Sabbath as time for us to spend in communion with him. In fact, we will never develop a complete picture of the importance of the Sabbath until we consider it as both rest **and** worship.

On the surface of it, "serving God every day" seems like a pretty good thing. We remember how Paul urged the Romans to "present your bodies, a living sacrifice" (Romans 12:1). We might even feel that the idea of seven days of service is better than seventh-day service. After all, Jesus said we are to take up his **cross** daily and follow him (Luke 9:23).

Yet there are differences in the ways our days are spent. Most of you spend a large part of your week days in school. Full time jobs will demand many of your hours each week in just a few years. (Some of you may already be holding down jobs.) Such employment is nothing new. First century Christians followed many trades. Some were slaves. The New Testament urges believers to perform their duties whole-heartedly, with a thoroughness which brings honor to the cause of Christ. So it is true that we serve God every day, but the Sabbath provides us with a different kind of opportunity for service.

Samuelle Bacchiocchi compares these two different kinds of service to the two sisters, Mary and Martha, who were good friends of Jesus. Martha was always bustling around taking care of details and working hard to make

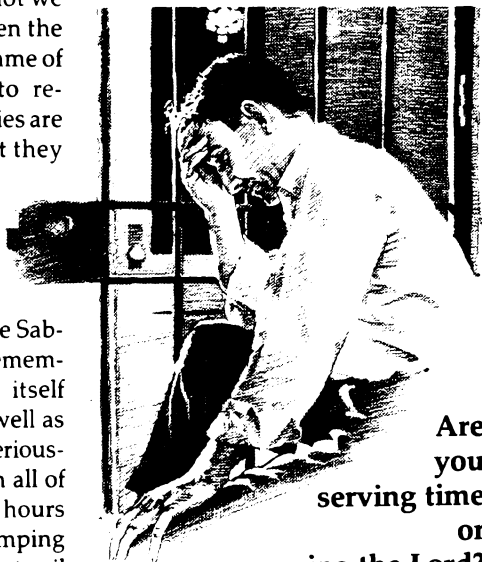
things go the way she thought they should. This is like most of our week days. Mary was the one who would sit down quietly in Jesus' presence and quietly absorb his teachings. Bacchiocchi suggests that this is what our Sabbath experience should be like.

When we talk about the Sabbath as a "day of rest," we need to be sure we understand what is meant. If we misunderstand this phrase we can be easily misled by the argument which suggests that the five-day work week has ended the need for the Sabbath.

As we think back over the story of Creation in Genesis 1 and 2 we remember that mankind was created on the sixth day, but rested with God on the Sabbath—the very next day! He certainly was not worn out from a week of work since he was less than 24 hours old! Yet God instructed him to rest. We have here the very important fact that we are not resting from our work, but we are resting in celebration of God's work. This is also symbolic of one of the very central teachings of the Christian faith. We can't work our way to heaven, but must rely on "the work of Jesus Christ" on the cross which he did for us.

When the Sabbath is observed as a day of rest, we automatically take a step away from our daily work by which we "make a living." The Sabbath serves as a reminder that we are dependent on God, and that we are not to worship our work or what we earn. The Sabbath helps us remember that "It is he that hath made us and not we ourselves" (Psalm 100:3). When the Sabbath is observed in this frame of mind, we are more likely to remember that our daily activities are to be done in such a way that they bring God honor and glory!

But in our modern world there seem to be more people who worship leisure activities than people who worship their work. How does the Sabbath relate to this issue? We remember that the commandment itself calls for six days of work as well as the one day of rest. If applied seriously, this would seem to call on all of us to use our non-Sabbath hours productively. Vacations, camping trips, fishing, sports, etc. are not evil things in and of themselves. They become damaging when they take time, energy or attention from those things which we should be doing. Again, the Sabbath is a time in which we can center our attention on God in a special way. We can think about the marvelous way in which his Son came to be the Savior of the world. We can



**Are
you
serving time
or
serving the Lord?**

marvel at the complexity of the natural world he created. We can consider the mystery of his personal interest in us as individuals. We can consider how we are to use our gifts and abilities in ways that honor him.

As you can see, some of the activities take place on a very personal level. They are best accomplished through quiet, unstructured time spent "one-on-one" with God. The Sabbath provides a special opportunity for such experiences since we have been freed from routine responsibilities and are therefore free for special communion with God.

But the Sabbath provides more than time for private contemplation. Group worship, study and discussion are appropriate, too. We do not know how long God's people have been using the Sabbath this way, but since the other six days were set aside for work, it seems logical that worship and study were linked with the Sabbath from the very beginning.

By getting together with other believers we help one another channel our thinking into fruitful areas. Each believer has been equipped by the Spirit with gifts and abilities. Joining with other Christians gives us the opportunity to be enriched through the teaching, preaching, encouragement, singing, etc. that various ones provide. We discover also, that our own gifts will fit into the needs of the "body."

We can see, then, that both worship and rest form important parts of the Sabbath experience. The change in routine that takes place when we stop our regular jobs is an acknowledgment of the authority of God over our time. The Sabbath provides us with an opportunity for quiet concentration on the goodness and blessings of God. This is, in fact, one form of worship. Joining with other believers for worship strengthens all involved, and helps us develop into well-rounded Christians. Private study and private worship are good, but they do not allow us to benefit from the rest of the body and may not help us in the areas where we need the most help.

Sabbath rest is more than physical. It is resting in God's power and love. We are to serve God daily, but our service takes on a less hectic, more joy-filled quality when we observe the Sabbath of the Lord!

“Input/Output”

Take time to write out your answers to A1, A2, A3 and A4.

- A1. What were your thoughts when you got up this morning?
 - A2. A2. In the moments before this class started today, what was your conversation about?
 - A3. What are your plans for the rest of the day? Where will you be going? What will you be doing, saying, thinking?
 - A4. Summarize in 20 words or less what your answers reflect (school, sports, clothes, dances, cars, movies, . . . etc.).
- B. Think of your mind as a computer. From Sunday through Friday all you have programmed in is school, family, sports, clothes, magazines, friends, TV, cars, dances, jobs. If this has been your input all week, then when Friday sundown comes, all you will be able to have for output are thoughts of these things and the tensions and frustrations of the past six days.

But computers have disk and tape drives and slots for cartridges. you can take out a disk, tape or preprogrammed cartridge and put it away for later use. Then the RAM (random access memory) of the computer is available for another program.

You can do something similar with your mind-computer, too. Try following these steps.

- B1. Store programs safely with God. (Do you feel funny about turning some of them over to him?)
- B2. Clear Memory. Prepare your personal RAM for new programming.
- B3. Reject reinsertion of stored programs.
- B4. Permit God to program you.
- B5. Use appropriate software and peripherals for desired results (Instruction manual -Bible, power cable -prayer, monitor - the “body,” joy stick -Holy Spirit, etc.)
- B6. Anticipate high quality output.



The Sabbath and Service to Self

If there is one question that sums up the attitude of a lot of people it is "What's in it for me?" For many people the primary, sometimes the only concern in life is how event and circumstances will impact their lives. "Looking out for number one" is a very popular past time. Even Christians are not exempt from such selfish concerns. It is easier for us to talk about unselfishness than to really make it an operating principle in our lives. We know the right words, but getting our attitudes to be in line with them can be very difficult.

Part of the problem may be in our understanding of what Christian unselfishness really is. Jesus said we are to love our neighbors as ourselves. This does not forbid "self-love." It simply puts it in perspective by requiring identical love for others. In the golden rule we are told to do unto others as we would like to have done to us. Again, the emphasis is on raising treatment of others rather than lowering our expectations for ourselves. This very realistic approach stresses better treatment of others, not bad treatment of us.

The Southeastern Associations' Camp Joy theme song stresses a good principle:

Jesus and Other and You,
What a wonderful way to spell joy.
Jesus and Others and You
In the heart of each girl and each boy.
"J" is for Jesus who takes first place.
"O" is for Others you meet face to face.
"Y" is for You and whatever you do,
Put yourself last and spell joy.

Although we may agree that the song expresses the way things should be, we are going to look at the Sabbath as service to ourselves before we look at it as service to others because until it means something to us, we can't pass its values along to others.

One of the reasons for the Sabbath is physical rest. In the last lesson we discussed the way in which this God-appointed day helps us keep an understanding of who we are and who God is. By observing the Sabbath regularly as a day away from our jobs, we are less likely to fall into the trap of worship of work. But the Sabbath involves much more than physical rest—things we need to understand.

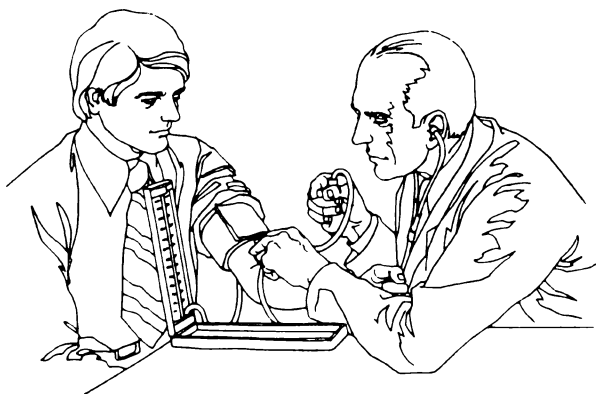
Although most modern jobs require less sweat and blisters, today's employment opportunities carry an even higher level of tension or stress than was true of some of those more physically demanding jobs. Many educators are concerned about the pressure that modern education places on students. The Sabbath provides an opportunity to get away from the pressures of school or job. But this is not an automatic function. We must allow ourselves to have a break. I have often noticed the way in which our discussions on Sabbath tend to deal with what we have been doing all week. This is not the most effective way of observing the Sabbath. To talk about

unfinished assignments, work projects under way, the big game or next week's dance all permit "the cares of the world" to intrude on this time God gave us to spend away from those pressures.

Several years ago a non-Sabbath-keeper was serving as a Church Growth consultant to Seventh Day Baptists. He stated that one of the great things Sabbath-keeping did was to provide "rest without guilt." He suggested that this was one of the things we should emphasize as we reach out to others. But it is something we need to take more seriously before we can help it be meaningful to those who do not know about the Sabbath. There is always work to be done, but when we use the Sabbath as time to set those things aside for a while, then we can come back to them with a fresh perspective and a willingness to "get things done." When we allow school or work to interfere with our observing the Sabbath as rest time—a break from daily pressures—then we are robbing ourselves of a blessing God built into the system. Homework, the Friday night football game, a Sabbath business conference: these are some of the things that can get in the way of the kind of break our Creator knows we need.

At one time I worked for a store owner who continually grumbled about my refusal to "work on Saturday." On one occasion I told him he would get more out of me in six days than in seven. A few weeks later he told me he had been watching the workers who were on the job seven days a week and he agreed that it was better to have a weekly break. We work more effectively when we follow a pattern of Sabbath observance. There is a bumper sticker available that say: "Got problems? Read the owner's manual." Beside the statement is a picture of the Bible. If we recognize God as our "owner," then the "owner's manual" (the Bible) will have the best information on maintenance. A part of God's maintenance schedule for his creation is the Sabbath.

In the society around us we see many ways in which people are trying to escape from the pressures of modern living. Oriental meditation, drugs, alcohol, soap operas and many other things are used to dull the edge of reality. Unfortunately, these efforts to escape only complicate life. The Sabbath was designed as a safety valve, providing us with a means of coping with pressure. The Sabbath also refreshes and prepares us to return to daily living. It is not an escape in the sense these other things are. It is God's gift to us so we don't need to escape.



As you look at your own pattern of Sabbath-keeping there may be things that don't quite fit the picture presented here. Why not try to make the Sabbath into what God planned it to be?



Exercise

For the next month, take a few minutes at the end of each Sabbath. Write down your responses to the following:

1. The thing that help me most to be aware of God's love today was . . .
2. The most important new truth I learned today was . . .
3. My most restful activity today was . . .
4. The thing I should probably avoid in the future was . . .
5. I saw God in . . .
6. I applied God's love today by . . .
7. I was able to let go and let God" for (Hours and minutes) today.

Lesson 12

The Sabbath and Service to Others

“Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh is a Sabbath of the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you.” Here is the first part of the fourth commandment as it appears in the New American Standard Version. Have you even paused to consider the way in which God listed so many people who were not to be working on the Sabbath? He wanted to make sure that the heads of the families did not try to find ways around the intent of the command. We have already considered some of the ways in which the Sabbath helps us serve God and ourselves. In this lesson we will begin to think of the Sabbath as service to others. Begin is the right word, since you will continue to find appropriate uses for Sabbath rest for as long as you continue to observe it.

As the Sabbath deepens our spiritual relationship with God, we begin to develop eyes for the ways in which others could be enriched too. The first



step in our sharing of the Sabbath as service to others is the willingness to do that which we can to provide others with the day for rest and worship. You may discover that you have followed patterns that have kept others from having “the day off” without meaning to.

When I was young there was an elderly Jewish man in our community who was ridiculed for his habit of going out on cold Sabbath mornings to find a Gentile he could hire to stroke the fire in his coal furnace. The community people saw this as inconsistent since the Gentile he hired had to be considered either a “manservant” or a “sojourner within his gates.” I suppose that Mr. Nashban considered the command to build no fires on the Sabbath as more important than the issue of hiring someone to do it for him. We should not become legalistic about this kind of matter, but are there things that we do that cause other people to work? Some things are beyond our control. We do expect our electric lights to work on the Sabbath. We do expect to have police protection. But there may be things we do that keep others on the job unnecessarily. It could be argued that “they” wouldn’t be keeping the Sabbath anyway. But the point is that as we begin to consider the Sabbath as service to others, we should set personal patterns that do not interfere with the possibility of other people keeping the Sabbath.

As we go beyond this, we begin to discover that the Sabbath is more than just a private day for rest and communion with God. There are the social aspects of Sabbath-keeping, too. The ancient Israelites were to provide

Sabbath rest to guests and servants. The Sabbath was to be for everyone, not just the wealthy or the heads of the families.

We see the way Jesus made it his custom (normal routine) to attend synagogue services on the Sabbath. To attend is to experience worship and fellowship with other believers. We are enriched by this, but our presence enriches and encourages others. To be absent from congregational worship is a selfish act, ignoring how our presence may help others. Usually we try to build a case for attendance on the basis of what the individual gets out of worship. We need to be more aware of how important it is for us to be involved as an act of service to others.

We see in Jesus' use of the Sabbath a willingness to discover and meet the needs of others. His Sabbath healings are examples of "doing unto others" when the opportunity is present. We discover that our Sabbaths provide us contacts with people we may see at no other time. Although we may not have the ability to heal as Jesus did, we may discover many ways in which we can heal relationships and help to restore the kind of harmony between people that God intended us to have.

There should be time for family, too. This is a service to others that churches should work to develop. Sometimes the Sabbath is so filled with church sponsored activities that we fail to provide time to nurture the family unit and the husbandwife relationship. Although it would be wrong to substitute the family for the church in our Sabbath experiences, there should be more awareness of the needs of the others in our family unit and a willingness to try to find ways to develop positive, effective methods of meeting those needs.

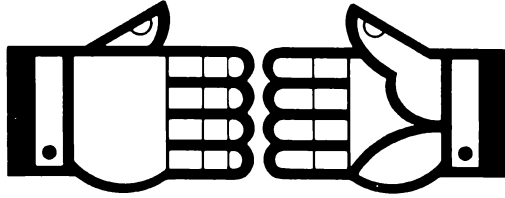
Until the time I left home to go to college I had never lived near a Sabbath-keeping church. With an hour and a half drive to "go to church" it is easy to see why many of my Sabbaths were spent at home. Yet within the family unit there was a treasuring of the Sabbath that transmitted its value to me in a way that those who are blessed with nearby churches sometimes miss. Mother and Dad did make a change of pace. Daily pressures were set aside. Family time was a priority. We studied together. We made meals together. We took rides together. I wish that more people could experience the kind of Sabbath I remember from childhood. I believe that it helped keep my family strong.

Time for the "needy" is another thing that the Sabbath provides. Some congregations have an unwritten law that strangers will be invited some-



Someone's missing!

where for Sabbath dinner. Some people set aside a Sabbath afternoon each month to visit a nursing home or jail. Many methods can be developed, but they should be designed to help us share our Sabbath time with those who may need our fellowship or help.



Recreation is another aspect of the Sabbath. Look at the word. Do you see how it really is re-creation? This is what the word meant when it was first used. Today we tend to think of recreation as “fun” or “activity.” We could get very legalistic here, too in setting up what is and is not re-creation and when and how it should be viewed as service to others. Obviously the needs and interests of people vary.

In my first pastorate I discovered that the youth group was in the habit of playing softball right after the Sabbath afternoon youth meeting. Unfortunately, the attitude of the players reflected their daily concern over winning, who was cheating and who was a poor player. I suggested a hike the next Sabbath. Over the next few years we used a number of activities to keep up interest. There were hikes, caving expeditions, trips to parks and scenic wonders. For that group the competition of games tended to bring attitudes and actions that tore down rather than built up. Expendng the same energy in some of these other activities allowed us to have positive fellowship experiences without the negative influences entering in. Perhaps you can come up with creative uses for the Sabbath which will help others eliminate negative patterns.

In relationship to this, perhaps one of our “rules” concerning the Sabbath is that we should avoid those things which tend to interfere with our awareness of this as special time that God has designed for our welfare. We don’t so much have to preach about the Sabbath to others as we have to live it in a way that will make others realize it can have value for them, too.

Discussion Starters

How do you react to the story of the Jewish man with furnace problems? How do you handle Sabbath conflicts?

Have you even been a “Lone Sabbath-keeper?” If not, try to imagine what it might be like. What advantages do you think there might be? What disadvantages? How would you handle your needs for Christian fellowship, teaching and worship?

What activities do you think of that might keep others from observing the Sabbath?

How can you help others catch an enthusiasm for Sabbath-keeping?

A Quick Review

The purpose of this series of lessons has been to increase your understanding of the importance of the Sabbath and to develop an awareness of some ways in which the Sabbath can come to mean more to you.

The Sabbath is like many others parts of the Christian life. We continue to develop deeper understanding of its importance and value the longer we are involved in it.

There are many sincere, but misguided Christians who believe that the Sabbath was either done away with or was replaced by Sunday. Our position as Sabbath-keepers is not to argue, but to demonstrate the value of positive Sabbath-keeping so effectively that they will see how God's special day should still be a part of the Christian life today. One of the greatest handicaps in effectively presenting the Sabbath to others is the way in which Sabbath-keepers permit the Sabbath to mean so little to them. In other words, these lessons will hopefully give you more than head knowledge of facts about the Sabbath. They will help you put those facts into action in your own life.

The conflicts that Jesus had over the Sabbath related to how, not whether, it should be kept! He used it as a day for worship, but he also demonstrated how it can become a day for others in our life. We say that Jesus is our example. His Sabbath-keeping was more concerned with its being a blessing than with the picky little rules that the Pharisees treasured so highly. Sometimes we fall into patterns that take on the force of law. We need to stop and consider our personal practices and ask why we do or don't do certain things.

Use this outline to help review the main points of the lessons.

I. The Authority of the Bible

- A.
- B.
- C.

II. The Early Days

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.
- E.
- F.
- G.

III. The Exile and After

- A.
- B.
- C.

IV. What Jesus Said and Did

- A.
- B.
- C.
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- D.
- E.
- F.

V. The Sabbath and the New Testament Church

- A.
- B.
- C.

VI. Other Religions Influence Christianity

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.

E. Some Who Held Fast

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

VII. The First Day of the Week in the Bible

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.

VIII. Troublesome Texts

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.

IX. More Troublesome Texts

- A.
- B.
- C.

X. The Sabbath and Service to God

- A.
- B.

XI. The Sabbath and Service to Self

- A.
- B.
- C.

XII. The Sabbath and Service to Others

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.
- E.

Supplementary Lesson

Is the Lord of the Sabbath the Lord of Your Life?

Doing what God tells us to do is very important. His Ten Commandments were given to the human race as the basic rules for good living both with God and with other people. 89% of the people in a recent survey said they thought we should try to obey the Ten Commandments. But only 20% of the people in the same survey could name even five of the ten! It is pretty evident that there are a lot of people who don't know much about these rules for righteous living.

But there is another problem for those of us who may be able to recite all ten from memory. That problem is that knowing them and obeying them are not the same. Breaking these laws, as well as the other laws God has given, is what the Bible calls sin. If we are honest about it we will admit that at one time or another we have broken various commandments. Romans 3:23 reminds us of the fact that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Who has sinned? All have sinned.

Sin requires punishment and the penalty that is demanded is death. Romans 6:23 tells us that "the wages (what we earn) from sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord." Since we have sinned, we deserve death, and no amount of effort to do right on our part will pay off this debt. The second half of this verse tells us that eternal life is God's gift to those who believe in God's son, Jesus Christ.

To believe in Jesus as the Son of God means that we accept the fact that although he did not deserve to die, he accepted death on the cross and that his death can be credited as the needed payment for our sins if we admit to being a sinner and accept him as our Lord and Savior.

When we do this we are really saying to God, "Although I want to do the right things, I know that there are times that I fail, and I accept your offer of forgiveness through the death of your son for me."

This is a step each of us must make for ourselves. Baptism is a step we take to show the world that we have made this decision.

Well, if we can be forgiven, why don't we stop worrying about the Sabbath and the other nine Commandments? That is a question that people have been asking since New Testament days. In answer to this attitude Paul says (Romans 6:1-4) "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace (forgiveness in Christ) may increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have



been baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him through baptism, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life."

The point is this: those who have accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior will continue to try to live according to God's directions (including the Ten Commandments) out of gratitude for the forgiveness we have received.

We no longer obey out of fear of punishment or to try to be "good enough," but because we want to do what pleases our heavenly Father.

If somebody says you are a legalist, or that you are "trying to earn your salvation" because you observe the Sabbath, just tell them that you like to do the things that are pleasing to the God who has already given you the gift of eternal life!

In other words, you can tell them that the Lord of the Sabbath is also the Lord of your life. You are following the example of your Lord when you observe the Sabbath.

Senior High Nurture Series

Key Verses

Lesson 1

Genesis 1:27, 2:1-3; Psalm 100:3; 2 Timothy 3:16

Lesson 2

Exodus 20; Hebrews 4:9-11

Lesson 3

Isaiah 58:12-14; Nehemiah 13:15ff

Lesson 4

Mark 2:27-28; Matthew 5:17-20; Colossians 1:16-17; Luke 4:16;
John 1:1-3; Hebrews 1:1-2

Lesson 5

Acts 15

Lesson 6

Matthew 15:1-9

Lesson 7

Romans 6:1-9; Acts 13:42-44

Lesson 8, 9

Matthew 7:21-27

Lesson 10

Matthew 6:25-34, Matthew 11:25-30, Romans 12:1-2

Lesson 11

Leviticus 19:18, Matthew 22:39, Psalm 37

Lesson 12

Luke 6, Mark 2:23-3:5, 1 John 4:7-21

Lesson 13

Review

Supplementary Lesson

Romans 3:23, Romans 6, Matthew 5:16-19

Aids for the Sabbath

1. Candle
2. Banner
3. Welcoming Service
4. Special meals that are planned and prepared for before the Sabbath
5. Music—God centered
6. Events that can focus on God and serving others
7. Christian VCR movies
8. Computer Bible games
9. Walks, rides that allow for observing the surroundings
10. Creative Time—writing, music, games, art etc.
11. Alone Time—this is good Sabbath Eve (Friday night) to groom and physically rest from school, job pressures, preparing for daylight involvements
12. Books to inform and build up Christ-like-ness
13. Visitation—new kids in area, shut-ins, loners, nursing homes, hospitals. These are good places to use #6 and #10
14. Fun and fellowship at the church center on Sabbath afternoon or evening with table games, VCR, signing, talk refreshments

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